THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHERS IN RURAL TITLE I MIDDLE SCHOOLS

CONCERNING THE EXPERIENCES THAT NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE JOB SATISFACTION

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

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A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

Michael Stephen Slaven. The Perceptions of Teachers in Rural Title I Middle Schools Concerning the Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction (Under the direction of Michelle Goodwin, Ed.D.) School of Education, July, 2011.

A qualitative phenomenological research design was chosen to examine the perceptions of teachers concerning experiences that negatively influence teachers’ job satisfaction in rural Title I schools in Georgia. Twelve middle school teachers from three Georgia school districts were interviewed. Pilot interviews and follow-up interviews were also held. Interview data was coded, codes were examined for redundancy and codes were collapsed into broad themes. Major themes related to teacher dissatisfaction included negative relationships with administrators and problems with student behavior. Major themes related to teacher satisfaction included positive relationships with colleagues, working with students, and a sense of efficacy. Problems with student behavior, initial misconceptions concerning teaching, and a sense of isolation were identified by participants as factors that increase the difficulty of teaching. Due to job dissatisfaction related to the teacher-administrator relationship and problems with student behavior, several participants indicated that they would leave their current position for a comparable job outside of education. Participant responses supported Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor theory on worker satisfaction, Abraham Maslow and Clayton Alderfer’s theories related to the categorization of human needs, and theories on human motivation proposed by Jeremy Bentham and Victor Vroom. Additional theoretical implications along with applications for educational leaders are also delineated in the study.
Dedication

To my wife, Tammy, and children, Rebekah and Walton, your sacrifices for my success are incredible testimonies of your love. Thank you!

To the only person before whom I willingly bow the knee, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, you have given me opportunity, purpose, and hope. Thank you!
Acknowledgements

Thank you to Dr. Goodwin, Dr. Kimball, and Dr. Schlabra for serving on my committee and providing direction and encouragement.

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Thank you to Dr. Deborah Mullis for serving as a peer debriefer. Your collaboration on this project was invaluable.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The decision to enter the teaching profession is encouraged by a belief that being a teacher will, at least partially, meet one’s career expectations. Beginning educators, similar to other professionals, hold certain preconceived ideas concerning the individual satisfaction that will result from their career as they perform the day-to-day duties of a teacher. When the teaching experience fails to meet these expectations, job satisfaction may be diminished. These experiences may vary depending on such variables as student characteristics, the relationship between the administration and the staff, and the nature of collegiality among teachers. The purpose of this study was to investigate the types of teacher experiences that are related to teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the context of rural Title I schools in Georgia. By gaining a better understanding of these experiences, the educational community can create and adopt policies that will avert the detrimental outcomes of teacher dissatisfaction, including teacher underperformance as well as teacher migration and attrition (Ingersoll, 2001; Perrachione, Petersen, & Rosser, 2008). While warnings of teacher shortages have, in the past, been used as campaign “fodder” for political candidates and have resulted in strong recruitment efforts among states and local school districts (Merrow, 1999), migration and attrition of high performing teachers remain a problem and can have a negative impact on the learning environment. The following section of commentary from a survey of teachers conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) provides an accurate summation of the importance of studying the satisfaction aspect of the teaching experience:
Teachers are at the center of the educational experience. Despite enormous daily pressures, they are expected to transmit the accumulated knowledge of decades to children of differing backgrounds, abilities and needs—a tall order. If we as a nation truly want quality public education, we must pay more attention to the needs and concerns of teachers. They must be an integral part of any effort to attain a higher level of educational excellence. (p. 3)

**General Background**

A teacher’s personal motivation is a critical component to effective teaching (Malikow, 2007), which is in turn a key component of school quality (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). This personal motivation can be significantly affected by the experiences of teachers within and outside of the school environment. Beginning teachers are especially prone to experience difficulties in the area of personal motivation, and these personal motivation problems give birth to low levels of job satisfaction. Since the strongest gains in teacher quality occur in their first few years in the profession (Rivkin et al., 2005), addressing the experiences and satisfaction levels of new teachers may have a significant impact on their long-term performance in the profession.

While efforts are taken by schools and school districts to foster teacher satisfaction, teacher attrition rates provide evidence supporting low levels of teacher satisfaction among a significant portion of the teacher population. The five-year attrition rate for public school teachers in 1999-2000 was nearly 40 % (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008). The yearly mobility rate for the 2003-2004 school year was 17%, with attrition accounting for 9% (333,000 teachers) of the mobility rate (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). The factors identified as causes of these attrition rates are varied and
include: heavy workloads (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, & Harniss, 2001; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999), problems with behavior management (Busch, Pederson, Espin & Weissenburger, 2001), a lack of personal teaching efficacy (Perrachione et al., 2008), dissatisfaction with teacher pay (Ingersoll, 2001), and a lack of administrative support (Skinner, 2008). Research on teacher satisfaction indicates that the overall treatment of teachers may not be promoting teacher satisfaction. In an attempt to summarize the treatment of teachers and the resultant attrition, Merrow (1999) poignantly wrote, “We train teachers poorly, then treat them badly, so they leave in droves” (p.64). The data from the teacher survey conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) supports Merrow’s statement. According to the survey, only 66% of teachers believe they are respected, a belief that undoubtedly has job performance, job satisfaction, and teacher mobility ramifications.

New teachers, regardless of how well they may perform in the future, tend not to perform as well as the veteran teacher (Rivkin et al., 2005). The quality of their instruction improves with experience, ensuring both financial and educational costs with teacher turnover. The national cost of total teacher turnover in the United States, including teacher migration, is $4.9 billion a year with the costs for individual states ranging from $8.5 million to half a billion dollars (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Due to the educational and financial costs of teacher turnover, especially for disadvantaged students, the need for policies to keep quality teachers in the classroom cannot be overemphasized. Further research in the area of teacher job satisfaction and teacher mobility decisions is needed. Additional research may encourage policies that will improve the experience of struggling teachers and, therefore, enhance their
performance in the classroom. Additional research will also help educational leaders understand the mindset of the teacher who is unchanging concerning their commitment to the profession, the one who feels a sense of contentment while working in a difficult educational environment and who remains unshaken concerning their intention to fulfill their teaching responsibilities.

**Problem Statement**

Research indicates a significant number of teachers experience job dissatisfaction. Different “triggers” or experiences serve as catalysts, increasing the likelihood that a teacher will feel dissatisfied or possess a low sense of job-related morale. Given that research indicates a teacher’s personal motivation is a critical component to effective teaching (Malikow, 2007), which is in turn a key component of school quality (Rivkin et al., 2005), the plausibility of teacher job dissatisfaction negatively influencing the academic performance of students is significant. Moreover, unhealthy teacher migration and attrition will naturally have a negative impact on an educational organization if suitable replacement teachers cannot be located. A need, therefore, exists for determining which triggers increase the likelihood of teacher dissatisfaction as well as the possible actions that may be taken by educational policymakers to improve the experiences of teachers. Teacher commentary related to job satisfaction is a reliable data source for identifying these variables and creating appropriate policies.

**Purpose Statement/Focus of Inquiry**

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to determine the experiences of teachers that prompt job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the context of rural Title I schools. The study investigated teacher satisfaction through the use of pilot interviews,
interviews and follow-up interviews at three Title I schools in southern Georgia. Since the primary goal of qualitative research is to “better understand human behavior and experience” (Bogden & Biklen, 1992, p. 49), a phenomenological method of inquiry was chosen for this study. The resultant data provided a greater understanding of how teachers serving in rural, poverty-stricken schools felt about their teaching experiences and also provided clarity concerning the phenomenon of teacher job dissatisfaction and low job-related morale. The data communicates to the reader the experiences of teachers, and implications are made as to how the overall experience of teachers may be improved.

While the results of this study are applicable for improving student achievement through improving teachers, my primary mission was one of service toward those in the teaching profession, a service on my part which is shaped by a Christian worldview (Philippians 2:1-4).

**Research Questions**

The problems under investigation were a lack of job satisfaction and the existence of job dissatisfaction among teachers serving in rural Title I schools in Georgia. The following research questions were addressed:

1. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job dissatisfaction?
2. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job satisfaction?
3. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the teaching experience?
4. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the impact of teacher job dissatisfaction on teacher performance and student learning?

5. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers continue to teach in rural Title I schools?

6. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers leave rural Title I schools or the teaching profession?

**Professional Significance of the Study**

The phenomenon of teacher burnout is of concern to the educational community (Nagy, 2006). This burnout can result in poor job performance, absenteeism, teacher migration, and/or teachers exiting the profession permanently. Teacher mobility has been a significant contributor to the shortage of qualified teachers in special and general education (Boe et al., 2008). If even a modest association between turnover and specific teaching experiences can be made, administrators will have the information necessary to mitigate teacher dissatisfaction at the school level and, in turn, reduce the likelihood of unhealthy teacher migration and attrition (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009).

Teacher migration and attrition waste the resources of the educational system and individual teachers. Research indicates that each case of teacher attrition costs school districts between $12,000 and $18,000 (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007), making data in the area of teacher satisfaction invaluable to educational leaders. Moreover, individual teachers also pay a price when exiting the profession. Jalongo and Heider (2006) summarized the costs for individual teachers with the following statement:
Nearly every person who exits the field of teaching in search of greener pastures has invested, at minimum, 4 years of her or his life to earning a teaching degree and meeting the state teacher certification requirements. Although it may be gratifying to see the skills developed in a teacher preparation program translate well into skills required by many other walks of life, it often is poor compensation for the *time, effort, and money* [italics added] invested by the individual in becoming a teacher. (p. 380)

In addition to helping the educational community understand the experiences which influence the job satisfaction/dissatisfaction of teachers, this study provided data pertaining to the experiences of novice and veteran teachers with varied backgrounds. Given that behavioral challenges have a strong effect on beginning teacher turnover and that the reasons for turnover among beginning teachers may differ from those of more experienced teachers (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009), the data analyzed in this study revealed those factors that impact teacher stress as well as their resiliency to stay in the profession at different levels of their career. Knowledge of these factors enables educational leaders to develop strategies targeted at improving the experiences and job satisfaction of both novice and veteran teachers.

School performance and the experience of teachers can be negatively impacted by absenteeism, migration, and attrition (Hackman, Oldham, Janson, & Purdy, 1975; Ingersoll, 2001). This study provides data useful in improving the experience of educators, and therefore, improving the experience of students. In other words, the data obtained can be utilized to meet the inherent humanitarian goals of education. The educational community expends a large portion of resources on developing strategies to
help students. Improving the experience of teachers is a suitable reward for those who invest much of themselves in an effort to help children, and by improving the experience of teachers, student achievement is encouraged.

**Overview of Methodology**

A qualitative phenomenological research design was used to investigate teacher perceptions of experiences that negatively impact job satisfaction within the context of rural Title I schools in Georgia. I believe a qualitative phenomenological research design provided the research framework necessary to gather teacher perceptions about their experiences (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, 2009). Teachers in three rural Title I schools were asked to participate in individual interviews. Four teachers from each school were asked to participate in at least one interview. Two additional teachers in one school participated in pilot interviews. Follow-up interviews were held as needed. Member checks were utilized to ensure accuracy of transcripts. Each interview, including the pilot interviews and follow-up interviews, was summarized. Data collected from the transcribed teacher interviews was coded, “the process of segmenting and labeling text to form descriptions and broad themes in the data” (Creswell, 2005, p. 237). The emergent themes were cross-examined by another professional in the field, a peer debriefer, to increase validity. Themes and subthemes were reported, and the aforementioned six research questions were addressed.

**Definitions of Key Terms**

**Job satisfaction.** Evans (1992) defines individual morale, or “satisfaction” in this case, as the “extent to which the job fulfils the individual’s “ideal” (p. 161), specifying that individual morale is adjoined “with the individual’s conception of self” (p. 161).
teacher’s satisfaction is based upon how they perceive their work in education, their relationship with the educational community, their administrative relationships, and how they view themselves in terms of the central mission of the school (Redefer, 1959). The focus of the teacher’s satisfaction is on their own experience.

While a correlation may exist between individual and group satisfaction, the two phenomena are significantly different. For example, an individual teacher may experience a strong feeling of dissatisfaction while the group as a whole is very satisfied with their job. The following statement provides a suitable description of the relationship between individual satisfaction and group satisfaction:

Teacher role embodiment – the perceived compatibility between a teacher’s sense of self and the roles they take on within a school – impacts teacher satisfaction and feelings of self-worth. . . . Negative dispositions were most prominent in teachers who rejected their embodied role and became physically and emotionally drained, as well as those who felt unsupported. When a critical mass of teachers took on negative dispositions, collective negative teacher morale emerged [italics added]. (Margolis & Nagel, 2006, p.155)

Guarino, Santibañez, and Daley (2006) define job satisfaction somewhat differently. Related specifically to one’s job-related activities and experiences, job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction is determined by how much one is attracted or not attracted to their work. In reference to teachers, teacher job satisfaction is based on a given teacher’s “total compensation.” Total compensation is figured based on a comparison between the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards of teaching and the rewards of activities in which one could possibly participate (Bentham, 1781/1988; Guarino et al.,
A decrease in job satisfaction for the teacher occurs when the rewards of other possible activities creates the perception that the teaching profession is meaningless (Maslach, 1982).

**Rural.** Study participants were employed in school districts identified as “rural” by the National Center for Education Statistics (2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has worked with the U.S. Census Bureau to develop their current locale classification system. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau is provided for each district in Chapter 3. The U.S. Census Bureau’s guidelines for differentiating between “urban” and “rural” are provided below:

The U.S. Census Bureau classifies as urban all territory, population, and housing units located within urbanized areas (UAs) and urban clusters (UCs). It delineates UA and UC boundaries to encompass densely settled territory, which generally consists of:

- A cluster of one or more block groups or census blocks each of which has a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile at the time, and
- Surrounding block groups and census blocks each of which has a population density of at least 500 people per square mile at the time, and
- Less densely settled blocks that form enclaves or indentations, or are used to connect discontinuous areas with qualifying densities.

**Rural** consists of all territory, population, and housing units located outside of UAs and UCs. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, A-22)
All of the schools in this study were located in areas classified as “rural” by the U.S. Census Bureau (2008).

The NCES (2006) uses four major categories: “city,” “suburb,” “town,” and “rural.” Town and rural are then broken down into three categories: “fringe,” “distant,” and “remote.” The NCES guidelines for determining classification are provided in the table below:
Table 1.1

*NCES Locale Classification Guidelines*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locale</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>City</strong></td>
<td>Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsize</td>
<td>Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Suburb</strong></td>
<td>Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsize</td>
<td>Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town</strong></td>
<td>Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe</td>
<td>Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles from an urbanized area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote</td>
<td>Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural</strong></td>
<td>Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe</td>
<td>Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distant</td>
<td>Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote</td>
<td>Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Information based upon most recent information provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (2006).

This study focused on teachers only in rural schools. The designations *fringe* and *remote* are used in Chapter 3 to help the reader gain a richer perspective of the schools involved.
**Title I.** The Title I designation originated from Title I Part A of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Title I schools, which are schools with at least 40% of low income students, can use Title I government funding to support a school wide program to improve student learning (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). According to the U.S Department of Education (2010) more than 50,000 public schools use Title I funds, and during the 2006-2007 school year over 17 million children benefited from Title I funded services. Public schools in Georgia report Title I data to the Georgia Department of Education (GA DOE). Schools are then designated as Title I schools by the GA DOE, provided they meet the 40% low income requirement, and are provided funding to support school wide programs to help students master state academic standards (Georgia Department of Education, 2010). Being a Title I school rather than simply receiving Title I funding allows a school to fund school wide programs instead of targeting the funds only to low-income students (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). The schools in this study are classified as Title I schools.

**Attrition.** Teacher attrition is the loss of a teacher from the teaching profession, either temporarily or permanently. Teacher migration, which may be considered as part of attrition numbers, is the movement of a teacher from one school to another or one district to another. Teacher transfer is the movement of teachers to different positions, either in terms of subject area taught or type of job duties performed. A variety of terms are used to describe teacher mobility decisions. When seeking to interpret data related to teacher turnover, the researcher should identify the type of turnover being described.
Summary

Research on teacher satisfaction has humanitarian, educational, and financial implications. Teachers may experience difficult working environments, unsupportive leadership, disrespectful students, and unrealistic parents and community members. These harsh experiences can diminish teachers’ job satisfaction and even their desire to remain in the profession, negatively impacting the school environment and costing the educational community billions of dollars. A careful review of the literature has revealed many quantitative studies on the topic. These studies provide long lists of job satisfaction variables developed through the analysis of teacher satisfaction surveys. A significantly smaller number of qualitative studies on teacher satisfaction have been implemented. While these lists of satisfaction-related variables are helpful in guiding future research, teacher satisfaction remains a phenomenon worthy of additional attention. The goals of this study were to: (a) investigate the satisfaction related variables most often pinpointed by researchers, (b) determine how teachers’ job satisfaction is formed, validating or invalidating some of the popular theories on job satisfaction and motivation, and (c) capture the voice of teachers, a voice at least occasionally overlooked by educational policy makers.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature on teacher satisfaction. The review begins with a focus on job satisfaction in general and then moves to teaching-related stressors and the job satisfaction of teachers. Factors related to teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction as well as their impact on teacher mobility decisions are identified. Since job satisfaction is strongly related to teacher attrition and retention, the literature review provides an overview of teacher attrition along with research on the primary areas of
teacher dissatisfaction leading to migration and attrition. A thorough theoretical background is provided at the end of the literature review providing summaries of the ideas of several leading motivation and job satisfaction theorists including Bentham, Maslow, Locke, Herzberg, Alderfer, and Vroom.

Chapter 3 provides justification for the qualitative phenomenological design of the study. The research questions, sites, participants, and researcher’s perspective are addressed. The manner in which data was collected, analyzed, and reported is also explained. Procedures taken to ensure the credibility and dependability of results are summarized.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide summaries of the interviews, the results of the coding process, and the implications of the study within the context of the six research questions. These results provide voice to teachers regarding their experiences and support for the conclusions that follow. Fundamental questions regarding the satisfaction and dissatisfaction of teachers in rural Title I schools are addressed. Chapter 5 ends with the limitations/delimitations of the study and suggestions for further research.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A comprehensive review of the research related to worker motivation and job satisfaction could take numerous distinctive forms. This review of the literature begins and ends with an examination of the conceptual and theoretical aspects of the topic, a focus I attempt to maintain throughout the study. Initially, an overview of the research on job satisfaction and worker motivation is provided. Basic components of these concepts are highlighted. The review then moves to teacher satisfaction and motivation, focusing on the common themes found in the related research. Reasons for teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction are explored. Literature establishing the relationship between teacher satisfaction and mobility decisions is summarized and analyzed. Since teacher attrition and migration are often the outgrowth of teacher dissatisfaction, an extensive section in the review is devoted to the problem of teacher attrition and the research that has been conducted on the causes of attrition. While attrition and teacher satisfaction are different problems, research indicates the existence of a strong correlation between these two phenomena. The review then provides an examination of why teachers stay in the profession and a description, formed via the voices of teachers in the literature, of the teaching experience. A theoretical background for the study follows this description. By closing with a summation of the relevant theories shared with theorists, I end the literature review in a similar fashion to the manner in which I began. The first section of the review addresses the fundamental concepts associated with worker motivation and job satisfaction. The last section of the review addresses those theories that support the fundamental concepts. In between these two sections, we have an examination of the problem and the problem’s effect on teachers, students, and the educational community.
**Job Satisfaction**

A worker’s job satisfaction is multifaceted and complex (Evans, 1969; Certo & Fox, 2002). While job satisfaction can be analyzed based upon data collected from and about existing workers within a given job environment (i.e. worker surveys and questionnaires), the job-related satisfaction experienced by a worker can also be understood, from a conceptual standpoint, through an analysis of that worker’s decision to make a change in his/her employment. When a worker is dissatisfied and, as a result, considers making a career change, he/she is, according to Evans (1969), “balancing in some complex way the pros and cons of his present job” (p. 93). Job satisfaction and the resultant mobility decision(s) may, therefore, be influenced by several factors within any given organizational context.

Research indicates that the amount of satisfaction or even the presence of any satisfaction on the part of a worker is dependent upon many different factors, with individual morale and group morale being affected by different organizational factors and to different degrees as a result of these factors (Anderson, 2000). Some of the key components of job satisfaction, as revealed in the research, are the amount of overall satisfaction experienced by a worker, the amount of a worker’s satisfaction with the various aspects of the job, and the manner in which the job meets a worker’s needs and goals (Evans, 1969).

Hackman et al. (1975) provided the following example illustrating additional factors that influence a worker’s job satisfaction:

Consider, for example, a golfer at a driving range, practicing to get rid of a hook. His activity is *meaningful* to him; he has chosen to do it because he gets a ‘kick’
from testing his skills by playing the game. He knows that he alone is responsible for what happens when he hits the ball. And he has knowledge of the results within a few seconds. (p.58)

Hackman et al.’s (1975) example of the golfer identified three key components of job satisfaction. These three components, which are crucial to a thorough understanding of worker satisfaction, are the job’s meaningfulness to the worker, the worker’s responsibility for the results of the work, and the amount and nature of the feedback given to the worker. Hackman et al. (1975) referred to these three components as “experienced meaningfulness,” “experienced responsibility,” and “knowledge of results” (p. 58) and have found that “people who work on jobs high on the core dimensions are more motivated and satisfied than are people who work on jobs that score low on the dimensions” (p.66). In terms of the meaningful work referred to in the golf example, skill variety, task identity, and task significance, are subdimensions which “contribute to a job’s meaningfulness for the worker” (Hackman et al., 1975, p. 59).

The components of job satisfaction may appear numerous and complex; however, an understanding of these components is necessary for an employer to understand and improve the experiences of workers. An improvement in the workers’ day-to-day environment may result in improved performance and lower rates of absenteeism and attrition. These results are dependent upon the “growth needs” (p. 61) of the worker, workers with stronger growth needs being more responsive to job enrichment (Hackman, et al., 1975).

A worker’s morale and job satisfaction are considered similar concepts in many research studies. While I believe there are differences in these two concepts, the
terminology is presented throughout the literature review according to its usage in the referenced studies. Any conceptual differences are clearly delineated.

**Teacher Stress**

Teachers are not immune to experiencing job-related stress. Common among teachers are certain stressors, and these stressors negatively impact a teacher’s satisfaction and performance as well as their physical and mental health, especially when stress is combined with physical exhaustion (Gold et al., 2010; Margolis & Nagel, 2006). In addition to the problem of being under stress, teachers may also find that no suitable outlet is provided within the work environment to relieve stress in a constructive manner, thus creating the perception for teachers that the stressful environment in which they work is a permanent one (Margolis & Nagel, 2006).

Teaching-related stressors vary in type and harmfulness. Dealing with parents, the accountability associated with state standardized tests, and classroom management are each examples of teaching-related stressors (Rieg, Paquette, & Chen, 2007). In addition, conflicting expectations (Huysman, 2008), unrealistic scheduling (Certo & Fox, 2002), feeling unsupported by the administration (Margolis & Nagel, 2006), and impeded communication (Briggs & Richardson, 1992) have also been identified by teachers as sources of stress. Margolis & Nagel (2006), in their yearlong study of teachers at a charter school in the urban Midwest, found that teachers’ physical exhaustion was correlated to the depth and pace of organizational change and the extent to which teachers understood the changes to be imposed rather than made with the input of the school organization as a whole. This type of change process resulted in teachers feeling unsupported. The Margolis and Nagel study (2006) resulted in the identification of a new
source of teaching-related stress, the manner in which organizational change is conducted.

Given the multi-faceted role of the teacher, a multitude of possible stressors is to be expected. A teacher, Sarah Fine, explains why she left her job as a teacher at a public charter school in Washington, D.C.:

When people ask, I tend to cite the usual suspect—burnout. I just couldn’t take it anymore, I explain. I describe what it was like to teach students such as Shawna, a 10th-grader who could barely read and had resolved that the best way to deal with me was to curse me out under her breath. I describe spending weeks revising a curriculum proposal with my fellow teachers, only to find out that the administration had made a unilateral decision without looking at it. I describe how it became impossible to imagine keeping it up and still having energy for, say, a family. . . .

When I talk about the long hours, for example, what I mean is that, over the course of four years, my school’s administration steadily expanded the workload and workday while barely adjusting salaries. More and more major decisions were made behind closed doors, and more and more teachers felt micromanaged rather than supported. . . .

There is yet another factor that played a part in my choice, something that I rarely mention. It has to do with the way that some people, mostly nonteachers, talk about the profession. . . .

Do my lawyer and consultant friends find themselves having to explain why they chose their professions? I doubt it. Everyone seems to know why they
do what they do. When people ask me about teaching, however, what they really seem to mean is that it’s unfathomable that anyone with real talent would want to stay in the classroom for long. (2009)

While teachers may vary in terms of the amount of stress experienced, including teachers in the same building or even the same classroom, the existence of stressors for teachers in all types of schools and localities has been documented (Huysman, 2008; Margolis & Nagel, 2006). One of the more serious consequences of teaching-related stress is the tendency of low individual morale among several teachers to turn into low collective morale for the majority or even the entire faculty.

While public perception may be that teachers in urban environments experience higher amounts of job-related stress, research has shown that teachers in very rural areas also experience significant job-related frustration. Huysman (2008) investigated teachers’ beliefs and attitudes affecting job satisfaction in a rural school district in Florida. While the majority of the teachers surveyed rated their overall job satisfaction as “high” (Huysman, 2008, p.34), these teachers also identified several aspects of their teaching experience which resulted in frustration or stress on their part. These stressors included the unrealistic expectations placed on teachers, the undue influence and power of colleagues or groups of colleagues within the school, and the feeling of being unappreciated as evidenced by the collective bargaining process. Concerning pay, teachers indicated “the subject of salaries was not at the center of their displeasure but the process of negotiations was the catalyst of frustration and resentment between all parties involved” (Huysman, 2008, p. 36).
Teacher perception of high stress, especially in certain teaching areas like Special Education, may increase the likelihood of teacher migration and attrition, with a greater likelihood of younger Special Education teachers succumbing to these stressors (Miller et al., 1999). However, the impact of work-related stress can be mitigated by teacher relationships with school leadership (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Margolis and Nagel found that the resiliency of teachers in stressful environments is supported by teacher perception that they are appreciated by leadership and that leadership makes decisions with teachers’ best interests in consideration. Utilizing the knowledge and experiences of teachers to create common assessments, using teacher input in determining the agenda for faculty meetings, and providing direct positive feedback concerning teacher performance were also found to improve faculty morale and help alleviate teacher stress (Margolis & Nagel, 2006).

**Teacher Job Satisfaction**

While studies of teachers vary significantly in the percentage of their participants indicating job satisfaction, several researchers have found a majority of teachers studied were satisfied with their current teaching positions (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007; Brunetti, 2001; Marston, Courtney, & Brunetti, 2006; Mertler, 2002; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008; Perrachione et al., 2008). When the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company conducted their nation-wide survey in 2008 of 1000 public school teachers grades K through 12, 82% strongly agreed that “they love to teach” (p. 28), and 62% were satisfied with their career in teaching, similar to the results obtained when similar research was conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in 1984. Moreover, in the same survey, 75% of teachers indicated that they would advise others to
pursue a career in teaching, in contrast to 45% of respondents in the 1984 survey. Similar results were found in a survey of nearly 32,000 Arizona educators in which 79% of respondents indicated a desire to remain in their current schools (Berry et al., 2007). In the same survey, 72% of respondents agreed that “their schools are good places to work and learn” (p. 5) with 29% strongly agreeing with that statement. In a study of teachers in one large California district serving students from different socio-economic backgrounds, nearly every teacher interviewed stated that “she or he liked working with young people” (Brunetti, 2001, pp.57–58).

A review of the literature on teacher job satisfaction does reveal that a majority of teachers feel satisfied with their current position, at least a level of satisfaction high enough to support an excitement about teaching and willingness to continue in the profession. Many studies have presented their majority of satisfied teachers as an unexpected and yet positive finding. Even a casual review of studies on teacher satisfaction will reveal that a majority of teachers in every possible organizational context are likely to indicate their satisfaction with the teaching profession or at least with the work of teaching. However, the majority of satisfied teachers in each of the previously referred to studies often left a significant minority of teachers with little satisfaction for their current position or the teaching profession, a considerable number of teachers when you consider the number of overall teachers in some of the studies. For example, the aforementioned 62% of teachers in the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey (2008) who indicated their satisfaction with the teaching profession, left 380 (38%) of the 1000 teachers surveyed as less than satisfied with their teaching career. Another survey of middle and high school teachers, previously referenced as support for most teachers
being satisfied with their career, found 23% of respondents dissatisfied with the job of teaching (Mertler, 2002). While studies vary in terms of the size of their dissatisfied minority, the percentages are large enough to warrant concern.

Research on teacher satisfaction has explored many possibly related factors including teacher characteristics, student characteristics, leadership practices and working conditions. Mertler (2002), in a teacher motivation and job satisfaction survey of 710 middle and high school teachers, found that males, novice teachers and teachers close to retirement report a higher level of satisfaction with teaching (See also Skinner, 2008). Addressing specifically the teaching experience and teacher satisfaction, the results of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey (2008) revealed that teachers with more than 20 years of experience and teachers with five years or less experience were more likely than mid-career teachers to report being very satisfied with their careers. As for working conditions and student characteristics, Skinner (2008) found that teachers with an average class size of 23 students or more, teachers working in a school with a minority enrollment of 31% or more, and teachers working in a school with 19% or more students who are approved for free or reduced-price lunch were less likely to report being satisfied. However, the percentage of students in poverty did not continue to be statistically significant when working conditions were added to the analysis, supporting the idea that the impact of the number of students in poverty on teacher satisfaction may be insignificant when working conditions are also considered.

Research on teacher morale supports making a distinction between individual morale and group morale as well as making a distinction between satisfaction with the teaching profession and satisfaction with the day-to-day work of teaching. Anderson
(2000) drew the following conclusions concerning the differences between individual and group morale: (1) the morale of the group is not an accurate assessment of teachers’ individual morale (2) school factors influence individual morale and group morale in different ways (3) peer assessment is not the most accurate way of determining the morale in an organization, and (4) there is a correlation between morale and “job turnover, absenteeism, and organizational commitment” (p. 2) with absenteeism and job commitment being “more closely associated with individual morale than with group morale” (p.2). Perrachione et al. (2008) found satisfaction with the teaching profession and satisfaction with the actual job of teaching to have different outcomes. Teacher retention, for example, was found to be more strongly related to the teachers’ satisfaction with the profession of teaching than with their satisfaction with the actual job of teaching. Perrachione et al. (2008) also discovered that the two categories of satisfaction may have different causes. The teachers in the study who identified themselves as “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with the teaching profession cited working with students and personal teaching efficacy most often as reasons for their satisfaction with the profession. Those who were “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with their job for the current year cited school environment, student behavior, and class size most often as reasons. Additional research which differentiates between teacher satisfaction with the profession and their satisfaction with the day-to-day job of teaching is scarce. The majority of studies reviewed treated satisfaction as one sliding scale with satisfaction and teacher retention on one end and dissatisfaction and teacher migration on the other. Types of satisfaction were generally not acknowledged.
Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction

Why are teachers satisfied? Teacher satisfaction is influenced by a variety of variables, intrinsic and extrinsic (Certo & Fox, 2002; Perrachione et al., 2008; Skinner, 2008). Examples of possible intrinsic variables include the joy of working with students and a sense of teaching efficacy. Examples of extrinsic variables include student behavior, class size, and school environment. A careful review of the literature will find evidence of every imaginable factor having at least some impact on the satisfaction of teachers. Variance in teacher characteristics, school environments, experience levels, and working conditions should be considered to ensure that the root causes of satisfaction are delineated. A casual glance at the immense amount of research on the experiences of teachers may yield a host of contributing factors but little in terms of “deep rooted” problems faced by teachers. In addition, certain factors influence individual and collegial satisfaction differently, though the two phenomena are related (Anderson, 2000).

Working with students has been found by several researchers to significantly influence teacher satisfaction. Brunetti (2001) concluded that working with students was “single most-powerful motivator” (p. 61) for teachers. Another study of elementary teachers with 15 or more years of experience found working with students and being successful in a career you enjoy as being key satisfaction factors for teachers (Marston, et al., 2006). Anderson (2000) reached a similar conclusion based on a survey of elementary and middle school teachers. The components of the teaching experience were categorized using the following categories: student and classroom experiences, administrative issues and conflict, and anticipated outlook of the job situation. The strongest predictor of individual teacher satisfaction in Anderson’s study was student and classroom
experiences, which included the teachers’ opportunity to work with students. Interestingly, the most reliable predictor of collegial satisfaction was administrative issues.

Some studies found several factors significantly influential in determining teacher satisfaction. Perrachione et al. (2008), in their survey of 300 randomly selected Missouri public elementary school teachers in grades K-5, found fair teacher evaluation, a sense of shared beliefs and values with fellow teachers regarding the school mission, the opportunity to plan and coordinate course content with colleagues, and consistent enforcement of rules for student behavior as factors contributing the most to respondents’ job satisfaction. Working with students, teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, good student behavior, small class size, and a positive school environment were also identified as factors. Brunetti (2001) found the emotional and intellectual challenge of working in the classroom, a sense of autonomy within their classroom (See also Skinner, 2008), working with fellow teachers, and the opportunity to make a difference in society through the educational process to be additional factors. In the same study by Brunetti, teachers indicated that factors such as salary (See also Skinner, 2008), job security, vacation time, and a work schedule conducive to raising a family had little impact on satisfaction, supporting the idea that teacher satisfaction may not likely be affected by reasonable increases in extrinsic factors. However, these same factors may have a significant effect on teacher dissatisfaction, further supporting the theory that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not two points on a sliding scale. Skinner (2008) found administrative support, parental involvement, student behavior, and collegiality to be key factors; however, working conditions and teacher autonomy had the strongest relationship with
job satisfaction. Another study found that teacher satisfaction was increased by professional development opportunities that allowed teachers to reflect on their work, practice certain skills, and receive feedback from multiple sources (Freedman & Appleman, 2008).

Additional research found that student behavior and learning had a significantly greater impact on teacher satisfaction than leadership, suggesting that administrators may increase teacher morale through policies and practices which improve student behavior and learning and minimize teacher workload (Anderson, 2000). Some variables, such as teacher autonomy and working conditions, were shown to influence teacher satisfaction independently. Therefore, increasing both of the variables rather than only one variable may result in significantly greater gains in job satisfaction (Skinner, 2008).

**Why are teachers dissatisfied?** The data collected via the administration of *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Past, Present, and Future* (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008) provides a significant amount of information concerning how teachers feel about their job, including how they feel about their administrators. The results in several areas were higher than the results of the same survey given by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in 1984. While the commentary attached to the data results indicated the number of teachers satisfied with their job was good news for education in America, the actual results of the survey are alarming concerning the number of teachers who may be enduring a less than satisfactory experience. Of the teachers surveyed, 66% were satisfied with their salary, 67% were satisfied with parental and community support, and 74% were satisfied with the support of their administration. A majority of teachers (67%) agreed that they were adequately trained and prepared for
the classroom, and 90% agreed that technology “enhances their ability to teach” (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008, p. 31). In addition, 92% of teachers felt collegiality was encouraged at their school. However, in contrast to the number of satisfied respondents, a large minority of teachers (43%) indicated that the diversity in learning abilities among their students hindered their success in teaching. In addition, teachers rated their school discipline policy significantly lower than principals. Most principals (96%) were satisfied with the discipline policy while only 71% of teachers considered the school discipline policy as satisfactory. In addition to the problems teachers faced with the diversity in learning abilities and the school discipline policy, the majority of teachers satisfied with teaching, as indicated in the survey results, left a significant minority not agreeing with their colleagues concerning the various aspects of the teaching experience.

While research studies indicate teacher satisfaction is influenced by intrinsic factors, extrinsic factors appear to have a significant impact on teacher dissatisfaction (Huysman, 2008; Perrachione et al., 2008). Teacher pay provides a good example. A teacher’s level of satisfaction may not be correlated to an increase in salary, at least not a realistic increase in salary, but a teacher’s level of dissatisfaction may rise considerably with even a modest reduction in pay (Huysman, 2008). In other words, an extrinsic variable such as salary may do little for teacher satisfaction but may have an enormous impact on teacher dissatisfaction.

A 1992 study by Briggs and Richardson and a 2008 study by Perrachione, et al. reached similar conclusions concerning extrinsic factors and teacher dissatisfaction. Both studies identified role overload, student behavior, and large class sizes as extrinsic factors
increasing teacher dissatisfaction, with Perrachione, et al. adding low salary to their list of factors. In another study, teachers’ lack of ability to enlist administrative support, to influence decision-making within the school, and to manage today’s classroom were shown to increase teachers’ dissatisfaction (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). The studies on teacher satisfaction overall suggest that a varied group of factors influence teacher satisfaction with intrinsic factors being the most reliable predictors of satisfaction and extrinsic factors the most reliable predictors of dissatisfaction (Huysman, 2008).

**Impact of Satisfaction on Mobility**

The impact of teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction on attrition are more closely related to individual teacher satisfaction than with the satisfaction of teachers overall (Anderson, 2000). When low levels of satisfaction are present, mobility, absenteeism, and teacher commitment to the organization and the classroom are affected (Guarino et al., 2006; Perrachione et al., 2008). A number of studies show that teachers who express a desire to continue teaching in their current schools are more satisfied with their schools and the teaching profession than those teachers who express a desire to change schools or leave the profession entirely (Berry et al., 2007; Ingersoll, 2001; Perrachione, et al., 2008). Ingersoll’s study (2001) found that 42% of teachers who leave teaching cite job dissatisfaction as the reason. In another study, K-5 teachers with five or more years of experience who were considering leaving indicated they were leaving due to dissatisfaction with low salaries and role overload (Perrachione et al., 2008). Those teachers in the study who indicated they planned to stay in the profession cited job satisfaction among the reasons for their desire to remain. Concerning teacher pay, Guarino et al. (2006) reached a similar conclusion in their study, finding a positive
relationship between teacher dissatisfaction with salary and the likelihood of their leaving the profession. Teachers who were dissatisfied with their salary were also more likely to have a decreased commitment to teaching. Additional studies indicate that beginning teachers leave teaching due to dissatisfaction with student discipline, administrative support, and student motivation (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). However, the desire to stay in one’s current position may be stronger for the teacher who is native to the area where they work (Huysman, 2008).

Jalongo, Rieg, and Helterbran (2007) included the following story of teacher dissatisfaction in their book on lesson design, a story that provides a good summation of what may happen to dissatisfied teachers:

While visiting friends in Florida I met a married couple who had left careers as high school teachers to start their own house cleaning business. They cheerfully enumerated the advantages of their new job: flexible hours, more time spent together, greater physical fitness, less stress, good salaries/tips, and vacations that were not dictated by the school calendar. True, the couple admitted, they had lost some social status and were no longer working in the profession in which they had invested four years of college study. Yet some of the sources of satisfaction that had eluded them as teachers were accessible to them for the first time. They mentioned such things as the ability to exercise a high level of control over their work and resources, the freedom to select an efficient system of operation, and the luxury of sticking with it. Perhaps most gratifying of all, they now left work behind at the end of the day. Reactions from the pair’s former teaching colleagues
varied considerably, ranging from those who thought they had lost their minds to those who envied them. (p. 1)

Admittedly, teacher satisfaction is not the only cause of teacher attrition or migration. In addition to job satisfaction, teachers who leave education also cite the pursuit to obtain a better job, a change in career plans, or an attempt to improve career opportunities as reasons for leaving (Ingersoll, 2001). However, the impact of dissatisfaction on teacher mobility decisions is clearly evidenced in the research.

**Attrition Rates Overview**

Lowering attrition rates increases school performance and improves the experiences of teachers (Ingersoll, 2001); however, the migration and attrition of teachers appears to be a pervasive problem. As one researcher in the area of teacher attrition described it, “No matter where you go in your community you are apt to encounter people who used to be teachers. Whereas other occupations speak of ‘wannabes,’ the field of teaching is dominated by ‘used to bes’” (Jalongo & Heider, 2006, p.379).

Researchers and educators vary in terms of how seriously they view teacher attrition in the United States. The 2008 nationwide survey conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company indicated that at least a two-thirds majority of principals and teachers believe getting enough qualified teachers and teacher turnover are not serious problems for their school. Additional research has diminished the seriousness of teacher attrition rates, indicating that the rate of turnover for teachers is the same or less than the average national rate for those working for non-business employers (Boe et al., 2008; Harris & Adams, 2007). Teacher turnover is only slightly higher than the rate for nurses and is lower than the rate for accountants and social workers (Harris & Adams, 2007).
However, while researchers may argue that teacher attrition rates overall are not significantly higher than similar professions such as nurses, social workers, and accountants (Harris & Adams, 2007), with 30% of new teachers leaving teaching in the first five years (50% in urban areas), teacher attrition undoubtedly has a significant impact on the educational community (Harris & Adams, 2007; Ingersoll, 2001; Merrow, 1999). A study of teachers working in large districts in Washington found that at least 50% of novice teachers changed schools within their first five years of teaching (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006).

In the 1990s, the attrition rate for teachers during their first three years of teaching was the lowest of several occupations studied by Henke, Zahn, and Carroll (2001). However, between 1992 and 2001, teacher turnover increased by more than a third, with one in four regular education and special education assignments turning over every year (Boe et al., 2008). Teacher attrition, though arguably too high for the occupation overall, affects novice teachers more than experienced teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that “nearly 3 in 10 new teachers move to a different school or leave teaching altogether at the end of their first year in the occupation” (p. 706). Of first-time teachers in 1999–2000, 29% either changed schools at the end of the year or left teaching altogether (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The percentages were even higher for teachers in high-poverty schools. Ingersoll (2003) estimated that during the first five years of their careers, 45% of teachers leave the profession. A 2004 study of Texas teachers, found that 18% of teachers will leave Texas public schools and an additional 6% will change school districts before the end of their first two years (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004).
Research does show that teachers with certain characteristics have higher rates of attrition. Those who teach science or math, white teachers, female teachers, and teachers “with higher measured ability” (Guarino et al., 2006, p. 188) are more likely to leave teaching. As for new teachers, the rates for beginning teachers appear to stabilize after their first three years in the profession (Boe et al., 2008). The attrition rate does, however, rise for those teachers nearing retirement age, producing a U-shaped curve when charting attrition rates with respect to age and experience (Guarino et al., 2006).

Causes of Attrition

Research studies provide a multitude of reasons why teachers leave or consider leaving the profession. A partial list of these reasons as seen in a study by Tyte and O’Brien (2002) includes accountability, workload, the attitude of students, parental support, lack of administrative support, the social status of the teaching profession, and salary. In an effort to provide commentary related to teacher attrition, these reasons can be combined with other themes as seen in the research to create the following categories: teacher salary, leadership, the teaching environment, job difficulty, parents and community, collegiality, teacher characteristics, and facilities. There are some factors which are not addressed in detail in this review of the literature due to the limited exposure these factors receive in the research. These factors are, however, worthy of mention given their impact on teacher attrition in a few studies. For example the willingness of colleagues to sacrifice for school progress has been implicated as being a factor influencing teacher mobility (Elfers et al., 2006). Additional attrition factors include insufficient certification on the part of the teacher (Miller et al., 1999), job security (Brunetti, 2001), and professional learning opportunities and incentives (Elfers et
A complete analysis of attrition necessitates the consideration that teachers may have more than one reason for leaving, with certain factors possibly having more influence. This multi-dimensional approach to attrition may reveal a hierarchical organization of influences on teacher mobility decisions (Certo & Fox, 2002) and, therefore, among job satisfaction variables.

Teacher salary. Teachers in the United States receive a salary which is approximately 20% less than professionals with similar education and training (Darling-Hammond, 2003). However, Skinner (2008), based on his research, suggests a weak relationship between salary and teacher satisfaction. Evidence of the weak impact of salary on teacher satisfaction and mobility decisions is actually provided in a number of studies. In the 2008 Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey of teachers across the nation, 66% of respondents felt their job allowed them the opportunity to earn a decent salary, compared to just 37% in the 1984 survey. In an in-depth study of Washington teachers, encompassing data from 1996 to 2005, a “notable” (Elfers et al., 2006, p. 120) percentage of teachers (30%) indicated that salary was not a reason for teachers leaving their school. In a similar study, teachers indicated that “Practical Factors” (Brunetti, 2001, p. 67), such as salary, had little influence in their decision to remain in the classroom.

Teachers do, however, believe salary is important to their colleagues. Focus groups of teachers from urban, suburban, and rural localities in Virginia revealed that teachers believe salary to be the number one reason their colleagues change positions or leave the teaching profession (Certo & Fox, 2002). However, when teachers who had left their teaching position were asked for the reason they decided to leave, the top reason
given was not salary but rather a lack of administrative support. While salary was mentioned by these teachers who had left as an influential factor, the role of salary in teachers’ decisions to leave the profession was quite different than the role it played in the minds of their colleagues (Certo & Fox, 2002).

The aforementioned 66% of teachers in the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) survey, who feel they receive a suitable salary, leaves one-third of the teachers in the survey feeling less than satisfied. Moreover, the positive relationship between teacher dissatisfaction with salary and attrition is shown in several studies (Berry et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Certo & Fox, 2002; Guarino et al., 2006; Ingersoll, 2001). These studies show the following tendencies: (1) an increase in teacher salaries will significantly decrease the amount of attrition and migration (Ingersoll, 2001), (2) higher attrition is associated with lower teacher salaries (Borman & Dowling, 2008), and (3) a positive relationship exists between teacher salaries and retention (Guarino et al., 2006). This belief among teachers concerning salary is echoed in the results of a survey completed by approximately 32,000 teachers in Arizona in which 49% of respondents identified salary as an extremely important factor to them (Berry et al., 2007). In this particular survey, salary was third among extremely important factors, trailing support from leadership and success with students but ahead of collegiality, teaching assignment, and teacher influence in class/school decisions.

As is seen in the research of other factors, teacher pay may be more of a factor in certain contexts. This would not be unexpected given the differences in teacher salaries across the United States and even within states and local school districts. Inexperienced teachers tend to make less than retirement age teachers and they typically have different
financial desires. Not surprisingly then, novice teachers who exit the profession are more likely than retirement-age leavers to cite salary as a primary reason for their decision to leave (Berry et al., 2007). A survey of experienced teachers in California found that among teachers who had already left teaching, accountability, workload, and student attitudes were the top three reasons indicated for their decision (Tye & O’Brien, 2002). Salary was the lowest ranked factor. In the same study, however, salary was indicated as the number one reason to leave teaching among those teachers who were considering leaving. The influence of salary, therefore, was significant enough to consider leaving but not strong enough to cause experienced teachers to actually leave.

**Leadership.** The overwhelming majority of research supports the idea that leadership influences teacher satisfaction, attrition, and migration. However, a few researchers have gathered data to the contrary and draw conclusions indicating only a minimal impact of leadership on individual teacher satisfaction (Anderson, 2000), and thus, only a minimal impact on teacher attrition and migration. Hunter-Boykin and Evans (1995) concluded that there is not a significant relationship between principals’ leadership style and teachers’ morale. In their study, principals with similar leadership styles were employed at schools with high, medium, or low morale scores. Studies do show the far greater influence of student behavior (Anderson, 2000), the insignificant impact of leadership related factors such as teacher autonomy on attrition (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009), and the adjustments to leadership that teachers inevitably make as they gain experience in education, thus mitigating the impact of administrative behavior on teacher attrition at least among veteran teachers (Marston et al., 2006). While administrators implement policies that impact many aspects of the school environment,
the particular style adopted by the administration, according to these studies, is not a critical factor for teachers and/or does not significantly impact teachers overall in terms of their decision to stay or exit from the profession. The 2008 Metropolitan Life Insurance Company survey results indicated that 74% of teachers view their administration’s support as good or excellent, leaving 1 in 4 teachers rating their administration’s support as less than desirable. While this may leave only a small percentage of teachers dissatisfied with school leaders and possibly even a smaller percentage who would feel compelled to leave their current position as a result, 1 in 4 is approximately the same ratio of teachers, at least new teachers, who leave their position each year (Boe et al., 2008). In addition, gaps in perception exist between teachers and principals concerning the school environment, the largest gap perhaps existing in the area of student discipline policy (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008).

As previously mentioned, several studies indicate teacher support from leadership has an impact on teacher satisfaction (Anderson, 2000; Huysman, 2008; Skinner, 2008) and teacher mobility (Berry et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Easley, 2006; Guarino et al., 2006; Ingersoll, 2001). Migration and teacher attrition numbers have decreased when teachers were provided with more autonomy and administrative support (Guarino et al., 2006). In one study, 60% of teachers indicated support from school leadership was the strongest influence on teacher mobility, more influential than salary (Berry et al., 2007). A study of alternative route urban teachers found the moral leadership of school principals strongly related to teacher retention (Easley, 2006). Anderson (2000) found administrative issues to be the strongest predictor of collegial satisfaction. In a study of teachers from urban, suburban, and rural areas, the number one
reason given by teachers for leaving their former position was a lack of administrative support (Certo & Fox, 2002). A quality administration was one of three primary reasons given by teachers in the Certo and Fox (2002) study for remaining in the profession along with commitment to the profession and relationships with colleagues. Concerning special education teachers, a multi-year study of over 1500 special education teachers in Florida found building administrator support to be related to their attrition rates (Miller et al., 1999).

The leadership and teacher attrition relationship may be the strongest for novice teachers who are initially intimidated by their administration but develop trust over time (Marston et al., 2006). In schools where there is an informal decision making process, teachers without a voice, especially novice teachers, may become suspicious and perceive favoritism on the part of the administration (Huysman, 2008). Teachers may likewise sense an undue and unfair influence on the part of certain colleagues simply because the administration will not challenge the voices or actions of those colleagues (Huysman, 2008; Ingersoll, 2001).

Margolis and Nagel (2006) found that school administrations may be able to improve teacher morale and mitigate teacher stress by utilizing teacher input in creating student assessments, holding teacher-led and interactive staff meetings, and giving frequent, direct feedback to teachers while “acknowledging their larger professional goals” (p. 156). A series of interviews with principals and focus group interviews with novice teachers revealed that administrators can increase the likelihood of new teacher retention by providing professional development opportunities, utilizing a shared-decision making model of leadership, supporting collegiality, modeling high
expectations, having an open-door policy, and maintaining a visible presence throughout their schools (Brown & Wynn, 2007). Brown and Wynn (2007) also found that administrators can influence retention by reducing teacher isolation, increasing teacher responsibility, and improving teacher satisfaction. Leadership’s recognition of teachers’ professionalism has a strong effect on high school teacher retention, and being recognized for their accomplishments has a significant impact on the retention of elementary teachers (Berry et al., 2007).

An atmosphere of trust and respect significantly increases the likelihood of teacher retention, teacher resilience being enhanced when they sense that they work in an environment of trust and respect, are valued and appreciated, and are comfortable taking concerns to the administration (Berry et al., 2007; Ingersoll, 2001; Margolis & Nagel, 2006). The following leadership subthemes identified by Certo and Fox (2002) help provide a larger picture of what teachers consider as administrative components of their teaching experience: spending time in classrooms, visibility, attentiveness to the needs of teachers, professional development, resources and supplies, understanding special needs students, teacher placement practices, workload, discipline of students, class size, meetings and paperwork, and time allotted for teacher planning. In their study, a lack of administrative support was second only to salary in terms of factors to be considered in teacher mobility decisions (Certo & Fox, 2002; See also Ingersoll, 2001).

Rowland (2008) found a significant correlation between principal leadership and teacher morale and concluded that the daily behavior of the principal has a significant impact on the environment of the school. Reaching a similar conclusion based on their research, Margolis and Nagel (2006) made the following statement:
… relationships were the most powerful mediator of teacher stress—teachers were most resilient when they felt valued and appreciated and trusted that school leadership had their long-term personal best interests in mind … this study reaffirms the power of the principal in shaping the environment and structures that either enhance or debilitate teacher work. (p.151)

The Arizona study conducted by Berry et al. (2007) found that less than a majority of teachers who left their position believed the overall leadership in their schools was effective and a very small number of leavers believed leadership made a “sustained effort to address” (p. 13) the concerns of teachers on empowerment and leadership issues. In the same study, 60% of teachers identified support from school leadership as an extremely important factor in teacher mobility, ahead of effectiveness with students and salary (Berry et al. 2007).

**The teaching environment.**

**Students in poverty.** The national teacher survey conducted by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) found that almost half of the teachers surveyed indicated a belief that poverty hinders the learning of at least a quarter of their students. This statistic is troubling considering that research indicates the number of low-income students has an impact on teacher mobility decisions. Ingersoll (2001), using a national sample, found that public schools with a large number of low-income students have moderately higher rates of teacher turnover (See also Borman & Dowling, 2008; Gaytan, 2008; Guarino et al., 2006; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005). Specific to this study, Scafidi, Stinebrickner, & Sjoquist (2005) found that teachers in Georgia were more likely to change schools if they began their teaching careers in schools with lower income
students. A study of 20 school districts in Washington found the poverty level of students to have a negative correlation with teacher retention (Elfers et al., 2006). However, when factors such as teacher pay, large class sizes, and lack of instructional resources are considered, the influence of student characteristics on attrition is mitigated, including the number of low-income students (Loeb et al., 2005).

**School type.** Some studies have found only a weak relationship between teacher mobility decisions and school type. For example, a study of over 28,000 teachers from across the United States did not find any relationship between school location and teacher attrition or between grade level (elementary and elementary and secondary combined) and attrition (Strunk & Robinson, 2006). Other research has shown that school type does have an impact on teacher mobility decisions, with urban, suburban, private, and elementary schools having higher rates of attrition (Borman and Dowling, 2008; Elfers, et al., 2006; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). Elfers et al. (2006) found the size of the school (See also Strunk and Robinson, 2006) and the size of the district to be additional factors contributing to teacher movement. Kukla-Acevedo (2009) found lower migration rates in rural schools, and Huysman (2008), based on his study of rural schools in Florida, revealed a strong desire among rural educators to stay in their current position. Huysman (2008) concluded, “Conditions traditionally associated with rural schools such as isolation, limited services, low socioeconomic status of students, and limited resources were considered as acceptable trade-offs for their perceived advantages of living in a rural area” (p. 35).

**Ethnic groups.** Teacher turnover, filling teaching vacancies, and the number of beginning teachers are all influenced by the racial and ethnic composition of the student
body (Guarino et al., 2006; Loeb et al., 2005). As the percentage of Black and American Indian students increases in a school, the likelihood of a teacher quitting also increases (Strunk & Robinson, 2006; Gaytan, 2008). Elfers et al. (2006) found that 41% of teachers surveyed identified the race and ethnicity of students as not a factor influencing teacher mobility, leaving over half of teacher’s surveyed silent on the issue. The study also found the composition of the student body, in particular the number of African-American students, to have an effect on the percentage of teachers who remained in their current school (Elfers et al., 2006). Additional research shows the influence of a school’s racial and ethnic compositions on attrition is substantially reduced when teacher pay and working conditions are also considered (Loeb et al., 2005).

**Working conditions.** There may be a stronger relationship between working conditions and teacher satisfaction than between school characteristics and teacher satisfaction (Skinner, 2008). While the annual turnover rate in the 1990s and early 2000s for special education and regular education teachers was almost identical (Boe at al., 2008), Miller et al. (1999) did find the perception of a poor school climate to be a key factor in the attrition and migration of special education teachers. School climate can, however, include a multitude of factors, and, as previously noted, research indicates that working conditions may not predict individual satisfaction and collegial satisfaction in the same way or to the same degree (Anderson, 2000).

The perception of a safe work environment has been shown to positively impact teacher retention. Teachers who believe their schools are safe places to work and learn have been significantly more likely to say they intend to stay at their current school (Berry et al., 2007). This may be especially applicable for 1st year teachers, whose
decisions may be more strongly affected by workplace conditions (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009).

**Student discipline.** Issues related to student behavior have a significant influence on teacher satisfaction (Anderson, 2000) and teacher mobility decisions (Ingersoll, 2001), perhaps even greater than the influence of administrative behavior (Anderson, 2000). The influence of challenging behavior climates is especially strong among novice teachers (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). In addition, as previously noted, a large gap in perception may exist in how principals view their schools’ discipline policy and how teachers view those same policies, with more principals considering the school’s policies as appropriate compared to the number of teachers holding the same view (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008). Ingersoll (2001) concluded that student discipline was a key area in need of improvement in order to lower attrition rates.

**Job difficulty.** A primary reason teachers experience low morale and leave the profession is the physical and mental strain of their work (Anderson, 2000; Certo & Fox, 2002). Little opportunity for job sharing and the reality of high-stakes testing have increased the difficulty of the teacher’s job (Berry et al, 2007; Certo & Fox, 2002). When many teachers believe the diversity of students’ learning abilities in their classroom hinders them from teaching children effectively (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008), the impact of workload on teacher morale and mobility takes a place of preeminence in any thorough analysis of the teaching experience. Research in the area of teacher workload suggests that administrators may be able to improve the morale of teachers through policies and practices that reduce the amount of physical and mental strain associated with the work of teachers (Anderson, 2000; Margolis & Nagel, 2006).
In one study of California teachers, among those teachers who had already left the profession or were considering leaving, two of the three top reasons for their decision were accountability and accountability’s natural outcome, heavy workloads (Tye & O’Brien, 2002). Guarino et al. (2006) found that the likelihood of a teacher leaving a low-performing school was increased by the use of accountability policies, which led to frustration and dissatisfaction on the part of the teacher when their students did not meet the expectations established by school stakeholders. Teachers’ satisfaction is diminished because of the unrealistic expectations of colleagues, administrators, parents, and even themselves (Huysman, 2008). The key role of workload in determining teacher mobility can also be seen in a 2008 study of Missouri teachers where 40% of teachers who considered leaving cited role overload as one of two top contributing factors (Perrachione et al., 2008). While 90% of teachers in the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) survey felt that technology helps with their job duties, only 67% of teachers in the same survey indicated that they were adequately prepared for the work of a classroom teacher. The perception of working in a high stress environment is especially a key factor among special education teachers as to which teachers will stay, leave, or transfer to another school (Miller et al., 1999).

**Parents and community.** Research is mixed in terms of the impact of parents and community members on teacher satisfaction and mobility decisions. While Skinner (2008) has determined parental involvement to have a positive relationship with teacher satisfaction and Elfers et al. (2006) found that teachers consider parental support problems an acceptable reason to leave a teaching position, the question remains as to whether or not parental and community support is a significant problem for teachers.
Research does indicate that teachers who perceive parent and community support are more likely to stay in their current school, coinciding with additional research which indicates an atmosphere of trust and respect increases the likelihood of teacher retention (Berry et al., 2007). The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (2008) survey did show that parental support is a problem for teachers, especially teachers in urban schools. However, approximately half of the teachers in the study considered the parental support problem applicable to only a small percentage of their students, and the problems were insignificant enough for at least two-thirds of the teachers to report an overall positive perception of parental support. In another study, 24% of teachers identified the pressure of parents and community members to raise student achievement as not being an influential factor in determining their decision to stay or leave their current position (Elfers et al., 2006). An additional study of teachers who were considering leaving the profession, found parental support to be the least influential factor on teacher mobility decisions following six other categories (Tye & O’Brien, 2002).

**Collegiality.** Research has shown that most principals and teachers agree that their schools encourage teamwork among staff members (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008). This teamwork is critical considering collegial interactions are a strong component of teacher satisfaction with the profession (Brunetti, 2001) and that these collegial relationships impact teacher retention and attrition (Berry et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Busch et al., 2001; Certo & Fox, 2002; Miller et al., 1999; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). Job satisfaction and retention are related to teachers’ relationships with principals, fellow teachers, staff members, and students (Denton, 2009), and these professional relationships mitigate the stress experienced by teachers
Teachers are more apt to remain in their current position when they experience collegiality, feel comfortable working with their colleagues, and share the same educational beliefs and values as their colleagues (Elfers et al., 2006). A collegial atmosphere among teachers in the building is especially important to novice teachers (Busch et al., 2001). However, research has shown that teachers appear to be more involved with their colleagues early in their careers, increasing the possibility of isolation among more experienced teachers (Marston et al., 2006). The effects of this isolation among veteran teachers are not delineated in the research.

A professional cohort that provides ongoing communication and support for its members is beneficial to teachers as they leave college and university education programs, especially in the case of teachers in urban, high-poverty settings (Freedman & Appleman, 2008). Only a small percentage of teachers in one study identified mentoring programs and support for new teachers as not being influential in their mobility decisions (Elfers et al., 2006). Opportunities for teachers to practice their skill, reflect, and receive feedback from multiple sources are especially valued by novice teachers (Busch et al., 2001; Freedman & Appleman, 2008; ). The feeling of disconnectedness experienced by some teachers can be seen in the growth of new teacher “mentoring and group induction activities” (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004, p. 706) designed to reduce teacher turnover. Guarino et al. (2006) found that teacher turnover has been reduced through the use of mentoring and induction programs, in particular, programs that foster collegial support.

**Teacher characteristics.** Researchers disagree as to the impact of teacher characteristics on teacher mobility decisions. Woman do enter teaching at a higher rate (Guarino et al., 2006; Gaytan, 2008) and girls are much more likely to be interested in the
teaching profession (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008). However, the proportion of female college graduates entering teaching has declined (Guarino et al., 2006). Some research has shown there is no significant difference in the expressed desire to remain in teaching between males and females, or between Whites and other racial groups (Berry et al., 2007; Easley, 2006; Perrachione et al., 2008; Strunk & Robinson, 2006). Perrachione et al. (2008) also found neither age nor experience to be characteristics impacting teachers’ intent to remain in the classroom, though teachers who were single were less likely to remain in teaching. Sue-Greiner and Smith (2009) found in their research, that gender and race were not predictors of attrition, and Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that male teachers were only slightly less likely than female teachers to leave their position. While women are statistically more likely to leave the teaching profession during the early years of teaching, (50% of women compared to 43% of men), the difference between men and women in reference to permanent attrition is only 2 to 3 percentage points (Sue Greiner & Smith, 2009).

Other studies have shown teacher characteristics to have a significant impact on attrition rates (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Guarino et al., 2006). A survey of 710 middle and high school teachers, found that males, novice teachers, and those teachers near retirement reported a higher level of satisfaction (Mertler, 2002; See also Skinner, 2008). It is, therefore, not surprising that Miller et al. (1999) found teacher characteristics to be related to attrition. In their study, age had the largest impact on mobility decisions, especially for special education teachers. Younger special education teachers demonstrated a greater propensity for migrating than regular education teachers in the same age group (Miller et al., 1999). In regard to other teacher characteristics, Borman
and Dowling (2006) along with Guarino et al. (2006) found higher attrition rates among teachers who are white, young, inexperienced, near retirement, highly skilled, and married with children.

As for experience and teacher attrition, teachers with less than four years of experience are “substantially more likely to leave their teaching jobs” (p. 83) according to Strunk & Robinson (2006). Elfers et al. (2006) found only half remaining in their initial position for longer than five years. Not surprisingly then, Guarino et al. (2006) found migration to be higher among novice teachers. As for the reason for higher movement among novice teachers, Strunk and Robinson (2006) argued that veteran teachers have more invested and less to gain by migrating or exiting the profession entirely.

Facilities. The quality of facilities impacts teacher satisfaction and mobility decisions. Miller et al. (1999) found that the likelihood of migration among special education teachers is increased when those teachers perceive a poor school climate. A 2002 study specifically focusing on the quality of facilities and teacher retention in Washington, D.C., found facility quality to be an important predictor of teacher retention for regular and special education teachers (Buckley, Schneider, & Shang, 2005). As teachers’ perception of the quality of school facilities improved, the likelihood of their retention also improved. A similar study of teachers from Washington D.C. and Chicago found teacher migration and attrition significantly affected by the quality of facilities, especially in cases where teachers had experienced health-related problems as a result of poor facilities (Schneider, 2003). A large number of teachers in the study reported being dissatisfied with their facilities and “about 50% of Chicago teachers and 65% of Washington teachers are [were] considering changing schools and about 40% of Chicago
and Washington teachers are [were] thinking about leaving the profession entirely” (Schneider, 2003, p. 3).

Why Do They Stay?

Given the potentially discouraging aspects of the day-to-day work of teachers and the lack of professional prestige for the profession (Inman and Marlow, 2004), what keeps teachers in the classroom? Research provides several reasons why teachers remain in their current position including: the emotional and intellectual stimulation of their work in the classroom (Brunetti, 2001), the leadership style of school principals (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Easley, 2006), the opportunity to serve society, (Brunetti, 2001), the opportunity to work with students (Easley, 2006; Marston et al., 2006; Perrachione et al., 2008), retirement (Perrachione et al., 2008), job security (Inman and Marlow, 2004) relationships with colleagues, (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Brunetti, 2001; Certo & Fox, 2002), work schedule/vacation time (Perrachione et al., 2008), and a commitment to the profession (Certo & Fox, 2002). As for the impact of leadership, principals who model high expectations, focus on student learning, practice shared-decision making, have an open door policy, maintain visibility in the building, provide nurturance and guidance, and encourage collegiality positively influence teacher retention (Brown & Wynn, 2007). Easley (2006) found that teachers in urban settings entered education motivated by a desire to make a difference in society and/or the lives of urban children. In another study, novice and highly experienced teachers, entered teaching out of a desire to serve society and participate in personally rewarding work (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). In a study of veteran high school teachers in California, the data showed the opportunity to work with students as the strongest motivator for
keeping veteran teachers in the classroom (Brunetti, 2001). The joy of teaching a particular subject was also identified as a key motivator. Extrinsic factors such as salary, benefits, vacation time, work schedule, job security, and career options for veteran teachers were not seen by teachers as key motivators. (Brunetti, 2001). However, in a study of Georgia teachers, and contrary to many other studies, Inman and Marlow (2004) found perceived job security as the top employment factor influencing teacher retention among novice and veteran teachers. Since this research is focused upon studying teachers in the state of Georgia, the results of the Inman and Marlow study are uniquely applicable.

Intrinsic factors such as working with students appear to have a tremendous effect on teachers’ decisions to remain in the classroom. Teachers will remain in very difficult working conditions, teaching students with enormous learning obstacles, out of a love for those students and a desire to be a part of those students success in education (Nieto, 2003). The impact of working with students on teachers’ mobility decisions is seen in a variety of school contexts (Brunetti, 2001; Easley, 2006; Marston et al., 2006). Easley (2006) found that a majority of alternative route teachers entered the profession because they believed in and wanted to support the moral aspect of education (Easley, 2006). Only a small number in the study indicated career surfing, job security, or corporate downsizing as a primary factor. To the contrary, a majority of respondents indicated that teaching provided an “environment of fulfillment” (Easley, 2006, p. 246) for them.

Research shows that mentoring activities have a significant impact on the teaching experience and on the likelihood of beginning teachers remaining in the classroom. Beginning teachers who participate in mentoring and induction activities are
less likely to migrate to another school or leave the teaching profession (Kelly, 2004; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The mentor or induction programs with the largest influence have provided the following: a mentor from the same teaching field, common content area planning opportunities, instructional collaboration, and being part of a teacher network extending outside the day-to-day work environment (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

People enter teaching for different reasons, leading one to conclude that their experiences in education will be different as well. A number of teachers enter the field with the intention of moving into another career later in life while others enter after years of wanting to teach, not having seriously considered any other career (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Research shows that those who enter teaching from another field, known as mid-career teachers, differ as much in their reasoning as do first-career teachers. Some mid-career teachers may be dissatisfied with their first-career choice, others may want to explore different fields, and still others may sincerely view teaching as their “calling” (Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). These variances in motivation undoubtedly influence the factors that keep these teachers in the classroom.

The Teaching Experience

While doubts about teaching among new teachers are common (Merrow, 1999), these teachers enter the classroom optimistic about their future and unscarred by problems with student behavior, unsupportive administrations, cantankerous colleagues, unhappy parents, unrealistic politicians, and the remaining inherent classroom stressors common to the teaching and learning process. Beginning teachers soon learn, however, that teachers rarely receive the prestige and authority they have earned and deserved.
(Inman & Marlow, 2004), and often experience harm inflicted by those within the educational community. Merrow (1999) described the poor treatment of teachers by the educational community as “self-inflicted wounds” (p. 64), identifying inappropriately low salaries, failure to locate and employ qualified teachers, and a lack of training for teachers in reference to the “realities of classroom life” (p.64) as the experiences which injure teachers. The awareness of these less than exciting realities of teaching may be followed “by feelings of ineffectiveness, loneliness, and alienation from the profession” (Schlichte et al., 2005, p. 36), especially by new teachers. To support these disillusioned new teachers, Delgado (1999), in the context of helping struggling special education teachers, suggested that veteran teachers develop strong relationships with new teachers and encouraged researchers “to take a closer look at relationships and their connection to retention of first-year special education teachers and, perhaps, teachers in general” (Schlichte et al., 2005, p.39). When these strong collegial relationships are not formed by teachers, success is minimal at best. Job dissatisfaction and attrition is encouraged (Schlichte et al., 2005).

Theoretical Background

This research is founded upon a theoretical background shaped by Jeremy Bentham’s utility theory, Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory, Edwin Locke’s goal setting theory, Frederick Herzberg’s two-factor theory, and Victor Vroom’s expectancy theory. Clayton Alderfer’s ERG theory is also referenced in the commentary provided for Maslow’s research. While I may subscribe to many of the fundamental principles of the aforementioned theories, there are certain components of these theories to which I disagree. The following summaries highlight those core areas of each theory to
which I agree. These fundamental components have influenced the design and implementation of this study.

**Bentham.** Jeremy Bentham’s (1748-1832) utility theory, developed early in the Industrial Revolution, proposed that people are motivated by a self-centered desire to avoid pain and find pleasure (Bentham, 1781/1988; Plant, 1975). A worker will perform as directed if the accompanying reward is desired or the punishment to be avoided is unwanted. In philosophical terms, if a person has a desire (Y), and if they believe the performance of a task (X) will result in Y, then they will perform X, of course, provided no obstacle permits them from doing so or provided they do not have a stronger desire than Y (Read, 2004). The following description also provides an adequate summation of Bentham’s ideas on motivation:

In Bentham’s view the central characteristic of human nature is that men seek pleasure/happiness and seek to avoid pain/unhappiness. When a particular individual performs an intentional, purposive act it is always done with the same motive—to produce a preponderant amount of pleasure over pain or happiness over unhappiness. (Plant, 1975, p. 105)

The basic tenants of utility theory can be seen in many proposed theories on human motivation. I do not adhere personally to the utility theory as a basis for making moral judgments, as seen in Bentham’s writings on morality, but does understand man in his natural state to be motivated by these ideas of pain, pleasure, and utility.

**Maslow.** Abraham Maslow’s (1908-1970) hierarchy of needs theory proposed a hierarchical organization of human needs placed in the following order: physiological needs, safety needs, love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization.
Maslow’s theory is based on the idea that people are motivated by more than one need and when an individual satisfies one need, another stronger need arises. The fulfillment of a stronger or greater need results in a greater sense of fulfillment or satisfaction. Maslow (1943) also noted that an examination of behavior must include the recognition of the biological, situational, and cultural contexts of the behavior. Maslow’s theory highlights the needs of teachers (for example, love and esteem needs) which must be met in order for stronger needs to be satisfied and supports the idea that very motivated teachers are experiencing satisfaction at higher need levels (Hoffman, 1996).

I do, however, see man’s needs in a manner more in line with Clayton Alderfer’s (1940-) ERG theory which was built upon core principles in Maslow’s theory. In ERG theory people’s needs are categorized as existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs and they are not hierarchical. The satisfaction of lower order needs is not a perquisite to the emergence of higher order needs (Alderfer, 1969). The satisfaction of what may be considered lower order needs can have an enormous impact on a person’s overall satisfaction. The results of this study address the issue of how teachers’ needs are related and the relationship between having one’s needs met and the level of satisfaction that is attained.

**Locke.** The Goal Setting Theory, developed by Edwin Locke (1938- ), addressed how humans behave in given work conditions. The theory proposes that the achievement of a worker’s goals determines job satisfaction or dissatisfaction in proportion to the discrepancy between the goals and the actual achievement attained (Mento, Locke & Klein, 1992). Higher levels of performance are generated through the setting and realization of specific goals. The Goal Setting Theory led to what has been labeled by
Locke and Latham (2002) as the “high-performance cycle” (p.712). The following excerpt from Locke and Latham summarizes this cycle:

The high performance cycle explains how high goals lead to high performance, which in turn leads to rewards, such as recognition and promotion. Rewards result in high satisfaction as well as high self-efficacy regarding perceived ability to meet future challenges through the setting of even higher goals (p. 712).

While the Goal Setting Theory proposed that workers will work harder for larger goals; feedback and personal ownership are identified by Locke and Latham (2002) as necessary ingredients to ensure success. The feedback and ownership aspect of Locke’s theory makes the theory especially relevant to the teacher’s experience, both in terms of their work with students and their experience in teaching as a profession. The ramifications of Locke’s theory in terms of teacher salaries, merit pay, teacher recognition, and feedback on performance are numerous, especially pertaining to efforts aimed at increasing teacher morale and job satisfaction as part of a campaign to reduce teacher turnover.

Herzberg. Frederick Herzberg’s (1923-2000) two-factor theory proposes that job factors can be separated into two categories: “Motivators” and “Hygienes” (Herzberg, 1974). Motivators contribute to job satisfaction and rarely to job dissatisfaction. Hygienes contribute to job dissatisfaction and rarely to job satisfaction. The two-factor theory, therefore, places job satisfaction and dissatisfaction on separate dimensions, instead of at the opposite ends of a single dimension (Gardner, 1977). Herzberg believed intrinsic factors are motivators, while extrinsic factors are hygienes. The following words from
Herzberg (1974) provide a suitable summation of motivating factors in the two-factor theory:

Motivation-hygiene theory suggests that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are produced by different work factors. What makes people satisfied at work are factors that relate to the content of their jobs—specifically, achievement, recognition for achievement, interesting work, increased responsibility, growth, and advancement. On the other hand, what makes people unhappy at work is not what they do but how well (or poorly) they are treated. These treatment factors (dissatisfiers) are related not to the content of work, but to the context of the job. (p. 18)

**Vroom.** Victor Vroom’s (1932-) expectancy theory argues, in simple terms, that people are motivated by an expectation that their behavior will result in a desired outcome (Vroom, 1994) and is based upon core principles in Bentham’s utility theory. The expectancy theory rests upon three beliefs: (1) The perceived outcome for a given task has a positive or negative valence to the person considering the task, (2) If the person desires the outcome associated with completing the task, there will be a certain amount of expectancy on their part that they can accomplish the task and obtain the desired outcome, and (3) The person considering the task will consider whether or not completion of the task will be instrumental in their actually receiving the desired outcome (Behling & Starke, 1973; Quick, 1988). These three beliefs are summarized by three key terms in expectancy theory: *valence, expectancy, and instrumentality*. The existence of negative valence, the absence of positive valence, or a lack of confidence that the task can be completed will result in the absence of motivational forces for the worker (Behling
& Starke, 1973). Quick (1988) provides a concise and yet thorough explanation of Vroom’s expectancy theory in the following statement:

In choosing between behaviors A, B, or C, people will choose the behavior or selection that will result in their getting the more valuable output or reward, provided they see the reward as attainable. If they suspect that the reward they most value involves a long shot or an immoderate risk, they’ll opt for an action or make a decision involving lesser value but greater expectation of success. (p. 30)

Vroom’s theory provides a suitable model for analyzing the approach of workers toward daily, routine tasks as well as toward their job in general.

**Summary**

The research on teacher satisfaction coincides with the research on the more general topic of worker satisfaction, demonstrating that teacher satisfaction is also a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Understanding the conceptual aspects of worker satisfaction is essential to a full examination of the teacher’s experience. Previous research on the topic has provided long lists of related factors but little in terms of a detailed analysis of satisfaction variables within the context of popular concepts and theories on worker motivation and satisfaction. Additional research is needed, particularly qualitative research, which provides a closer view of what experiences lead teachers to report satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the areas of student behavior, leadership, and collegiality. The additional research will provide support for current thinking in the area of teacher satisfaction and/or provide new theories and concepts related to this phenomenon.
The research does reveal common themes concerning those variables having the greatest impact on teacher satisfaction. Working with students, relationships with colleagues, the behavior and practices of leadership, and student behavior are common themes. Additional research, outside the context of teacher mobility, will either lend support to the relationship between these variables and teacher satisfaction or introduce new variables.

I have a great concern for the lack of research providing teachers with a voice concerning the difficult experiences they encounter. While researchers have completed significant studies in this area, yielding valuable results concerning what satisfies and dissatisfies teachers, I believe little may be done in terms of teacher friendly policies, unless educational leaders are motivated by the voice of teachers. Passion, not research, has the greatest effect on the change process. Through this study, I hope to ignite the passion of educational leaders in terms of improving the experience of teachers.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to reveal teacher perceptions of experiences that negatively impact job satisfaction in rural Title I schools. Since the primary goal of qualitative research is to “better understand human behavior and experience” (Bogden & Biklen, 1992, p. 49), a qualitative research method was chosen. Teacher satisfaction was explored through the use of interviews at three rural Title I Schools located in different school districts within the state of Georgia. I believe the holistic (Best & Kahn, 1997; Jones & Kottler, 2006; Lichtman, 2006) and inductive nature (Creswell, 2005; Best & Kahn, 1997; Jones & Kottler, 2006) of this research design provided significant pieces of data about teacher job satisfaction in particular and the teaching experience in general (Ary et al., 2006). The data allowed many dimensions of the topic to be portrayed, ensuring a consequential study of a multi-dimensional problem (Bogden & Bilken, 1992). The teacher interviews provided detailed statements related to the topic, allowing for a close investigation of the “essence of the phenomenon” (Lichtman, 2006, p. 70).

Interview data was reported in rich detail in the form of summaries (Best & Kahn, 1997; Jones & Kottler, 2006; Lichtman, 2006; Mertens, 2005). Ideas from the interviews were coded, codes were examined for redundancy and codes were collapsed into broad themes (Best & Kahn, 1997; Creswell, 2005; Jones & Kottler, 2006). The emergent themes were cross-examined by another professional in the field to increase the validity of the researcher’s analysis, ensuring that the “reality of subjects” (Lancy, 1993, p. 9) was captured and not the reality of the researcher. Member checks and transcriptions were also utilized to ensure accuracy.
Design

This study followed a qualitative phenomenological research design. While many previous studies on teacher satisfaction have been quantitative in nature, a qualitative approach was taken for this study to provide opportunities to pursue, in the context of rural Title I schools, particular themes which may or may not have been addressed in previous research. The goal of this research was to explore and gain understanding of the meaning participants ascribe to a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2008). I also expected the study to give teachers a voice concerning their teaching experiences. A qualitative phenomenology seeks to look “at the lived experiences of those who have experienced a certain phenomenon” (Lichtman, 2006, p. 70) in order to determine “the way in which members of a group or community themselves interpret the world and life around them” (Mertens, 2005, p. 240).

Qualitative research is non-linear. The researcher should be “open to adapting inquiry”, pursuing “new paths as they emerge” (Best & Kahn, 1997, p. 241). While quantitative research moves sequentially from reviewing the literature to designing and implementing the study, qualitative research is “characterized by a continuing interaction among data gathering, literature review, and research questioning” (Jones & Kottler, 2006, p. 36). Researchers “modify protocols as they progress through the ever changing landscape of those they study” (p.9), moving “back and forth between data gathering/collection and data analysis” (Lichtman, 2006, p. 15).

Research Questions
In this particular study, the problem was the lack of job satisfaction among teachers serving in rural Title I schools. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job dissatisfaction?

2. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job satisfaction?

3. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the difficulties of teaching?

4. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the impact of teacher job dissatisfaction on teacher performance?

5. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers continue to teach in rural Title I schools?

6. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers leave rural Title I schools?

Site

The research was conducted at three schools located in three school districts in Georgia. In an effort to maintain confidentiality, the names of the counties, school districts, and schools involved in this study have been omitted. Table 3.1 describes the demographics of the three counties involved in the study. Table 3.2 describes the demographics of the three school districts involved in the study. Table 3.3 provides the demographic data for the three schools involved in the study. In phenomenological research, the researcher is “opportunistic” (Lancy, 1993, p. 9) in terms of gaining access
to data collection sites and in terms of taking “advantage of unfolding events that will help answer research questions” (Creswell, 2005, p. 206). Access to the teachers in the three school districts was considered prior to site selection. I did select additional participants for teacher interviews (pilot interviews); however, these participants were chosen from the three districts that granted permission to conduct the study.

Table 3.1

Demographics Comparison of Counties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Comparison of Counties</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% of Minority Population</th>
<th>Median Per Capita Income</th>
<th>Persons Below Poverty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County A</td>
<td>10,138</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>$15,348</td>
<td>32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County B</td>
<td>17,535</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>$15,284</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County C</td>
<td>8,721</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>$12,777</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data based on most recent information provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2008)

Table 3.2

Demographic Comparisons of School Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Comparison of School Districts</th>
<th>% of Students Considered</th>
<th>% of Minority Students</th>
<th>National Center for Education Statistics Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District A</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Rural-Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District B</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>Rural-Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District C</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Rural-Remote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data based on most recent information provided by the Georgia Department of Education (2009) and the National Center for Education Statistics (2009).
Table 3.3

Demographic Comparison of Schools 2008-2009 School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Comparison of Schools</th>
<th>Student Enrollment</th>
<th>Number of Full Time Teachers</th>
<th>% of Students Considered Economically Disadvantaged</th>
<th>% of Minority Students</th>
<th>NCES Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>Rural-Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>Rural-Fringe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Rural-Remote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Data based most recent information provided by the Georgia Department of Education (2009) and the National Center for Education Statistics (2009).

Participants

I used purposeful sampling (Cohen & Manion, 1985; Jones & Kottler, 2006; Mertens, 2005) to choose participants for the study, selecting participants and sites to be included in the sample “on the basis of his [my] judgment of their typicality” (Cohen & Manion, 1985, p. 100). Maximum variation sampling was also used as teachers from grades 6–8 in rural Title I schools were chosen to maximize variation in terms of grade level, gender, and experience (Creswell, 2005; Mertens, 2005). Table 3.4 delineates the gender, first or second career status, level of education, grade levels taught, and years of experience for each participant. The three sites are located in the same region of the state, with one site being the district where I was employed prior to my current position. Therefore, convenience sampling was also used as participants were chosen based on their being readily available for participation (Cohen & Manion, 1985; Mertens, 2005).
After receiving permission to conduct the study from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University, I contacted the superintendents for each participating school district. I communicated with two of the superintendents via email and fax. I met face-to-face with one of the superintendents. After receiving permission at the district level to proceed with the teacher interviews, I then met face-to-face with two of the principals and spoke with the third on the telephone. I asked each principal to help with enlisting teachers for participation. Each principal was informed that participants should vary in terms of gender, grade level taught, and years of experience in education. Each principal agreed to ask for volunteers from among their faculty. At least three teachers from each school agreed to participate in the study. I conducted interviews with a total of twelve teachers. Pilot interviews were held with two teachers from one of the schools participating in the study. The pilot interview participants were not part of the twelve. However, their responses were included in the data results section of the study. Multiple interviews were also held with some participants to address gaps in their responses or to gain additional data related to new or unexpected responses.
Table 3.4

Demographic Data For Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>First or Second Career Teacher*</th>
<th>Level of Education**</th>
<th>Grade Levels Taught</th>
<th>Years of Teaching Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amy (Pilot)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy (Pilot)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6,7,8,10,12</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>5,6,7,8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonathan</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>8, College Level</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lane</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Graduate</td>
<td>6,7,8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*First career means the participant did not hold a long term job in another field prior to entering education. One participant labeled as “second career” considered her first career
that of a homemaker. Since she maintained that position for more than a year, I labeled her as second career.

**None of the participants had received doctorate degree at the time of the study.**

Graduate level refers to classes taken for Master’s or Specialist degrees.

**Researcher’s Perspective**

In a qualitative study, the researcher should clarify any potential biases they may have in order to create an “open and honest narrative” (Creswell, 2008, p. 192) for those who will be reading the study. The process of bracketing, which has been defined by Lichtman (2006) as “placing one’s thoughts about the topic in suspense” (p. 72), for the duration of the study seems unrealistic. Given the unlikelihood of approaching any serious study without being influenced by one’s biases, the researcher has provided below a summation of his background in education and his ideas concerning the topic of teacher satisfaction.

I am currently an assistant principal at a middle school in the southern region of the state of Georgia. I holds a Bachelor’s degree in Theology from Florida Baptist Theological College (Currently The Baptist College of Florida), a Master’s degree in Secondary Education Social Studies from Georgia Southwestern State University, a Specialist in Instructional Technology and Design from Valdosta State University, has completed a non-degree Educational Leadership Program at the University of Georgia, and is currently pursuing a terminal degree in Education at Liberty University. I taught middle school and high school Social Studies courses in Georgia for eight years prior to taking his first position as assistant principal in 2008. The decision to take a position in school administration was heavily influenced by a desire to improve the experience of
teachers. Teacher attrition, particularly attrition due to job satisfaction problems, has become a personal concern. Having taught in rural Title I schools, I have at least a partial understanding of the experiences unique to teaching in these environments and the need to develop policies that will improve teacher morale through positive changes to their teaching experience. I am keenly interested in the teaching experience and believe collegiality, student behavior, and a sense of administrative support strongly influence job satisfaction among teachers.

Data Collection

Process. As previously mentioned, qualitative research is non-linear. The study continued to be refined, even during the data collection phase of the study (Bogden & Bilken, 1992). Prior to any data being collected, approval was obtained to conduct the study from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University (Appendix A). Once initial interview data had been collected, a preliminary exploratory analysis was conducted during which time I explored the data, recorded initial thoughts, considered the organization of the data, and determined whether more data was needed (Creswell, 2005). The remainder of the data collection process was based on this initial analysis.

Interviews. After being granted permission by the three school districts to conduct the study (Appendix B), I contacted teachers for interviews. This contact was made via email and telephone. While the standard sample size for a phenomenology is six participants (Mertens, 2005), 12 teachers were asked to participate in individual interviews, with at least four teachers representing each school. These interviews were held at the respective school site. Two “pilot interviews” were also held to determine how well prompts on the Interview Guide (Appendix C) elicited responses related to the
research questions. Interview prompts were based upon themes I identified during the review of literature. For example, since the teacher-administrator relationship was a major theme in the literature, I included one prompt designed to elicit responses that would address the teacher-administrator relationship within the context of teacher satisfaction. Additional themes in the literature included collegiality, student behavior, and teacher efficacy, and prompts that addressed these themes were included on the Interview Guide.

The “pilot interviews” also tested the success of the prompts in providing data rich in detail for purposes of data reporting. Interview prompts were revised based on these pilot interviews and approval to utilize the revised prompts was obtained from the Institutional Review Board at Liberty University (Appendix D). These prompts were submitted to Dr. Michelle Goodwin, chair of my dissertation committee at Liberty University and Dr. Debbie Mullis, another professional in the field and school administrator who served as a peer debriefer throughout the study. Dr. Goodwin and Dr. Mullis provided their thoughts as to the appropriateness of the interview prompts along with how the prompts would be improved. The question “Was this your first career choice?” was added to the first prompt. Prompts including the question “How does this make you feel about your job?” were changed to “What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?”. “How do you feel about student behavior?” was changed to “Have discipline problems affected your job satisfaction? Can you give an example?”. The second part of the seventh prompt was changed from “How does this make you feel?” to “How does this impact your satisfaction?”. “How do you feel about your salary?” was changed to “Are you satisfied with your salary, benefits, work hours, and required
duties?” The two prompts “What experiences in education have diminished your desire
to teach?” and “What experiences in education have increased your desire to teach?”
were changed to include the phrase “not previously mentioned” in order to focus the
participants attention on experiences they had not already discussed during the interview.

I informed the participants that their responses were being audio taped for
purposes of data collection. The participants were also informed that their responses
would remain confidential (Bogden & Bilken, 1992). To maintain confidentiality, the
actual names of teachers were omitted in the data results section of the study.
Pseudonyms were utilized instead. The Interview Guide (Appendix D) was used to guide
the interview questions and provide commonality to the interviews (Best & Kahn, 1997).
However, the interview process in a qualitative phenomenology should allow participants
to “tell their own stories” (Lichtman, 2006, p.9). Therefore, the interviewer asked broad
open-ended questions about the topic (Best & Kahn, 1997; Creswell, 2005), modified
questions and prompts based on data collected prior to the interviews (Cohen & Manion,
1985), and remained flexible enough “to note and collect data on unexpected dimensions
of the topic” (Bogden & Bilken, 1992, p. 77). I asked clarifying and elaborating probes to
elicit more information from the interview participants (Creswell, 2005) but sought to
remain neutral and not influence the participants’ responses.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data. Since qualitative data is “characterized by words rather than
numbers” (Lichtman, 2006, p. 14), the results of the interviews were summarized and
placed in a narrative format (Lancy, 1993). Direct quotes were provided (Best & Kahn,
1997; Bogden & Bilken, 1992; Jones & Kottler, 2006) in an attempt to “convey that the
author is merely a ‘translator’ and that the story is the native’s own” (Lancy, 1993, p. 22; see also Erikson, 1986). Attention was given to detail, providing a “thick description” (Best & Kahn, 1997, p. 241) of the data (Jones & Kottler, 2006; Mertens, 2005). The primary focus was to provide “voice to individuals who may not be heard” (Creswell, 2005, p. 204) in an “attempt to understand the meaning of events and interactions to ordinary people in particular situations” (Bogden & Bilken, 1992 p. 34).

**Coding.** The coding process (Appendix E) “involves identifying text segments, placing a bracket around them, and assigning a code word or phrase that accurately describes the meaning of the text segment” (Creswell, 2005, p. 238). This process was completed with the help of my peer debriefer and was patterned after the coding process described by Creswell (2005), Bogden and Bilken (1992), and Lichtman (2006). After the interview data was transcribed, we both read the transcripts, bracketed on the transcripts words and phrases, and discussed the regularities or patterns of words that we had individually marked in writing on the transcripts. The words or phrases assigned to these regularities or patterns of words (Bogden & Bilken, 1992) were used to develop hierarchical coding categories in which some codes were subsets of larger categories (Lichtman, 2006). We read the transcripts repeatedly, noting any themes within the themes already identified. The process was repeated until we had determined that theme saturation had been reached. This two-tier coding process ensured a more accurate description of the responses provided during the interviews. A table (Appendix F) was created to aid in the coding process and also to provide a complete picture of the data. I completed the table after working with the peer debriefer to code the data. The peer
debriefer did view the table and the information provided therein was discussed. With very few exceptions, every word provided by participants was assigned to a theme.

**Credibility/Dependability**

**Member Checks.** After the individual interviews, the interviewee was sent a copy of their transcript (Appendix G). The participant was then asked to review the transcript (Appendix H) and identify any inaccuracies (Lichtman, 2006; Mertens, 2005). This process ensured that the transcripts accurately reflected the responses given during the interview process. Additional questions were asked of the participant to check the validity of the initial interview data analysis. An audit trial (Appendix I) for this study shows the timeframe for each step.

**Feedback.** I asked a professional in the same field to read the transcripts and identify the themes. This person, Dr. Debbie Mullis, is referred to as a “peer debriefer” (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2010, p. 358). Dr. Mullis is a veteran teacher at the middle school level and has served as a school administrator for the past ten years. Dr. Mullis has a M.A. in Middle Grades Education and an EdS in Educational Leadership from Valdosta State University, and an EdD in Educational Leadership from Argosy University. Dr. Mullis is currently the assistant principal at Ben Hill Elementary School. After, Dr. Mullis had an opportunity to read over the transcripts and identify themes, I then met with her to compare themes. The results of the cross-examination were discussed and any discrepancies in conclusions were addressed during several feedback sessions.

**Transcriptions.** The responses given during the interviews were audio taped and transcribed. These transcriptions provided the details needed to address teacher perceptions and capture the voice of teachers concerning their experiences. The audio
taped interviews provided an additional source of data by which I could interpret teacher responses. Tone, laughter, and pauses helped determine the meaning behind various statements.

**Triangulation.** In qualitative research, triangulation is “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection” (Creswell, 2005, p. 252). Triangulation ensures that the researcher analyzes data that accurately reflects the information provided by the participants and identifies themes that are reflected by the data (Mertens, 2005). The member checks, peer debriefer and transcriptions were used to provide triangulation in terms of data analysis. Each of the methods cross-examined the data to determine weaknesses and strengthen the results of the study. Cohen and Manion (1985) warned, “Exclusive reliance on one method, therefore, may bias or distort the researcher’s picture of the particular slice of reality he is investigating” (p. 254). In addition to triangulation concerning the manner in which the data was analyzed, more than one data collection tool was used in this study. Pilot interviews, interviews, and follow-up interviews were used to ensure that I had obtained a complete picture of how teachers feel about their experiences. In addition, interview prompts were revised based on preliminary analysis and the number of interviews was increased to ensure that theme saturation had been reached.

**Ethical Considerations**

Once a teacher agreed to participate in the study, I established with the teacher a time and place for the interview and provided the teacher with the consent form approved by Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board. Pseudonyms were used for teacher names in the written report and when utilizing the assistance of a peer debriefer. A code
book was developed and kept to decipher data since pseudonyms were utilized. The code book was kept in a separate locked file cabinet as the audio tapes and written transcripts. All research records were stored securely in two locked file cabinets and only I have access to the records. All records will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

Each interview participant was given the opportunity to listen to their interview, withdraw their comments, and have the audio immediately erased. Once interviews were transcribed and the participant had been asked to comment on the transcript, the audio-taped version of their interview was securely stored. Any computer file, including but not limited to email correspondence, related to the identification of the interview participant is password protected and will be erased three years after the completion of the study. These records will not be used for future research purposes.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. Participants were asked to respond to interview prompts related to job satisfaction/dissatisfaction variables. The exposure to these prompts may increase or diminish the participants’ emotions regarding their experience(s) in education. Additional consideration of these variables, as a result of the interview process, may result in teachers experiencing a higher level of dissatisfaction and/or depression concerning their job related duties and/or their career in education. While aggressive steps have been taken to protect the identity of participants, the possibility of participant anonymity being compromised does exist. A small group of districts and schools are participating in this study. A teacher may reveal information during an interview that would allow his/her supervisor(s) to determine their identity through a process of deduction. This revelation could injure the relationship between the
teacher and other teachers and/or between the teacher and their supervisor(s). This study attempts to improve the experiences of teachers by identifying the job-related difficulties teachers currently experience. Individual interviews are an appropriate tool for gathering detailed, rich data related to the topic. Risks in participating are minimal. Participants were provided the opportunity to review responses, retract statements, and withdraw from participation at any time. Given the process by which possible participants were identified and the manner in which data was reported in the completed study, school administrations will not be able to easily ascertain the identity of a given participant in the completed report. Strong measures have been taken to maintain anonymity.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The goals of this study were to provide teachers’ voice in terms of their experiences impacting job satisfaction/dissatisfaction and to address certain questions, based on relevant research, concerning job satisfaction/dissatisfaction among teachers in rural Title I schools in Georgia. After conducting the two pilot interviews, I quickly discovered that teacher responses were both descriptive and prescriptive. Therefore, I decided to treat both types of responses the same in terms of reporting. The reader should be able to differentiate between prescriptive and descriptive responses given the number of direct quotes which are provided.

This chapter summarizes the results of the interviews, including the pilot interviews and follow-up interviews. Summaries of teacher interviews are in the order teachers were interviewed. Pseudonyms for participants are used rather than actual names in order to protect teachers. These summaries not only provide an overview of each review but they also illustrate the voice of teachers concerning the positive and negative aspects of the teaching experience.

After the summaries, the coding process is summarized and the results are provided in a narrative format. As with the summaries, the coded interviews address the topic of teacher job satisfaction/dissatisfaction while also giving voice to teachers. Direct quotes are used throughout this chapter. The chapter closes with the conclusions related to the research questions which guided the study.

Summaries of Interviews

Amy. I held two pilot interviews. Amy participated in the first of those pilot interviews. An additional follow-up interview was held once Amy’s initial interview had been transcribed and reviewed.
This is Amy’s 20th year both as a teacher and in her current school. She started teaching piano at age 13. During her time in education, Amy has taught classes in chorus, music appreciation, informational technology, journalism, and reading. Her duties have been wide-ranging, including the supervision of students as they traveled to other campuses, directing traffic, ensuring that students had the appropriate items for lunch and “just in general being around and making sure that the students were doing what they were supposed to be doing.”

Amy has a positive relationship with her administration “all the way up to the superintendent.” Amy believes that her administration is honest with her, brings concerns to her rather than others, recognizes her work, and will listen to her concerns. The administrators are available to hear concerns, and they have a desire to see her succeed. However, Amy has not always had a good relationship with administrators. On one occasion she had a principal who was overly critical of her and clearly interested in his own gain. This made teaching difficult for Amy, not knowing how her work was going to be presented or whether or not the principal would be satisfied with her work.

In reference to her colleagues, Amy considers herself to have two sets of co-workers, those who are on her teaching team and those who make up the rest of faculty. Amy has worked with some of her colleagues for 20 years, making these colleagues seem like family. Constructive criticism on the part of her colleagues is important to her. Amy does not feel threatened by her colleagues in part because she is the only chorus teacher in the school. Her colleagues help Amy when she is having problems, inside or outside of the classroom. Sometimes Amy feels dismissed by the faculty overall and this frustrates her. Defensively, she wants to inform the staff that she is educated and that she is a real
teacher. When students sense that other teachers dismiss Amy, then it impacts her relationship with them. As for the teachers that do not have a good relationship with Amy, scheduling keeps her from having to be around them “so that works out well. That is nice.”

As for her relationship with the parents and the community, Amy recognizes that several of her parents now are her former students. In some instances, the parent is able to address their child’s concern with Amy based on the parent’s experiences with Amy when they were a student. This is typically the case when students communicate inaccurate information to the parent. Since Amy lives in the community she serves, this encourages her to try harder as a teacher so her parents and neighbors can “see good things for their kids.” However, there is a negative aspect to Amy’s relationship with parents and the community. She believes that some of her parents are not concerned about their child’s learning.

Parents do not appear to be apprehensive about meeting with Amy. If they know her personally, they will ask her questions outside of school and this gives her the opportunity to address their concern(s) in a more friendly environment “as opposed to that formal almost competitive courtroom like teacher conference.” The downside of such a relationship with parents is that they know where Amy lives, and she sees them in many different places even when she doesn’t feel like addressing classroom concerns. While this encourages her to be of good character outside of school, it also “doesn’t give you a time to relax sometimes.”

Amy does not see student behavior as being very different than when she was a student. Adults see it as different because they are no longer the ones misbehaving. The
change in behavior has been minimal; however, student behavior is important in the classroom. Amy believes a small number of students cause teachers to make negative generalizations about student behavior overall. Moreover, teachers and parents together play a vital role in curbing inappropriate behavior. Students will do what they are allowed to do. The idea of the teacher playing the role of the student’s parent, in the place of their actual parents, frustrates Amy. She feels that as a teacher she has to play too broad of a role in addressing student behavior, teaching students about cyberbullying, sex, bullying, race relationships, appropriate dress, and attendance. Amy believes her role as a teacher has been expanded too far, causing her to focus on areas outside of her primary desire which is teaching music.

In reference to teacher efficacy, Amy does feel that she positively impacts the lives of students. Making an impact on students is “a way to live forever.” She remembers students who have come back to her expressing their gratitude for her effort on their behalf. Knowing that you have helped someone to experience more out of life is very motivating. Amy addressed this aspect of her experience with the following comments:

… and then there are my students who are music teachers now. I taught them. I am part of what they refer to in their memories to learn that. Their lives are better because of something that I have done. It just doesn’t get better than that. That is just good.

As for how Amy feels about her salary, she considers her salary appropriate based on the expectations set forth in her contract. However, her salary does not match what she is actually expected to do. Amy acknowledges that she is better off than many others and
tries to keep this in mind. She does not like the threat of her salary being taken away when she is frustrated with some aspect of her job. Amy does acknowledge that her benefits are good.

As for experiences that have diminished her desire to teach, Amy recounts the principal mentioned before who was overly critical of her performance. This caused her to question herself and was not a good experience. In addition to this incident, the behavior of students and parents frustrate Amy. She is also irritated by those colleagues who will not perform as directed, allowing their duties and responsibilities to become her duties and responsibilities. When others received undeserved recognition, Amy feels dismissed as a person and as a professional.

As for experiences that have increased her desire to teach, Amy points to the fact that her daughter is in the same school system. Having her daughter in the same system and hearing her daughter talk positively about certain teachers has inspired Amy to do her best. Also, having seen students learn and be excited about learning as a result of her efforts has increased her desire to teach. Amy tells the story of a student mentioning a song on Facebook that Amy had wrote several years ago. To know that her efforts have brought knowledge and joy to others has increased Amy’s sense of efficacy. She states, “I can affect the world. I can make things better. I can change. I love that.”

Amy does not believe she was prepared to handle being a teacher. She had a Bachelor’s degree in Music Education, and while her understanding of the content area was strong, she had little preparation in education. Amy was not prepared to design lesson plans, utilize technology, handle the extra duties of teaching, or take care of fund raisers. Amy feels she was prepared for the ideal classroom but not the real world of
teaching. She saw videos of wonderful classrooms but not the type of classroom environments she would later experience.

In reference to quitting education if the possibility arose, Amy states, “I love my job except whenever I hate it.” Amy does not believe she would leave education even if finances were not a concern. She enjoys seeing others learn. If she did leave public education, Amy believes she would go into private teaching. The moments of student learning, the positive interaction with children, and the times when her students have expressed their gratitude keep her in the field of education. Amy concludes that “knowledge is power and I want people to be powerful. I will not ever get out of it.”

Amy did participate in a follow up interview. She was asked two follow up questions pertaining to her relationship with colleagues:

(1) Concerning your relationships with colleagues, based on the response you have previously given, do you feel that the academic area that a teacher is assigned, or the type of teaching position they are assigned, has an impact on their relationship with their colleagues?

and

(2) So you think that part of the problems that teachers have with their colleagues stem from teachers being concerned about job security or how they are evaluated or how they are viewed above them?

In response to these questions, Amy indicated that she believes the current emphasis on accountability negatively impacts relationships between colleagues. The tight job market in education and the idea of a teacher’s pay being tied to student performance are factors contributing to competitiveness among teachers. Teachers in certain academic areas are
stressed by the emphasis on standardized testing, making it difficult for them to relax and trust others. Teachers in pure performance areas such as music are not judged in the same manner as academic teachers, and they are able to see the results of their work throughout the time they have their students. Different teachers have different approaches to instruction. A lot of teachers have a problem accepting difference approaches. This adds to the frustration of some teachers. With budget cuts being made, teachers are concerned with how they are viewed by administrators. If you are not a first string teacher, “no one is going to pay attention to you, and they will fire you for a cheaper teacher.”

And finally, Amy was asked the following question to finish her follow-up interview: “I would like to get your feedback on why you think teachers in rural Title I schools leave the profession and why they stay. What do you think are the most powerful factors?” As for why teachers leave, Amy believes that the mindset of educators and the mindset of many people in rural low-income areas are in opposition to one another. While education is a stable career that provides teachers with a middle class lifestyle, educators in rural Title I areas feel dismissed by the community’s lack of emphasis on education and resultant lack of educational opportunities. Vocational training is often valued more than the liberal arts. A lack of personal intellectual stimulation for the teacher and a sense of entitlement among community members only add to the problem. Teacher mobility is the result. On the other hand, Amy believes that teachers stay in these areas for two reasons. First, since students are usually behind academically, teachers have plenty of opportunities to witness students learning. This sense of efficacy encourages teachers to remain. Second, teachers feel a need to serve the community.
Andy. Andy has been in education for 20 years. Prior to entering the classroom, he worked for three years at an aquatic center teaching swimming to middle and high school students. Andy has worked at the same school for the duration of his time in public education, working with 9 principals and 15 assistant principals. In the community, 80% of the people live under the poverty level. Much of the industry has relocated, and there is a lot of public housing.

Since Andy has always worked at the same school, the only thing that has changed is the administration. Andy believes he has had a good relationship with all of the administrators with except one. The one administrator he did not have a good relationship with only stayed a short period of time before he was moved into a different position.

During the last 20 years, Andy has taught classes in agriculture as well as engineering and technology. He also coached for a brief period. Andy really likes his colleagues serving on the same hallway and teaching the same type of content. He perceives these teachers to be more student-based in their teaching approach, teaching “a student a subject as opposed to teaching a subject to a student.” The relationship Andy has with his colleagues strengthens his job satisfaction, making it easier for him to come to work each day.

Given the amount of time Andy has spent teaching in the same community, many of the community members under the age of 36 have spent time in his classroom. This personal experience with the community overall is a connection that Andy appreciates. The community has changed since he started teaching. Teachers are, however, respected, and Andy seldom has a problem with a parent. While he acknowledges some of the
students are difficult to manage, “some of the worst kids in our schools are the first ones that run up to you in the parking lot at Wal-Mart.”

Student behavior is not necessarily worse in Andy’s mind; instead, the behaviors change over time. The teacher must be able to separate the behavior from the child. Students enter the classroom without a clear understanding of what is acceptable behavior. Their parents have not taught them the behaviors teachers expect them to exhibit.

Andy believes he does positively impact the lives of students. This aspect of his job increases his job satisfaction. Andy has had a number of students who after graduating from high school have expressed their gratitude to him. He recounts the following experience with one of his students:

One young lady told me that I was the first one to figure out that she was a self cutter and I had figured it out. I figured out that she had gotten into trouble so many times at her old school that she had started putting all kinds of piercings in her ears because she derived the same feeling that she had from self mutilating. I had figured it out and we talked about it. . . . It is not always what you are teaching. It is that you have a place in a child’s life that is important.

Up until recently, Andy has been satisfied with his salary. He has felt that the salary was appropriate for the number of hours and days he worked each year. The recent cuts have bothered him. His salary has been reduced, and his duties have increased. Andy feels that he has been unfairly treated in reference to his contract. He has to uphold his end of the contract but the state is not obligated to uphold their responsibilities.
As for areas of the job that diminish his desire to teach, Andy does not like standardized testing or paperwork. While he has had the opportunity to complete a Master’s degree, Andy has purposefully avoided leaving the classroom for an administrative position. Andy believes that the role of an administrator inherently involves dealing with three aspects of the job he dislikes the most, “paperwork, ugly children, and ugly parents.” When he has to spend time on the administrative aspects of the job, including paperwork, testing, and the curriculum, this negates his feeling of success at the end of the day.

On the other hand, working with children has increased his desire to teach. Andy has experienced this in his work with the technology club. Students show up early in the morning and stay late in the afternoon to participate. This has been a very satisfying experience. Student club members “actually want to come in and do something and learn.”

As for job preparation, Andy does not believe his college did a good job of preparing him for the classroom. Andy perceives that some of his professors liked the classroom so much that they left the classroom for the college campus. This lack of confidence in some of his professors caused Andy to avoid getting a graduate degree. A few years of teaching made him realize that his professors were out of touch with the present realities of the classroom. Andy believes he had the content knowledge he needed but only experience could teach him how to manage a classroom and design realistic lesson plans.

Andy believes that different factors impact job satisfaction depending on what else is happening. Presently, due to budget cuts, salary is a sensitive issue. If a teacher has
a student that because of behavior is using a lot of his/her time, then student behavior may become the primary issue. The same is true if the teacher has a colleague with a bad attitude. Any of these problems could diminish job satisfaction. While Andy will be able to retire at age 54, he does not see this happening. Andy’s desire is actually to move down, possibly to the pre-K. Students in early grades need a positive role model as well as exposure to male teachers. The students “need to see men at an earlier age . . . you cannot grow up to be something that you do not know exists.” Addressing the needs of students at an early age can better prepare them for the classroom when they are the age of the students Andy currently teaches.

During Andy’s follow-up interview, the following questions were addressed:

(1) Do you think the subject taught or the position held by a teacher affects the relationships they have with their colleagues or the relationship that you have with them? (2) How do you think job dissatisfaction impacts student learning? (3) Why do teachers stay in rural Title I schools and why do they leave? What are the biggest factors?

Andy believes that in the regular classroom an added stressor is the pressure exerted on teachers in reference to student performance on standardized tests. This pressure leads to teachers competing with each other as opposed to collaborating with one another. In Andy’s case, since he teaches engineering and technology and is the only teacher in his field, he does not feel a sense of being in competition with other teachers. Not competing with others allows him to focus more on teaching kids. In reference to how job satisfaction impacts student learning, Andy thinks that dissatisfaction does affect teacher
performance. Prior experience has taught him that “if you don’t like what you do, be it teaching or ditch digging, you don’t put much effort into it.”

As for why teachers stay or leave rural Title I schools, Andy explains that he has stayed because of relationships formed with students, parents, and grandparents. Having been in the same position for a number of years has created in Andy a desire to remain in the same position. This has allowed him to track the progress of students over a lengthy period of time. Teachers leave because of a lack of opportunity for advancement and a lack of educational and career opportunities for their children.

Cathy. Cathy has been in education for 27 years, and this was her first career choice. She has taught in two different schools during her time as a teacher. The first school was in a nearby school district. Cathy spent 10 years there as a 4th grade teacher. The remainder of her teaching experience has been at her current school as an 8th grade teacher. Cathy has been assigned practically every content area during her time at her current school. Her extra duties have been the typical teacher duties including before and after school supervision of students and attending extra-curricular activities and parent meetings outside of the regular school day.

Overall, Cathy feels that she has a good relationship with the administration. Her response in this area seemed to pertain only to her current administration. However, she feels that student misbehavior is not handled well. The assistant principal does what he can. The staff overall believes that the administration is too lenient when it comes to addressing discipline issues. Cathy is pleased, however, with the support she receives pertaining to instruction. If you need instructional resources for your classroom and funding is available, the administration will work to ensure that you receive what you
need. Cathy does believe that not enough training is provided to ensure that teachers know how to use resources and that not enough time is given for teachers to have the opportunity to practice using the resources. While her relationship with the administration does not decrease her job satisfaction, it also does not increase her job satisfaction.

The strongest job satisfaction factor for Cathy is her relationship with her colleagues. She perceives that the relationship is wonderful and that the teachers on the hallway work as a team. If a teacher experiences problems that are personal or school related, other teachers are willing to help. This bond Cathy has with her colleagues offsets the frustration she experiences with other areas of education.

Cathy’s relationship with parents and the community has a negative impact on her job satisfaction. Parents are not concerned or do not know how to show concern for their child’s education. Cathy attributes this lack of concern to be in part the result of living in a rural, poverty-stricken area. There is simply not enough of a relationship with parents, and the community overall does not demonstrate an interest in education. In addition to the lack of interest, racial issues impede communication between the school and home.

Student behavior has also had a negative impact on Cathy’s job satisfaction. There is major difference between student behavior now and student behavior when she started 20 years ago. Cathy believes parents are a major contributor to this difference. Students now are not afraid if you tell them you are going to contact their parent about their behavior. This is very different from decades past. Now, parents excuse their children’s behavior, and the result is a lack of accountability for students. Students are also not taught to respect teachers. Teachers are questioned by parents as to what they
may have done to encourage a student to misbehave. Issues related to student discipline are a major concern for Cathy and her colleagues.

Cathy believes she makes a positive impact on students. She tries to focus on this aspect of her job. She is very satisfied when a student expresses their gratitude to her for playing a role in their success. Cathy has had former students acknowledge that they should have paid closer attention in her class because they need that knowledge for their coursework now. A sense of making a difference is important to teachers, knowing that what they are doing does affect the lives of students beyond the classroom.

Salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties are sufficient to Cathy. While she would like to make more money, work hours and required duties are very tolerable. She and other teachers are concerned about future cuts that may be made to teacher salaries. Cathy does not like the idea of her salary or benefits decreasing. She perceives that veteran teachers are especially concerned with future cuts since they may have families to support.

As for additional experiences in education that may have increased or diminished Cathy’s desire to teach, the “attitude of the teenagers and the fact that the teenagers feel they are the rule makers” diminishes her desire. On the other hand, working with technology has increased her desire to teach. Cathy enjoys trying out new resources for the classroom. These experiences with new technology offset the monotony of the job.

As for whether or not she felt prepared for the classroom, Cathy believes the best preparation is the first year of teaching. One can only learn so much from the coursework required in a teacher education program. Cathy had an idea of what to expect but did not truly know what to expect. While completing her student hours in the classroom was
helpful, Cathy learned more during her first year on the job because “as long as you got somebody to fall back on like you do when you are student teaching, it’s not the same.”

Cathy does believe that she would quit teaching if she had a comparable job offer. There is a desire to teach among young married women in her community. The hours are attractive and the job allows them to be around for their children. Young women go back to school to get their teaching certificate; however, not many of them leave high school with teaching in mind. The “decline in morals and just the desire to be here” among students has diminished Cathy’s desire to remain in teaching.

In additional correspondence I had with Cathy, Cathy was asked: What impact does teacher job satisfaction have on teacher performance? Cathy stated that she believes a lack of job satisfaction has a “huge impact on student learning.” If the teacher is not satisfied, then “not much learning or effective teaching [will be] going on.”

**Dave.** This is Dave’s 9th year as a public school teacher. This is not his first career choice or, according to Dave, his last. Dave was 40 years old when he entered education. Prior to entering teaching, Dave built houses and also worked with the postal service. He wonders if he “should be a postmaster right now” instead of teaching. This is his second teaching position. Prior to his current position as a 6th grade social studies teacher, he taught 6th grade social studies and math in a nearby school district. Dave’s experience there was not positive. The words *violence* and *chaos* come to his mind as Dave thinks about his initial teaching job. However, he considers his current school to be more “like a real school.” There are some discipline problems but very much unlike his former teaching assignment.
The first three years that Dave taught he had four different principals. He thought he was “running them off.” He considers most to have been supportive of his work. Dave considers these administrators to have cared about him as a person, and he really enjoyed working with them. As long as you performed as expected, you did not hear much from these administrators. However, Dave has worked under some administrators he considers micro-managers. Working under these individuals was not very satisfying. Overall, his administration has an effect on his job satisfaction but Dave does not feel that it is a major component for most teachers’ satisfaction with profession.

At both schools Dave’s colleagues have been a very positive part of his experience. Dave does not feel he “could ask for a better group of people” with which to work. Some of his colleagues are also his closest friends. Having such a relationship with co-workers helps balance out the negatives of the job, especially the negatives associated with student behavior.

Dave has had a good experience with the parents and the community. In his current school, Dave knows many of the parents because he is a native of the area. The small percentage of parents that are not supportive are “the same people that give the bank trouble, that give the post office trouble, that give the cop trouble.” While he knew very few of the parents in the other county where he taught, overall his experience with them was positive. Dave feels that a teacher’s relationship with parents can have an impact on job satisfaction, especially if they believe parents are against them.

Dave identifies discipline issues as his main area of dissatisfaction with teaching. He does not believe the administration is consistent in this area. Dave cites a recent incident he had with a student as an example. He caught a student standing on the urinal
in the bathroom and referred that student to the office. The student was not punished for
this action, and Dave was told that unless the student had damaged something nothing
could be done to him. Dave felt that the school “needed to head him off before he
destroyed something.” While Dave does not believe he has all the answers in regard to
student discipline, he acknowledges that sometimes “they need a pat on the back and
sometimes they need a kick in the butt.” Distinguishing between the two of these can be
difficult.

Dave gets a lot of satisfaction from believing that he is able to improve the lives
of some students each year. While he used to think he could help every kid, he now
realizes that this is not realistic. Dave tries to focus on a few students each year, in
particular those students that he describes as “hard to love.” When asked later about other
experiences that have increased his desire to teach, Dave goes back to this same idea of
helping improve the lives of students beyond his classroom. In the following section, he
recounts his experience with a female student during his initial teaching assignment in the
nearby county:

In the other county, as an example, I had a student, Brittany, who was really bad,
but during field day up there she out ran all of the kids including the 8th grade
boys. They wanted to put a picture of the kids and myself in the paper. I asked
them to take my picture with Brittany. I mentioned that she could run in the
Olympics. The kids in the county believed that because a former student had run
in the Olympics. I got the picture out of the paper, had it laminated, and handed it
to her. The next year I saw her at Walmart. She came up to me and asked me to
come to one of her track meets. I was thinking that she had a 35 average in math
and she wasn’t on the track team. Brittany told me that since I had told her that
she could run in the Olympics that she had not been in the STAR program
[program for students with discipline problems] and that she was passing all of
her classes. I followed her through high school and that was very rewarding. No
one had ever told this kid that she could get a scholarship or run in the Olympics.
That was really all it took.

Dave is satisfied with his salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties. He is
working on an advanced to degree for the sole purpose of increasing his salary. Dave
considers benefits to be excellent. The school is on a four day week this year so teachers
have every Monday off. Dave really likes this aspect of his job, a three day weekend
every week. He considers himself to have a decent job close to his home. Since many
others as a result of our current economy do not have this luxury, Dave says he gripes
when he probably should not.

Dave believes he was not prepared for the classroom. He thought his students
would be “perfect, well-behaved, smart, and well-mannered” coming “from homes that
would be supportive.” Dave was brought into reality when he saw a student taken away
in a police car. Up until then, he thought Harry Wong had painted an accurate picture of
what the classroom was like. For Dave, Harry Wong was wrong. This did have an impact
on Dave’s job satisfaction, not the preparation but the difficulties of managing the
classroom.

When asked if he would quit provided he had a comparable job offer, Dave
replied, “Yes, in the morning. I could go right now.” He feels he would do better in the
business world and that he is wasting his talents by staying in the classroom. While Dave
believes there is a purpose for his having been in the classroom the last nine years, he is “actively pursuing a position in something else.”

In an additional interview, Dave elaborated on collegiality describing it as “one of the best parts” of the job. He gets together with his colleagues outside of work. Since it is a small town and a small school, everyone knows each other and they get together often. This relationship with his co-workers is very important to Dave.

Dave was also asked in the follow-up interview about why teachers stay and why teachers leave rural Title I schools. Dave believes that they stay because of their relationships with the faculty and with the community. Many of the faculty grew up in the community and consider this both their place of employment and part of their home. Their connections with other people keep them from leaving. Dave believes that teachers leave for this reason as well. Their familiarity with others drives them to seek something new, something different.

Emily. Emily has been in education for the last ten years and this was her first career choice. She began as a substitute teacher in an elementary school in a nearby school district and is now a 7th grade teacher at her current school.

Emily feels that she has a good relationship with her school administration as well as the staff at the district office. The current superintendent is new and she does not have a close relationship with him. The bond of friendship with her colleagues and the administration does have a positive impact on her job satisfaction. Specific to her relationship with her colleagues, Emily describes herself as friends with them, thus making “coming to work a more pleasurable experience.” She had friends on the faculty prior to being hired. This friendship motivates her to work hard because she does not
want her team to look bad. This friendship also means that teachers understand what their colleagues may be enduring outside of school. While Emily does not know if collegiality is the most important job satisfaction factor, she does see it as a key factor because a person is “much more happy and satisfied when you enjoy the people that you work with.”

Emily knows many of the parents through church and because they are her former classmates. A good relationship with parents is easy when they respect and like you. Emily believes she has this type of relationship with students’ parents, and she enjoys teaching the children of people that she knows outside of her job.

In reference to student discipline, Emily acknowledges this as an area that does at times affect her job satisfaction. She recounts that the previous year was very stressful because of student behavior combined with large classes. Emily describes the previous year in the following section:

    I would leave work and think they are so bad. I hated my last period class last year. I hated being in there because 90% of them were bad. We know some of them that are going to the alternative school this year because of last year.

Emily felt that these children were not motivated to learn and that they viewed life as a “free ride.” She believes that issues surrounding student discipline have a major influence on teacher mobility decisions.

It is important to Emily that students are successful beyond her classroom. She believes that she has a positive impact on their lives. Believing this adds to her satisfaction with teaching along with encouraging her to track the successes of former students.
Emily is discouraged concerning teacher pay. While she acknowledges that “everyone wants more money, benefits, and better work hours with less required”, she comments specifically on the issue of pay and recent cuts to pay as a result of teacher furloughs. While Emily acknowledges that the reduction in pay was not large, it was discouraging and stressful for her. Much is expected of teachers, and they are also having their pay cut, negatively impacting her job satisfaction.

Concerning other experiences that have increased or diminished her desire to teach, Emily could not think of additional experiences which have increased her desire. However, as for those which have diminished her desire, Emily identified the added accountability of teachers and the lack of accountability for students and parents. When a student does not perform well, the teacher is blamed. The parent and the student are not held accountable. Emily feels that some aspects of education are outside of the control of the classroom teacher.

While Emily believes she was prepared to teach as far as content is concerned, she does not believe she was prepared to utilize group work and other teaching strategies required by the new Georgia curriculum standards. Emily has had to work at making these strategies a success in the classroom, and she acknowledges that experience can be a good way to learn.

Emily could not say that she would quit teaching if she had a comparable job offer. She has never really considered doing anything else except for interior decorating. Most of the women in her family are teachers.

**Faith.** Faith has been teaching for 21 years, and teaching was not her first career choice. She initially wanted to work for a magazine or a newspaper. She served on a local
board of education for two years. Faith then got a divorce and decided to enter teaching at that point. While on the board of education, Faith had to vote on consolidating the city and county schools. The vote failed. When she went back to take some education courses, the city gave up its charter and the two school systems consolidated. Faith was the first woman appointed to the board of education in that particular county.

Faith began her teaching career in a middle school where she taught for five years. She was also the department chair and team leader there. Faith then moved to the high school and taught for 12 years. She primarily taught language arts to 10th grade honors and seniors and was also the department chair. Faith was chair of the committee that handled the transition to block scheduling. She also redelivered the language arts portion of the Georgia Standards to the faculty. Faith helped plan and carry out the high school’s first prom. She was involved in the booster club, athletics, and was the literary coordinator for the One Act Play. Faith is now a teacher in a neighboring school district where she has taught middle school language arts for the last four years. She has also served as the department chair, team leader, leadership team representative, and helped with a parliamentary procedure team. During her teaching career, Faith has been selected as teacher of the year, once for the school and once for the system.

Faith has had positive relationships with her principals and assistant principals with the exception of the last principal she had while teaching at the high school in her previous school system. She did not feel that he supported her as a teacher. Faith disagreed with the principal and he did not respond well to her disagreeing. Faith’s decision to leave the school was based upon this administrator. She did not have a job in place when she left that position and she was not concerned about her next job at the
time. This experience with an administrator almost caused Faith to leave the field of education. Faith believes she would have left education had she not found her present job.

Collegiality is important to Faith. Her relationship with her colleagues made leaving her previous position very difficult. However, the relationship with the administrator was so strained that she left anyway. Faith has a good relationship with her colleagues now; however, she is hesitant to build relationships knowing that she has a short number of years until retirement. Faith maintains communication with her colleagues from the high school where she taught. These relationships are important to her. Faith does acknowledge that she has not established these same types of relationships with all of her colleagues. Some of these teachers have had an approach to work and working with others which are contrary to Faith’s approach.

In her previous teaching position, Faith was more familiar with the families of the children in her classes. This relationship with the parents was a positive experience. Students knew that Faith could and would contact their parents. Faith believes that she has always maintained a good relationship with parents. When she was literary coordinator, parents were willing to help do whatever she asked of them. While in her current position, Faith is not as familiar with the families that she serves. However, she still feels that a good relationship with the parents exists. Faith has seen a decline in parental involvement over the last decade and does believe that parents need to be more involved in education. She is uncertain as to whether or not this increase in parental involvement will occur.

Student behavior is a major concern for Faith. A lack of discipline was one of the reasons she left her former school. The administration was inconsistent. Faith did not like
others considering a major discipline incident in her classroom as minor. She also didn’t like her view of an incident being questioned and students receiving a light punishment for being what she considered to be extremely disrespectful to her. Faith was vocal as to her views about discipline and this became a problem.

Faith believes consistency is a major part of addressing student behavior. She understands some leniency for 6th grade students but not for those above them. Her students are getting ready for high school and are well aware of the expectations. As for discipline incidents in her classroom, Faith believes these incidents have been addressed. However, she feels that students are given too many chances. As for her classroom, Faith describes her approach in the following statement:

These children for the most part are old enough that they know how to behave. If they don’t behave at home, that is certainly their parent’s prerogative but when you come here this is how we behave here. This is what I expect and I run my classroom that way. If they want to act like a fool somewhere else, they are certainly able to but in my classroom we don’t do that. I have had success with that. I think a lot of it probably had to do with that I was parent before I was a teacher. I was in the process of raising three boys. That gave me much more experience than any behavior management class. I don’t think you can learn that from a class. I do think teachers need to be, especially young teachers, need to be encouraged to be firm from the beginning. They need to be encouraged to be organized and to teach from bell to bell. If you teach from bell to bell, then you do not have a lot of problems because they do not have time to get into anything. Those who do get into stuff are going to get into stuff whether you are teaching
bell to bell or whether you are not teaching bell to bell. That has been my experience.

Faith believes that parents have changed in their approach. The parents are young and inexperienced. Parents do not want their child to be punished for inappropriate behavior. The parents and the students are different from when Faith first entered education. Parents do not demonstrate responsibility and so their children are not learning to be responsible. However, there are parents who hold their children accountable, though the number has steadily declined, and there are students who demonstrate respect for adults.

Faith hopes that she has positively impacted the lives of her students but is unsure if a teacher can be certain of how they influence students. She likes to have former students express their gratitude for having been with her. When Faith was working with literary, she gave parts to students that others would have overlooked. She is not soft-hearted. She has tried to be “warm and fuzzy” but is unable. There are probably a number of students, equal to those who are appreciative, who do not like her. Faith believes she has treated students fairly, and she still likes children and teaching. Overall, she believes she has had a good relationship with students.

Faith feels that she should not complain about salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties. The furlough days she has experienced were necessary, and Faith feels fortunate to have a job. She chooses to come to work early and stays late if there is a need. Her children are grown and she lives alone. This gives Faith a different perspective than she may have had in previous years. She does not like that the state legislature “feels like education is a place that can be cut.” This will hurt the state in the long run. Faith feels satisfied with her life and the education profession.
A sense of efficacy as a teacher is important to Faith as demonstrated by her response to a question about other experiences in education that have increased her desire to teach. She recounts a recent project her low level students completed in her class. These students worked harder than her other students and produced the best products. These moments of success working with students have given Faith a sense of purpose. She has seen many leave her to become productive members of the community. Faith tries to lead by example in giving back to the community. She does feel that her time is coming to an end, but she believes education has served her and her students well.

Being a parent best prepared Faith for the classroom. She feels that young teachers are not prepared to manage the classroom. They are not given enough support or the right mentors. Students discipline procedures are an important part of setting up a classroom. Beginning teachers need to understand the importance of being firm with student behavior. Earlier this year, Faith separated from a co-teacher over a difference in approaches toward classroom discipline. Faith was structured and rule oriented while the co-teacher “just wanted us to all love each other and whatever.” This was the co-teacher’s first year and Faith believes her former co-teacher will have a difficult time as a teacher on her own. Faith’s approach was shaped by her parenting experience, her personality, and the instruction of her parents. Since some of the beginning teachers are very young and without any parenting experience, they lack the same experiences Faith believes helped her best prepare for the classroom environment.

If Faith could quit, she would. She believes that time for her has arrived. She no longer desires to entertain students in an effort to teach them. She no longer wants to attempt to make learning fun. Discipline is also becoming more of an issue for Faith. She
plans to work two more years and then move on to a different job. Faith was ready to get 
out of education after the experience at her previous school. Providence is partly the 
reason she has her current job. However, as Faith thinks about the future, she considers 
her family and the idea of enjoying her life with them absent of the aggravations of 
teaching. Faith does not want to reach the point again of hating her job, as she did her last 
year teaching high school.

**Glen.** This is Glen’s third year in education. Prior to his current position as an 8\textsuperscript{th} 
grade language arts teacher, he student taught in a middle school in the neighboring 
county. His first career choice was a career in drama, theater, or writing. However, Glen 
really wanted to get married and needed an income. He thought he could get a job in 
education because of his gender and the fact that he is middle grades certified.

During his student teaching, Glen was in a 7\textsuperscript{th} grade gifted language arts class. In 
his current position, he has taught language arts for three years. He has also taught 8\textsuperscript{th} 
grade social studies for two years and a language arts remedial class. Glen has taught 
students with a wide range of cognitive abilities.

Concerning his relationship with the administration, Glen feels that he has a good 
relationship. The administration responds to his needs as a teacher, and Glen recognizes 
that administrators have a lot of responsibilities. However, Glen’s job satisfaction has 
been diminished by the light punishment given to students that he refers to the office 
because of behavior problems. He believes that the influence of parents determines the 
punishment that certain students receive. A student from an influential family may get 
detention for misbehavior while a student from an underprivileged family may get in-
school-suspension. Glen fears that this kind of partiality also influences the assignment of
teacher roles as well. He considered himself very passive in his relationship with the administration. This results in administrators asking him first to take care of certain duties because they know he will agree to it. This also has affected how Glen feels about the job. He has learned that a teacher “has to be a hard butt in order not to get trampled over a little bit by the administration.”

Glen has a close relationship with his colleagues. He teaches at a small school. There are five teachers on his grade level, a two man team and a three man team. The teachers are competitive with standardized test scores. However, Glen believes that he and his colleagues remain close in their relationship with one another. He describes their relationship and how this impacts how he feels about the job in the following section:

I would say that we stick together. We share concerns and stuff like that. That has been one of the best parts about the job, the closeness we have with each other, especially on teacher workdays. I think if every day was teacher work day I could come to work every day. We can talk about things and share frustrations, and it is nice to have people you know . . . to be able to talk with an adult in between classes. That has made my job more bearable at times.”

Glen has had some problems with parents. He wants to hold students responsible for being prepared for class and meeting deadlines. Considering the average age of the student that he teaches, Glen figures that in four years “they will be able to die for their country, buy as much porn, lottery tickets, and cigarettes as possible so if they are 14 and they can’t bring a pencil to class, that aggravates me more than anything.” Students fail his class because they cannot turn their work in on time. Glen has a number of students fail. However, he has never had a student fail his class, and also pass the standardized test
for his subject area at the end of the year. Parents do not like that Glen holds their children accountable for being prepared and turning in their work on time. Glen recounts that a parent recently came to him wanting an extension on a project that students had ample time to complete. He would not approve it. The administration may approve of the extension, but he will stand by his decision. This kind of approach has caused tension with parents who take their child’s side. This also has caused some dissatisfaction with the job and has been difficult for Glen to address.

Problems in the area of student discipline are why Glen dislikes his current teaching assignment. He does not like having to address students about sitting in their desk and being quiet. While others may view this as a classroom management issue, Glen views this as a problem with respecting authority. He cannot make students conform. There must be some intrinsic motivation on their part. Glen informs students that there will be consequences for their failure to comply, but it is based on their decision. Discipline issues are very frustrating for Glen as illustrated in the following statement:

In 8th grade in the middle school, you have to be an angry person. You have to be ugly to children. That is the most dissatisfying part of this job, having to be aggressive and not being able to teach what you love. I love English. I love social studies. Doing the discipline on a daily basis. . . . These kids have been in school for how many years? Since they have been five? . . . They do not know yet that they don’t throw stuff in class. That is ridiculous. We should be moving past that. They are in 8th grade. In four years, they will have to be an adult. That is the part I dislike the most. That is it right there for me. I can’t teach, and with high stakes testing and everything, discipline interferes with that so much. That is the
toughest part to me. I will not say too much. . . . You are a bad person if you get mad at a child. You spend 8 hours with them and you say ‘That little . . . right there, gets on my nerves.’ You are a bad person. You are a bad person if you say, ‘You know I teach 8th grade and I teach English. I love the educational process. I think education empowers people but the kids are discipline problems and so I don’t like teaching right now.’ ‘You are a bad person. You are a bad teacher.’

That kind of stuff gets a little old.

Glen believes that by not taking more serious the misbehavior of students the school is setting students up for failure.

While Glen does not see that he makes a positive impact on the lives of students, they come back to him later and tell him that he has made an impact. During his first year of teaching, Glen thought the students were not going to benefit from their time with him. Now, he sees that some students have been successful in high school, and some are on their way to attending college. Having students come back to him and express appreciation for having been in his class is very satisfying for Glen. At times, however, he feels that his position is a “glorified babysitting job.”

When he first started teaching, Glen was satisfied with his salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties. Like his colleagues, he taught three classes in his subject area each day and then had one extended learning class. Now, as a result of budget cuts and his passiveness towards the administration, Glen teaches two social studies classes, two language arts classes, and an extended learning class. This added subject area has diminished his job satisfaction. After-school duties are acceptable. Teachers get equal treatment in reference to bus duty assignments. As for salary, Glen feels that others with
less education make significantly more than him. However, the insurance is good for him considering that he has a family and a small child. Glen does believe that the salary and benefits along with the time off to spend with your family are what keeps people in the classroom. He feels that his job is secure. This job security is comforting considering the lack of security in other professions.

As for other areas that have diminished his desire to teach, Glen is frustrated with the paperwork involved in teaching. Early on, he would take time outside of school to take care of this responsibility, but he no longer takes time from his personal life to get this paperwork done. The biggest frustration for Glen is the lack of respect he feels for being a teacher. While society may talk about the importance of our teachers, Glen does not feel that his contribution is recognized. In addition, his performance is based upon people that he feels he cannot control. Glen illustrates this point in the following statements:

You know, not anything against administrators, but I get judged based on people that I can’t control . . . so I always tell my friends like this, I have friends in business and friends that teach at the college level, I have a lot of professors as friends . . . I always tell them, ‘You know it is like if you ran a business and you have 40, I guess I have 80, because I teach the same 40 kids twice, I have 80 employees and their job performance . . . alters my job performance but I can’t fire them and I can’t make them work . . . I can’t send them home. I can’t get better employees in. But yet there job is what makes my job. Students know they will be promoted to the next grade unless their scores are really bad or they miss many days of school. They also know that certain subject areas are not
important as far as standardized testing is concerned. The accountability rests on the teacher. The focus is on what the teacher will do to help a given student learn even if the student is not willing to make even a modest effort. Glen’s students have performed well on standardized tests, even compared to other school districts in the area. However, because Glen is a beginning teacher, he still receives more classroom observations than many of the other teachers. Considering the academic success of his students, these additional observations are frustrating for him as is the sense that he is not treated as a professional. Glen remarks that on his next job he wants “a bathroom break when I want and a 30 minute lunch by myself . . . I am going to get me a bathroom break and a pack of crackers.”

As for experiences that have increased his desire to teach, learning about the success of students beyond his classroom has been satisfying for Glen. Students mature when they get into high school. They are willing to come back and express their respect and gratitude for him. While they may not demonstrate that type of attitude when they are in his classroom, they show it now that Glen is not pushing them to learn.

As for his preparation to enter the classroom, Glen believes he was well prepared to teach the content. However, as for the stressors that come with teaching, Glen feels that people lied to him. He was told to endure the first year and his experience would improve. However, this improvement did not occur. Again, he goes back to the issue of student discipline. Glen is unable to speak to students the way he thinks appropriate given their behavior. This lack of control frustrates him. Classroom management cannot be taught from a textbook. Teachers develop this over years of experience. Glen
acknowledges that some of his colleagues do well in terms of classroom management, but this is not the case with him.

If Glen could quit, he would, provided he had a comparable job offer. Teaching is not what people present it to be. Veteran teachers talk about how things have changed over the past decade. Glen believes that students are acting as they have in the past. However, education has changed. Teachers are now under greater scrutiny concerning what they teach. While he would quit, Glen would like to remain in education, perhaps teaching on the college level, teaching adult education, or doing something in administration. Glen loves education and considers it empowering.

In an additional interview, Glen was asked how teachers’ job satisfaction affects student learning. Glen believes that job satisfaction affects student learning if the teacher allows it. To illustrate this point, Glen used his own lack of job satisfaction as an example. While he is very dissatisfied with his current teaching assignment, he just received the results of his students’ state writing test for this school year and only three students out of 60 did not pass the test. Glen believes that a lot of teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs. They decide whether or not their satisfaction will affect their job performance.

Without provocation, Glen later emailed additional comments on the topic of job satisfaction and student learning. Over 90% of his students passed the standardized writing test for this school year. His school was ranked first among districts served by the Regional Education Service Agency which consists of several school districts. While he teaches in a rural Title I school, his students still performed well on this test. In Glen’s
case, a lack of job satisfaction does not seem to have had a negative impact on student learning.

**Heather.** Heather has been in education for ten years, and this was not her first career choice. She worked as an accountant prior to teaching. She participated in the Georgia Teacher Alternative Preparation Program (TAPP Program) as a new teacher. Since the program was in its first year, the program leaders did not know what the participants needed in order to be prepared for the classroom. Heather was in the program for two years and the experience was intense but appreciated.

Being married to a football coach, Heather worked in several schools. She has taught 5th grade, middle school, and has been an inclusion teacher at the high school level. She has certification in middle school math and social studies as well as K4-12 special education certification. Heather has taught in small rural schools. Her previous middle school had 950 students and her previous high school had 1200 students. Heather also taught in a small private school that had a student enrollment of 600.

Heather has always maintained a good relationship with her administration, even though she did not always agree with their decisions. Her previous experience in the business field has helped her understand the difficulties of working with the public and the need to be flexible. Heather believes this experience has helped her maintain a good relationship with those in leadership roles. As a manager in a CPA firm, she considers herself to have been in a position similar to that of principals, helping her to relate to the difficulties they experience.

Heather also has a good relationship with her colleagues. She considers the teachers around her to have a close bond with each other. Being able to talk with adults
who can relate to her job experiences adds to her job satisfaction. These relationships also enable her to handle the difficult times on the job.

Most of Heather’s experiences with parents have been positive. The parents of the EBD students that she worked with in a previous school “were not always the easiest to get along with”, but, overall, her experience has been positive with the parents that do visit the school. Problems do occur with those parents who do not routinely come to check on the child. They show up once a year and complain that whatever is wrong is your fault as the teacher. Heather feels that her work is helped by those parents who maintain routine communication with the school and demonstrate that they are supportive.

In reference to discipline problems and job satisfaction, Heather recounts a negative experience she had at a previous middle school. One of her students refused to do any class assignments. The same student informed the administration and the counselors that if Heather asked her to do her work one more time “she would make sure I never made it out of the parking lot alive.” Heather also found out that the student’s mother was in prison for killing someone. Heather requested that the student be moved from her classroom. The student was not moved. Heather was informed that she was the only person who required anything of the student so rather than remove the student from the classroom, the school posted a resource officer outside of the classroom each day. This decision bothered Heather. She is frustrated when the behavior of a child does not change. Depending on the administrator, a student may get in-school-suspension for a given behavior on one day and may receive afterschool detention for the same behavior at a later time. In her current school as well as at previous schools, Heather has seen a lack
of consistency in regard to discipline. If an administrator has been out of the classroom for 10 to 15 years, they may be out of touch with what it is like to teach today. When they were teaching, they may have had a few students overall who disrupted their class. Now, a teacher may have several students in each class who are behavioral problems. The added pressure of standardized testing causes you to try to keep students in the classroom as much as possible. Heather believes teaching today is very different from when some administrators were in the classroom. Current, administrators need to spend some time in the classroom.

Heather believes that students are held less accountable than they were in the past. The accountability is being shifted to teachers. With each passing year students become more apathetic and less compliant. Heather believes this is more of a societal issue than a school problem. She finds the same characteristics with the parents of some of her students. Heather perceives this to be a nationwide problem. There are parents who do not work or cannot stay at a job. These parents demonstrate a lack of accountability and this translates to their children. In addition, education is not valued the way it was in decades past.

Heather believes she has a good relationship with students. She acts like a middle school student when she is teaching. Her approach is different than the approach she used with high school students. Some of the EBD students she has worked with in the past have completed the requirements for a high school diploma and have asked her to attend their graduation ceremony. If even a small number succeed, this gives Heather a sense of accomplishment and purpose. Her satisfaction as a teacher is increased when she can see students being successful beyond her classroom.
Heather would like to make more money. Other school districts provide local supplements for teacher salaries. Her current district does not. She moved back to this area to take care of her sick mother. Heather took a $2500 a year cut in pay as a result of the move. She does think the duties are reasonable. She would like to see the duties equally divided among the staff. Heather feels that people outside of the classroom are unaware of the effort and time teachers sacrifice.

In reference to experiences in education that have diminished her desire to teach, Heather states that the lack of accountability is a key area of frustration for her. While at age 50 she does not see herself getting out of the classroom, the lack of accountability and the behavior of students have caused her to at least consider moving into another area within education. Heather has considered moving back into special education because she has had a good relationship with those students. Being in special education would lessen her accountability in terms of standardized testing. However, Heather acknowledges that any move would not result in her leaving education for she loves teaching.

As for teacher preparation, Heather was not well prepared for the classroom. Her first year was tough and she attributes this to not having a background in education. Her background was in accounting and business. She had taught adult education classes at a local technical school, but that experience was very different. While she did not have difficult students her first year, classroom management was a struggle for Heather. Working with middle school children is a unique experience. While her teacher preparation program addressed classroom management, Heather had no actual experience in the classroom. She feels that some student teaching may have helped her. Now, she has very different students throughout the day and has learned to customize her approach.
based on the students she is teaching. Heather’s satisfaction with the profession was affected when she was struggling initially but once she gained some experience her job satisfaction was no longer affected.

Heather believes she would leave her current position if she had a comparable offer that would keep her in the field of education. She does not think she would go back into the business world. Heather enjoys working with children, even the difficult ones. She did see other people who went through the teacher preparation program with her leave education. She learned that people either like teaching or they don’t. Heather has considered going back to the high school level or teaching at a junior college.

**Ian.** Ian is in his 3rd year of teaching. He began teaching physical education and now teaches 7th grade science and social studies. He considered law enforcement as a career but entered teaching instead, thinking that teaching would be safer and more stable. Prior to coming to his current school, Ian taught in a low income area in a school district located in a different area of South Georgia. All of the students at that school received free breakfast and lunch. Ian taught physical education and also coached baseball and football. In his current school, he coaches football, baseball, and wrestling. His current school has a more diverse student body than his previous school.

As for his relationship with the administration, Ian considers them “approachable and helpful.” He considered himself to have a good but not very close relationship. If he has questions, they are available. Ian is satisfied with the role of the administration. They do his evaluations and provide feedback. He tries to handle the classroom on his own without the intervention of the administration. His job satisfaction has not been affected by the administration.
Ian believes that he has a good relationship with his colleagues, especially his subject area team because they work together planning and organizing lessons. Other than coaching, Ian does not spend much time with teachers on other hallways. Working with other teachers has had a positive impact on his job satisfaction. His relationship with them makes up for the dealing with difficult students.

Ian believes he has a good relationship with parents. Most of them are willing to work with the teachers. On a few occasions parents have shown a lack of interest in their child’s education and this is demoralizing. Ian has discovered that it is sometimes difficult to contact the parents of students who are not being successful academically or in terms of behavior. Ian spends too much personal time trying to contact parents who have not provided the school with a working phone number or email address. This has had a negative impact on his job satisfaction, though minimal.

The biggest contributor to Ian’s job dissatisfaction is student behavior. A few students in each class have a negative impact on the entire classroom. These students are a daily problem. This ongoing problem is frustrating. Ian illustrates the problem by recounting a discipline problem with a female student:

It is an ongoing process that doesn’t end and is frustrating. For example, a girl in my class cussed me out in front of everyone and was back in the classroom three days later without even an apology. It is a cycle that I do not feel like I am winning.

Ian does believe he is having a positive impact on students. While this may be difficult for him to see, Ian believes his actions are a role model and are having a positive effect. Some of the students have a difficult life outside of school. Some of the damage
that has been done to them Ian feels helpless to change. His satisfaction is impacted by knowing that he is making small differences. Ian will accept this as long as he knows his efforts are not entirely in vain.

Ian is not satisfied with his salary. Specifically, he believes his salary falls $10,000 short of what it should be. Other professionals with the same education make more than teachers, and teachers are just as important to society. This aspect of the job is very discouraging. Teacher duties are too many. Ian believes teacher and student morale would improve if teachers could focus solely on teaching and learning. Some of the duties should be eliminated. As for work hours and benefits, Ian is satisfied.

As for other areas that have increased or diminished his desire to teach, Ian does not like working in one area all day. To break up the monotony, he would rather have the opportunity to work in different areas of the school. Ian does enjoy building relationships with athletes and students. He feels he has been able to help them when they have come to him for advice. Teachers want to have a sense of efficacy and know that others appreciate their effort and respect them.

As for teacher preparation, Ian feels he was ready to handle teaching except for dealing with student behavior. Dealing with behavior problems was not a part of his preparation, yet teachers deal with it daily. Teachers need to be trained on how to handle students. However, Ian believes this lack of preparation has not impacted his job satisfaction.

Ian does not believe he would quit if he could. He sees himself in education for the near future. He also believes there are certain aspects of the job that he should focus
on more and thus increase his enjoyment of the job. Ian believes he is educating youth and this makes him feel that his job is important.

**Jonathan.** Jonathan has been in education for four years. This is his second career. He retired from his first career and decided he wanted to teach. He is a self-contained special education teacher for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and teaches four academic areas. Jonathan reviews, amends, and rewrites Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and compiles student Georgia Alternate Assessment (GAA) portfolios for students who do not take the standardized test for regular education students.

Jonathan believes his relationship with the administration is good. He feels respected by those in leadership, receiving positive feedback and recognition from them. Jonathan believes the administration is confident in his ability to address the needs of his students. Administrators have not had a negative impact on his satisfaction with teaching.

As for his colleagues, Jonathan enjoys a positive relationship with his colleagues. Teachers have a mutual respect for one another, knowing the difficulties that each of them faces when dealing with hard to manage students. His relationship with colleagues helps Jonathan endure the stressors that come with teaching middle school.

Jonathan has a minimal relationship with parents. The majority of parents show very little interest in their child’s education. Most of the communication with parents Jonathan initiates. A few of the parents attend meetings or return information. However, Jonathan notes that this lack of interaction with parents has not impacted his job satisfaction. He does not think about quitting because parents are not involved. If they were involved, Jonathan does not feel that this alone would increase his job satisfaction.
Discipline is a major issue with Jonathan. The lack of discipline and the school’s approach to addressing student behavior is directly linked to his job satisfaction. Jonathan’s feelings about this topic are best seen in his own words:

While I enjoy teaching and have a positive relationship with my administration, the lack of discipline and failure of my administration to adequately enforce even the most basic of discipline such as student disrespect to teachers, dress codes, electronic devices, and noise levels in the hall and cafeteria has a very negative impact on my job satisfaction. It is my personal opinion that the lack of discipline and the inability to enforce a discipline program that the Better Seeking Team developed is doing not only a disservice to the students who are chronic offenders of discipline policies, but lowers the overall morale of the teachers as well. Every school has those few students who are not going to abide by school policy or follow acceptable norms of school behavior. They are constantly in trouble, and when in the classroom, they create such a disturbance that the learning environment for all the other students is negatively impacted. I believe that when we implement a discipline program that allows indefinite infractions in the classroom before administration gets involved, we fail not only that student because of the wrong precedent we send him, thinking there is no consequences for their actions, but we also fail the other students in the classroom because of a disrupted learning environment.

When Jonathan initially considered teaching, he thought he would have students who wanted to learn everything he could teach them. He realized that teaching middle school was not going to be this way. Many of the students are not motivated to learn.
They complain about the effort required to complete small tasks. In addition, most students appear to view school only as a time to socialize with their friends. This lack of effort and motivation among students has had a negative impact on how Jonathan views teaching.

Jonathan is satisfied with the salary he receives. He considers teachers to be paid well. He also has a retirement income from his previous employer. Extra duties are as expected. Jonathan attends some of the extra-curricular activities. His work hours and schedule throughout the year allow him to spend a lot of time with his family. This time off makes up for the difficult experiences he has with students.

The only experiences that have significantly impacted his job satisfaction are the experiences that Jonathan has had with students not being held accountable for their behavior and students not being motivated. He believes he can handle the other aspects of the job and is certain that other teachers feel the same way. Parents should be embarrassed by the behavior of their children. Jonathan wonders what the future holds for these students and others and notes that student behavior is a societal problem.

Jonathan enjoys teaching. He does his best toward the profession. He has decided that whether or not his students are interested in learning he will continue to do his best to teach them. He holds himself responsible and is prepared every day for the classroom. He is driven by those students who actually want his help.

Jonathan does feel that he was prepared for the classroom. His teacher preparation program and the responsibilities of his previous career prepared him well for the classroom. While the behavior of students has shocked him, Jonathan knows he will
endure along with his colleagues. His preparation for the classroom has had a positive impact on his experience.

If given the opportunity, Jonathan would change careers. The negative experiences he has had in the classroom have overshadowed the positive experiences. He expresses his thoughts about the way teachers are treated in the following statement:

I think good people leave the classroom when they get a chance because they are tired of being abused verbally and having their efforts thwarted by children who are not held accountable for their behavior.

**Kevin.** Kevin has been in teaching for 19 years. Teaching is his second career. His first career was in law enforcement working with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. He taught adult education for 13 years and has taught 8th grade math and science for the last 6 years.

Kevin has a good relationship with the administration. He senses that they have confidence in his ability and that they are appreciative of him. They know that he does his best each day. They also take a personal interest in Kevin. He hopes that his principal remains in her current position but fears that she will be moved. Kevin believes that a good relationship with the administration affects job satisfaction. If his administration was overly critical or unapproachable, he believes this would diminish his satisfaction with the job.

Kevin has two colleagues that he interacts with on a regular basis. These relationships have been pleasurable, giving him “an avenue to relieve stress and to discuss teaching strategies.” He believes that a teacher’s relationship with their
colleagues is a primary factor determining job satisfaction. Having good relationships with colleagues helps teachers endure the frustrating aspects of the teaching experience. Kevin considers himself to have a good relationship with parents. This is sometimes a problem because many of them want their children in his class. Parents like his fairness and discipline. His students perform as expected and he feels that he is often simply the facilitator. Kevin also feels that the community supports his work. This support makes teaching easier. Students see that education is to be valued and their teacher is to be respected.

Discipline problems have affected Kevin’s job satisfaction. He uses the school’s cell phone policy to illustrate the problem with how discipline is handled:

There is a strict no phone rule. There has been a lack of consistency for enforcing this policy. I have, on more than one occasion, taken a phone from a child for use in the classroom only for the child to show me the phone later that same day. The policy is 30 days or a fine of 25.00 dollars. However, you’ll find no fee was paid and the phone returned. Our principal does not do this, but our two assistants do. Inconsistency like that is frustrating.

Parents do not seem to take seriously their role in reference to student behavior. In today’s classroom, being able to manage the classroom is important, and the struggles that he has faced in this area have certainly diminished Kevin’s job satisfaction.

Kevin believes he has a positive impact on the lives of students. Since parents are not teaching their children to be disciplined, he makes up the difference. Through the sharing of personal experiences, Kevin attempts to teach students the content and how to
behave. After speaking with former students, he knows he is helping them beyond his classroom. This sense of efficacy is encouraging to Kevin.

Kevin took a $38,000 a year pay cut to teach. However, he no longer has to travel as a part of his job. He is satisfied with the work hours and with benefits. He volunteers often for additional duties, including those he considers to be necessary for the school. He knew what the salary and benefits were when he entered this career. Making less than he has in the past has not diminished his job satisfaction.

Another aspect of his experience that has increased his desire to teach is the feeling of students understanding what he is teaching. Knowing this makes you feel “effective, important, and you are at the moment.” Some of his students are behind academically, and helping those students is satisfying. Kevin hopes that the accomplishments these students make “will carry over into every aspect of their experience.”

Kevin’s teacher preparation has affected his job satisfaction, improving his experience. Experience is an excellent teacher about the classroom. Kevin thinks he was as prepared as could be expected. Having a good understanding of the content and of your ability as a teacher is important when beginning as a teacher. Feeling prepared has increased Kevin’s satisfaction with the profession.

Kevin would not quit if he could. He likes education and being around the students. His work hours and time off during the year allow Kevin to be involved in activities outside of education. Given the instability in the economy, many people do not enjoy the kind of job security that he does as a teacher. Kevin considers himself to be fortunate to have job security along with a good salary and benefits.
Lane. This is Lane’s 3\textsuperscript{rd} year in education, and teaching is his first career choice “outside of dreaming to play baseball professionally.” His three years have been at the same middle school. Lane is a 6\textsuperscript{th} grade language arts inclusion teacher. This means that he works as a co-teacher with another 6\textsuperscript{th} grade teacher, serving students with disabilities in their least restrictive environments. Lane also sets up meetings for students with disabilities and ensures that these students receive the accommodations specified in their Individualized Education Program (IEP). As for duties outside of the classroom, Lane has coached middle school girls’ softball and served on the middle school athletic committee.

Lane feels that his relationship with the administration is positive. He does not agree with the decisions that have been made pertaining to what he describes as “an assortment of issues.” He has never had what he would describe as a confrontation with any of his administrators on campus. However, he does feel that his principal “has an intimidation factor about her” because she is unpredictable. Many teachers are careful as to what they say or do in her presence. Lane believes that many teachers try to avoid the principal as much as possible. He illustrates her unpredictability stating:

\ldots Our team or group of teachers recently made a request to make schedule changes to improve the learning environment of our students and the behavior in our classrooms. The principal quickly approved the changes and heralded it as a positive step in the right direction and something we could do anytime we felt it necessary. A few weeks into the schedule change, however, she changed her opinion. She believed that we had set up the classes in an unfair way and that we needed to change the schedules again to “bust up” a certain group of students. This led to frustration among the teachers and a bit of a rift between the teachers
and the principal. Later, the principal came back and discussed yet another possible change in the schedules and was very supportive and encouraging. Nobody ever knows what sort of reaction she is going to have, so approaching her with an idea is sometimes a “scary” proposition.

While concerned about this unpredictability, Lane still maintains that his relationship with the administration is good, allowing for a positive working environment.

As for his relationship with his colleagues, Lane states that these relationships have been one of the major highlights of his career. He believes that his colleagues are supportive and would not be condescending toward him or “in any other way unprofessional or unkind.” His relationship with them encourages him to continue even when situations are bad. Lane feels that he has been blessed to work with his colleagues and that they have had a positive impact on him.

As a co-teacher, Lane communicates often with parents. He focuses on his IEP students but also contacts parents of students without disabilities. He has found that this communication builds a rapport with parents and fosters a friendship with them. Sometimes parents blame the teacher when problems with the child arise. While Lane believes the supportive parents outweigh those who are condemning in their approach to the school, the largest group of parents that he encounters is those who show no interest in the child’s education. Changing this has been difficult in a community where educational expectations are not where Lane feels they should be. His job satisfaction is affected by this experience with parents. While supportive parents increase his satisfaction with the job, non-supportive parents and “those who are rude and
discourteous and those who are indifferent, make my [his] job seem difficult and unfulfilling in regards to teacher-parent relationships.”

Student discipline is a concern for Lane. He believes that it is not addressed effectively. Teachers are scorned in meetings for having the idea that the administration is not acting in response to student behavior. Lane and other teachers believe what the administration is doing is not effective, not that they are not doing anything. He is unsure as to who is to blame for this, teachers or administrators. Lane believes that he and his co-teacher manage the classroom well, setting expectations at the beginning of the year and maintaining those expectations throughout the year. He knows, however, that a certain number of students are going to behave inappropriately regardless of the actions of the teacher. Some students could be paid to behave and they would still act out. These students need to be handled differently and the administration is responsible to ensure that this happens. Some positive changes have been made in regard to student discipline. A tier of interventions has been established that will either change student behavior or move students with behavioral problems into an alternative setting. The downside to this tier of interventions is the length of time it takes to move students into this alternative setting and that the program was implemented in the 3rd quarter of the school year.

As for positively impacting the lives of students, there have been days when Lane wondered if he was helping anyone. In an effort to address budget concerns, the local board of education shorten the school year, lengthened the school days, and increased class sizes. The school day and the class sizes have added more stress to the classroom teacher, even teachers who have co-teachers and paraprofessionals in the classroom.
However, Lane has seen evidence of his positive impact on students. He recounts a situation with a female student who was having problems:

I noticed she seemed sad a lot and I began talking to her. I prayed with her on numerous occasions and asked how she was doing. When she went on a trip to Alabama, she brought me back an Atlanta Braves ‘rally monkey’ because she knew that I was a big Braves fan. I have Braves stuff in my classroom. That was one of the moments when I felt I had made a difference in someone’s life; I made a positive impact.

Lane is satisfied with having a job in the same town where he lives. He does believe that teachers should have a higher salary and would like to make more money. Teachers perform an important task. They have responsibilities and expectations that are unlike other professions. Teachers “may not be operating on human beings, but we are preparing human beings to be effective citizens for life.” Teachers deserve more money than they receive. Early on, Lane figured out what his salary as a teacher would be and was then surprised to find out what he would actually take home in net pay. Lane does not believe that new teachers are aware of how much they will actually keep out of their salary.

The most negative aspect of Lane’s experience has been the condescension displayed by his principal toward the staff. While Lane believes her approach is unintentional, the principal has been very condescending to the staff during grade level meetings when she is informing teachers of what she wants to change. This has diminished Lane’s desire to teach. He feels that she does not have the appropriate level of trust in her teachers. However, the teachers are in the classroom and are teaching the
content on a daily basis. If there is a trust issue with certain teachers, then those teachers should be replaced. If he was in business, Lane believes he would replace the workers he does not trust.

As for experiences that have increased his desire to teach, knowing that he can help another person has been encouraging to Lane. He sees his job as a ministry, “an opportunity to reach people for Christ.” While education is important, it is not Lane’s primary focus. Being a Christian publically and showing by example a life that honors Christ while also having fun is paramount to Lane.

**Marie.** Marie has been teaching for 22 years, and teaching was her first career choice. She has taught in four elementary schools and three middle schools in different counties in Georgia. She performed the typical teacher duties in each of the schools. Marie had a good experience working with students with disabilities. Although her degree is not in special education, her experience in this area helped her learn the Student Support Team (SST) process, how to work with the parents of students with disabilities, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process.

Marie has had varied experiences with administrators. Starting out, administrators were more likely to be supportive. As time has passed, a feeling of support from the administration has diminished. Marie believes this is happening across school systems and has negatively affected her job satisfaction.

Marie has maintained good relationships with her colleagues. This has made her experience more positive. She has seen that when the administration is not supportive of teachers this causes dissension among the faculty. When this dissension has occurred, Marie’s job satisfaction has been affected negatively.
Marie has had good relationships with the parents of her students over the years. She describes these relationships as “very close and meaningful.” Marie began teaching in 1985, a time when schools and parents demanded more in terms of student behavior. Parents were more involved in their child’s education. The morals and values of parents have changed in comparison to the morals and values instilled in Marie by her parents. Now, parents are too lenient at home and blame teachers for many things. While she strives to keep in close contact with parents, Marie has found that many of them do not take responsibility for the child’s behavior.

Student behavior has negatively impacted Marie’s job satisfaction, especially the last four years at her current job. Students are afforded too much due process, and parents are not held responsible. Marie describes the severity of the situation in the following statement:

Administrators put too much on teachers, giving in to children because they do not want to upset the students or their parents. Students are not held accountable for disrespecting their teachers, staying in dress code, having materials or completing work. Zeros are taboo and immediately rolled up to a 60 at the county level. This applies to students that refuse to do any work and tell you just that, so students do not feel that they need to behave. They are not held to a higher standard.

Marie has always loved children and enjoys being able to help them. She feels that she has positively affected many of her students during her tenure. Former students have received higher degrees and have communicated with Marie beyond their classroom experience with her. Marie does feel that without the support of the administration and of
parents having a “positive impact is almost impossible.” Teachers face too many barriers. They are also not treated with the proper respect. The word of students has more importance than the teacher’s.

Marie is partially satisfied with her salary, benefits, work hours and required duties. She believes she should cover the duties assigned to her and that performing her duties should be an enjoyable experience. However, when the administration does not treat you with fairness or respect, these duties turn into obligations. This has greatly impacted Marie’s satisfaction with teaching.

All of the experiences described by Marie have affected her desire to keep teaching. The school climate, the abuse of teachers, and students abusing each other are major concerns for Marie. Gangs and problems associated with the student use of technology outside of school impact what happens in the classroom. People do not understand the behaviors of students inside and outside of school nor do they understand its impact.

On the other hand, recognition from students that she has helped them has been a motivating factor for Marie. When students who are behavior problems hug Marie at the end of the year and express how she has helped them, Marie is encouraged to continue. This lessens the stress she routinely endures.

Marie believes she was prepared for the classroom. Many of her family members are educators. However, there is a difference between the ideal classroom you think about in teacher preparation programs and the real classroom you face when you begin teaching. This has become more apparent to her as she has gained additional experience.
People cannot understand what the classroom is like unless they experience it as a teacher.

If she could, Marie would quit now. She is not happy with the quality of education or the manner in which teachers are treated. Marie has made certain financial plans in an attempt to hasten her departure from education. She feels that she is abused as a teacher, and this mistreatment has impacted her decision to remain in the profession. While Marie does not desire to change careers, she does want to retire before age 60. Until then she will continue to perform at her best and “remain hopeful that legislators will listen to teachers and that state and local board of education systems will require higher standards when hiring administrators.” Marie believes that those in leadership are responsible for the quality of education students receive and for the manner in which teachers are treated. She closes her responses with the following statement: “If we are hired because of our qualifications, then let us teach, let us discipline and respect us for what we are hired to do.”

Nancy. Nancy has taught for 30 years. Teaching was not her first career choice. Prior to teaching, she worked for the state serving mentally handicapped adults. Nancy has worked at four Title I middle schools and an alternative school. She has served as a reading specialist and has taught classes in language arts, science, and social studies. She performs the typical teacher duties of creating lesson plans, contacting parents, keeping records. At times, she performed administrative functions for a team of teachers, scheduling students and planning field trips. While at the alternative school, Nancy served as the schools technology coordinator, installing software, recording inventory, and attempting to solve technology problems.
At some schools, Nancy was satisfied with her job. This satisfaction was related to her being treated as a professional and being given “the tools and support needed to teach.” At other schools, Nancy was not happy. She felt that she was abused and not given the support needed to teach. Nancy considers the administration at each of her schools responsible for how she was treated and for the resources she was or was not provided.

Nancy has had a good relationship with her colleagues, in particular those who shared her outlook toward teaching. There were teachers that she considered her personal friends. Being in the classroom all day, teachers feel isolated. Having colleagues with whom you have a good relationship and being able to communicate with them throughout the day helps alleviate this feeling of isolation. Nancy believes that her colleagues have a significant impact on her job satisfaction.

Nancy has had positive and negative experiences with parents. When parents appear to respect teachers, then parent-teacher meetings are productive. When the administration does not respect teachers, then this mindset is picked up by parents. This impedes communication between the parents and the school. The community’s perception of the school is also based upon how the community perceives the school administration. While Nancy has enjoyed a good relationship with parents, she also has endured difficult parents. These parents are usually the parents of hard to manage students. These confrontations with parents have had some impact on her job satisfaction but have not discouraged her to the point of giving in or giving up.

As with parents, Nancy has had good and bad relationships with administrators. A feeling of being supported is important to teachers. When this feeling is not present, the
learning environment is negatively affected as well as teachers’ job satisfaction. Nancy has worked in good situations and also in the worst of environments. She has discovered that teachers’ job satisfaction is based on feeling supported by the administration, collegiality, and the ability to work with students and their families.

Nancy believes she has positively impacted the lives of some students. As for other students, she believes she has had no impact. Nancy hopes the students she has helped outweigh the students she has not been able to reach. When she is able to see students successful beyond her classroom, Nancy gains a sense of purpose. This sense of purpose translates into more effort and more job related happiness for her and her colleagues.

Nancy believes she was prepared for the classroom. She was satisfied with her career for several years. She also went back for an additional degree. However, as her career nears its end, Nancy feels that no program could have prepared her “for teaching in the abusive environment that was allowed by the administration.”

Nancy has been satisfied with her salary, benefits, work hours, and duties. She feels that some of the required duties were a waste of time but overall her administrators have not been unreasonable in their requests. Nancy has enjoyed a lengthy career that has given her the opportunity to spend a lot of time with her family as well as engage in activities outside of education.

The lack of administrative support, student behavior, and poor school climate has encouraged Nancy to retire from teaching. She feels “abused and was [is] tired of the emotional and physical drain.” Two years have passed since Nancy has dealt with some of these experiences. However, Nancy has not recovered from these experiences and still
has a negative attitude toward the school system. She would work longer but she does not want to jeopardize her health and emotional well-being. Nancy is now ending her career hating teaching. She enjoyed teaching when students were motivated to participate. She has seen former students leave her classroom and be productive. However, Nancy has also seen many students who lacked motivation and were disruptive to the learning environment. Student and teacher accountability has changed and so have her feelings toward education.

**Coded Interviews**

A two-tier coding process was used to identify themes and subthemes in the interviews. The major themes and subthemes were developed. I transcribed the interviews, sent the transcripts to the participants for additions/corrections, and summarized the interviews. This process was completed with the help of another professional in the field, Dr. Debbie Mullis. Dr. Mullis is a veteran teacher and school administrator at the elementary and middle school level with advanced degrees in Middle Grades Education and Educational Leadership. Dr. Mullis helped identify themes, address issues of redundancy, and develop a list of all themes and subthemes. Tables were created to compare and contrast responses. For reasons related to presentation, the participants were divided into four groups based on their order in the interview process. Each of the tables (Appendix F), with the exception of the last one, contains the responses of four participants. A sample section from the first of four tables is provided below:
Table 4.1

Sample from Coded Interviews Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Relationship with colleagues</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>It is very comfortable and that is nice</td>
<td>My strongest job satisfaction factor</td>
<td>It is definitely one of the best parts… Everybody knows each other. They do stuff a lot of times together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Provides feedback</td>
<td>If I am having trouble with something, somebody can go “Well try this”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Positive relationship</td>
<td>Pretty good relationship with the school as a whole, it has really become a family, very close and comforting, supportive of one another</td>
<td>I really like the colleagues that I work with…They are more student-oriented</td>
<td>The relationship with this staff is wonderful. It is a true team effort on this hall.</td>
<td>At both schools that I have worked at, I could not ask for a better group of people to work with. They are very supportive…Some of them are the closest friends that I have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7 Makes up for other areas of frustration</td>
<td></td>
<td>The bond that I have with my co-workers offsets the frustration experienced with other areas of this job.</td>
<td></td>
<td>This makes up for some of the issues that I deal with, and they deal with, associated with student behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following themes were addressed most often by participants: relationship with the administration, relationship with colleagues, relationship with parents, student discipline, teacher efficacy, desire for teaching/working with children, job security, and relationship with students. Teachers were asked about other aspects of their experience, but their responses were brief and less passionate in comparison. The desire to teach and work with children, job security and teacher relationships with students, were unanticipated themes as is apparent in the selected interview prompts. Additional themes included their relationship with the community, teacher preparation, teacher isolation, and teacher accountability. Participants were also asked about teacher salary, benefits, work hours, required duties, their desire to remain or leave their current position, the impact of job satisfaction on teacher performance and student achievement, and what determines teacher mobility in rural Title I schools. While teacher responses were informative and helped answer the research questions established at the beginning of the study, participants devoted more attention during the interviews to the aforementioned major themes.

The major themes included a number of subthemes. For example, responses related to student discipline were passionate and lengthy. Subthemes included but were not limited to the school being too lenient, inconsistent enforcement, the lack of parental help, the importance to teaching, the influence of society, the lack of student accountability, and ineffective interventions on the part of school leadership. Subthemes in the area of the teacher’s relationship with the administration included confidence in the teacher, appreciation for the teacher, personal interest in the teacher, approachableness, respect for the teacher, recognition of the teacher’s work, and an administration that
shows understanding of teacher frustrations. Participants also stressed the importance of collegiality. Subthemes for collegiality included relieving stress, providing feedback, mutual respect, mutual understanding, and sharing concerns.

**Student discipline.** Participants indicated strong feelings concerning their experiences related to student discipline and their ideas concerning the impact of student discipline on the teaching experience and student learning. Participant responses illustrating how teachers feel overall about student discipline and how they see student discipline issues impacting the teaching experience included, “it is why I dislike teaching 8\textsuperscript{th} grade . . . to me that is the biggest problem” (Glen), “it takes a lot to continually have others treat you with contempt” (Jonathan), and “discipline is probably the single most problem that has negatively affected my job satisfaction” (Ian). Participants addressed specific aspects of student discipline. For example, Cathy stated, “I think the whole staff feels that it is too lenient here.” In terms of consistency, Dave responded, “I feel like discipline is simply not consistent.” As for student accountability, responses included, “there seems to be no accountability for the students themselves or parents” (Emily), “the continuing lack of accountability . . . this is very frustrating (Heather), and “students are not held accountable” (Marie). Additional student discipline subthemes included the following: (1) a lack of parental support, “student behavior is a major issue for me and many of my colleagues” (Cathy), (2) the negative impact on job satisfaction, “I think student discipline . . . has an enormous impact on whether or not teachers stay in the classroom” (Emily), (3) the influence of society, “it is a matter that they are feral and they don’t know” (Andy), (4) the lack of student motivation, “it is stressful to see children lack the motivation to want to learn” (Emily), (5) the lack of improvement, “I don’t see it
getting any better” (Glen), and (6) the ineffectiveness of school interventions, “I believe it [student discipline] is not dealt with effectively” (Lane).

**Collegiality.** Participants also indicated strong feelings concerning the impact of collegiality on their job satisfaction, with some participants identifying their relationship with their colleagues as the strongest job satisfaction variable in their teaching experience. For example, Cathy referred to collegiality as “my strongest job satisfaction factor” and Dave describes this same aspect of the teaching experience as “definitely one of the best parts.” Responses of a similar nature included “that has been one of the best parts about the job” (Glen) and “I think this is one of the biggest factors impacting satisfaction for me along with other teachers” (Kevin).

Participant responses also addressed how collegiality impacts their job satisfaction. Reasons given included “an avenue to relieve stress” (Kevin), receiving feedback, “a sense of mutual respect” (Jonathan), “having adults to talk with and who can relate to what you are dealing with in the classroom” (Heather), and sharing concerns with one another. Several participants praised their relationship with their colleagues with comments such as “it has really become a family” (Amy), “the relationship with this staff is wonderful” (Andy), “I could not ask for a better group of people to work with . . . some of them are the closest friends that I have” (Dave), and “I probably hated to leave a circle of colleagues when I left the high school worse than anything I have ever done” (Faith). These participants also alluded to how collegiality compensates them for the difficulties they experience in other aspects of the job. Glen stated, “That [relationship with colleagues] has made my job more bearable at times” and Heather stated, “This [relationship with colleagues] helps when the job gets difficult.”
**Relationship with administration.** Another major theme revealed in the interviews was the teacher’s relationship with the administration. Thoughts and feelings were mixed concerning the positive or negative nature of these experiences. Positive remarks were made concerning administrators who demonstrated confidence in the teacher’s ability, appreciation for the teacher, personal interest in the teacher, approachableness, respect for the teacher, and who gave recognition of teacher work. Positive statements were also directed toward administrators who responded to teacher needs and showed an understanding of teacher frustrations. Examples of positive comments included “I know they are confident in my ability to meet the needs of the students” (Jonathan), “they appreciate me” (Kevin), “they are seeming to recognize what I am doing” (Amy), and “as far as . . . listening to my concerns, I really like them” (Glen).

Interviewees also shared and commented on negative experiences with administrators, experiences which increased their job dissatisfaction. These experiences included administrators who were overly critical, unpredictable, and abusive. Lane had several comments and experiences to share demonstrating his negative relationship with an administrator. Lane described this aspect of his experience as the “biggest negative experience I’ve encountered that has diminished my desire to teach.” Lane’s comments referenced a feeling on his part of condescension directed toward the staff by the principal along with an uncertainty on the part of the staff as to the type of reaction they may receive from the principal when they attempt to address their concerns. Teachers, therefore, try to avoid her. Lane continued, “I feel that our principal has an intimidation factor about her. . . . Therefore many teachers are very careful of what they say or do.
Other participants, such as Marie and Nancy, also addressed problems in their relationships with administrators. Marie stated, “I have had experiences where my administrators were very supportive, but overall, as the years have gone by, that support has dwindled.” Similarly, Nancy commented, “did not get the support needed to teach middle school students” and “I felt used and abused.”

However, other participants indicated that their relationship with the administration had little impact on their job satisfaction. Cathy stated, “my relationship with the administration has not decreased my job satisfaction . . . has not really increased my job satisfaction either.” Ian and Jonathan also commented on how little the teacher-administrator relationship impacts their job satisfaction. Ian stated, “This [relationship with administration] has not had an impact on my job satisfaction” and Jonathan remarked, “The administration has not negatively affected my satisfaction with teaching.”

**Relationships with parents.** Responses to interview prompts indicated that teacher-parent relationships also have a minimal impact on job satisfaction. Several participants commented on the lack of interest and involvement on the part of parents. For example, Jonathan stated, “the majority of my student’s parents or guardians show very little interest in their child’s education.” Similarly, Lane commented, “the largest group of parents is the group that is completely disengaged in the educational lives of their children.” However, experiences with disengaged parents appears to have had a minimal impact on the job satisfaction of these teachers. Jonathan addressed this in with the following comments: “While this lack of interaction with parents is discouraging, it has no direct correlation to my job satisfaction. . . . If parents were more involved, I am
not sure if this would raise my satisfaction level.” Likewise, Ian stated that parent problems have “a negative impact on job satisfaction but very minimal.”

Participants also described positive experiences with parents. Responses included “they are willing to work with teachers” (Ian), “I have had some very close and meaningful relationships with many of the parents” (Marie), and “I know almost all the kid’s parents or grandparents. This is real good. . . . Probably 95% of them have been very supportive” (Dave). Amy even commented on how her relationship with parents encourages her to put forth more effort and Kevin stated that his relationship with parents communicates to students that education is important and that he is “to be respected as their teacher.”

Problems with the teacher-parent relationship included parents not being supportive, a lack of parental accountability, and the difficulty of contacting parents. Concerning coaching and his relationship with parents, Dave concluded, “The parents drove me not to coach again. I loved the game. I love the kids but I did not love the sunshine and I did not love the parents.” Marie addressed the accountability aspect stating, “Parents do not discipline as much at home and blame the teacher for many things . . . many do not want to be held responsible for their child’s actions at school.” As for contacting parents, Ian has “found it is very hard to contact parents of students who are not doing very well, or have behavior problems.”

**Teacher efficacy.** Another major theme was teacher efficacy. Teacher responses to questions pertaining to teacher efficacy and the impact of a sense of efficacy on teacher job satisfaction revealed the following subthemes: improves satisfaction, difficult to determine, making an impact, not making an impact, types of impact, teacher sees
evidence, and importance of efficacy to teacher. As for the importance of making an impact on the lives of students, responses included “that is the best part of my job” (Andy), “I try to dwell on that . . . teachers need to know that what they are doing does matter” (Cathy), and “I think most teachers simply want to know that they matter” (Ian). Participants shared several stories and made direct statements concerning their impact on students. These statements included, “I am changing them” (Amy), “I do I know I do” (Andy), “I have seen students go on to do great things” (Emily), and “I feel I positively impacted many students’ lives” (Nancy). Respondents also remarked as to the impact of teacher efficacy on job satisfaction. Cathy stated, “One of the most satisfying things for a teacher is to have a child . . . come back and say ‘Thank you’.” Teachers did, however, address the difficulty of determining at times the amount of impact they are having on students.

**Relationship with community.** Participants were also asked about their relationship with the community. Responses were limited in comparison to other areas of discussion. Comments addressed the importance of community involvement and support as well as positive and negative experiences encountered by participants. Responses also addressed the impact of the teacher-community relationship on teacher mobility decisions. Dave stated, “By and large, there is an excellent situation with the community” Kevin in like manner remarked, “I feel that the community is supportive of me as a teacher. Having parents and the community on your side makes the job much easier.” On the other hand, some participants made negative statements in regard to their relationship with the community. These statements included, “the community overall is simply not interested in what goes on here” (Cathy), and “education is seen as a money wasting
frivolity” (Amy). As for the impact of the community on teacher mobility, Dave
responded to a question about why teachers stay in rural Title I schools with the
following statement: “I think teachers stay . . . because they know everybody . . . this is
also why they leave. They want something new, something different.”

**Teacher compensation.** Responses to questions pertaining to salary, benefits,
work hours, and required duties indicated that teachers would like to make more but
many considered these aspects of the job to be acceptable. Participants did address recent
cuts in pay. Andy stated, “They have started taking money away from me and then give
me more duties.” Emily also commented, “Recent cuts to our pay, though not huge, have
really been discouraging.” While several participants indicated that teachers should be
paid more, most were satisfied with their pay and pay did not appear to be a significant
variable in terms of job satisfaction.

**Teacher preparation.** Teachers also addressed their perception of teacher
preparation in response to the respective interview prompt. Subthemes as revealed in
their responses included appropriate preparation, the impact on satisfaction, the need for
more experience, the importance to the teacher, misconceptions about teaching, student
behavior, partial preparation, and content knowledge. Responses indicating that the
appropriate preparation was experienced included, “the preparation I received through
my program more than prepared me to become a teacher” (Jonathan), “yes . . . as well as
I could expect” (Kevin), and “yes, I feel that I was prepared” (Nancy). Responses
indicating a partial preparation included “there’s very little to nothing about how to
teach” (Lane), “I was prepared for the ideal classroom.” (Amy), and “I had an idea of
what to expect but did not truly know what to expect” (Cathy). The impact of teacher
preparation on job satisfaction can be seen in the following comments: “I would say that my preparation affected my satisfaction with teaching initially” (Heather) and “the lack of preparation has not really impacted my satisfaction” (Dave). Addressing problems related to student behavior was mentioned by several participants as an area where they were unprepared. Glen remarked, “I feel lied to” in regard to student behavior and Ian commented, “The only aspect that I was not prepared for was how to handle behavior problem students.” Nancy made the following stronger statement in regard to teacher preparation and student behavior: “I felt that there was no preparation that would prepare me for teaching in the abusive environment that was allowed by the administration.”

**Additional themes.** Additional themes revealed in the interviews were the teacher’s personal interest in children, the school environment and teaching, job security in a struggling economy, a feeling of isolation, relationships with students, teacher accountability, and the impact of job satisfaction on student performance. Andy commented, “I like working with children” and Dave concurred stating, “I like working with middle school students.” Several participants indicated that they valued their job more in light of the current economic problems in the country. Responses illustrating this theme of job security included “I am fortunate to have a job” and “it is secure . . . a lot of places are at risk, especially right now.” A feeling of isolation was seen in the following statements from Ian: “I do not like being confined to one particular area for the entire work day. . . being in the same place all day gets monotonous.” As for teacher accountability, several statements from participants addressed this theme including “everything falls on the teacher” (Emily), “the accountability is all on the teacher” (Glen), and “the more the accountability has shifted to teachers and the more that we
have to do to make sure they [students] are successful” (Heather). And finally, concerning job satisfaction and student performance, Andy stated, “I find that if you don’t like what you do, be it teaching or ditch digging, you don’t put much effort into it” and Cathy commented, “Teacher not happy, nobody happy and not much learning or effective teaching going on.”

**Research Questions**

There were six research questions that guided the development of the interview prompts and the elaborating probes utilized by the researcher during the interviews and follow-up interviews. The conclusions I reached regarding these research questions are provided in the sections that follow.

1. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job dissatisfaction?

Teacher satisfaction is negatively impacted by their experiences with parents, administrators, and students. In regard to parents, minimal parental involvement, the inability to feel that you can relax in public, racial animosity, disagreements over athletics, a lack of support, a lack of interest, a feeling of helplessness regarding parental involvement, and little sense of personal responsibility on the part of parents contributed to teachers’ job dissatisfaction. Teacher responses to these experiences included: “the parents drove me not to coach again . . . I love the kids . . . I did not love the parents” (Dave), “makes me want to try harder” (Amy), and “my job satisfaction is impacted by this on a variety of levels” (Lane). The most often noted problem was the lack of parental involvement or the perception that parents are not interested in their child’s education. Jonathan stated “the majority of my students’ parents or guardians show very little
interest in their child’s education,” and Lane remarked, “The largest group of parents is
the group that is completely disengaged in the educational lives of their children.” The
job dissatisfaction created by a lack of parental support and interest, which is
communicated through a lack of parental involvement, is supported by previous research.
These studies have shown a positive relationship between parental involvement and
teacher satisfaction (Skinner, 2008), and the negative impact of parental support
problems on teacher mobility decisions and teacher retention (Berry et al., 2007; Elfers et
al., 2006). However, in conjunction with previous research (Metropolitan Life Insurance
Company, 2008), the question remains as to how much of an impact teacher-parent
relationships have on teacher satisfaction. While teachers voiced a concern about parental
involvement, responses also indicated that the problem is not a major satisfaction factor
for them. For example, Jonathan stated, “While this lack of interaction with parents is
discouraging, it has no direct correlation to my job satisfaction. . . . If parents were more
involved, I am not sure if this would raise my satisfaction level.” Several of the
participants who indicated concerns related to teacher-parent relationships also indicated
an overall positive relationship with parents (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company,
2008). Other areas of the teaching experience seem to have a much larger impact on
teacher satisfaction (Tye & O’Brien, 2002).

Teacher responses to questions about their experiences with administrators
indicated teacher-administrator relationships can have a strong impact on teacher
satisfaction. One of the participants left her previous school due to her relationship with
an administrator. Faith stated, “the reason I left there, because I disagreed very strongly
with my principal and he was not too keen on anyone who disagreed with him . . . I was
so unhappy . . . almost caused me to get out completely.” In a similar situation, Amy recounted, “difficult to teach whenever I was constantly afraid of how what I was doing was going to be presented . . . seriously considered getting out of teaching.” Lane added, “The biggest negative experience I’ve encountered that has diminished my desire to teach is the condescension that I’ve felt from our principal to the staff.” These negative perceptions concerning the teacher-administrator relationship were the result of such factors as the teacher feeling abused by the administration, the administration not accepting criticism, a lack of respect for teachers, and unpredictable responses from administrators. While some research has indicated only a minimal relationship between administrators’ leadership styles and teacher morale (Hunter-Boykin & Evans, 1995; Marston et al., 2006), additional research has shown a significant relationship between teachers feeling supported by their administrators and teacher satisfaction (Anderson, 2000; Berry et al., 2007; Guarino et al., 2006; Huysman, 2008; Skinner, 2008). Perhaps a distinction should be made between the administration’s style of leadership and the administrative support teachers perceive based on their experiences. In this study, among the participants who made the strongest negative statements, one teacher left a position due to feeling that the principal would not listen to her concerns, and the other teacher works in a setting where he feels the principal is unapproachable due to her previous responses to teacher concerns. Both of these teachers were silent concerning the style of leadership exhibited by the administration. Their frustrations were based on feelings stemming from not being able to approach the administration or have their ideas given due consideration. The teacher who expressed a fear of approaching the administration is a beginning teacher. His fear is supported by research which has found that teacher
dissatisfaction may occur for beginning teachers due to their feeling intimidated by their administration, with a more trusting relationship being built over time (Marston et al., 2006). The administrator-teacher relationship problems described by participants in the study appear to be related to the personal aspect of the relationship more than the professional, based more on feelings about administrator-teacher interaction than with the actual decision-making process used by their leaders. Interestingly, even those participants who had bad experiences with administrators indicated an overall positive perception of administrators, some also voicing a sympathetic understanding of the inherent difficulties of administrative work.

The greatest contributor to job dissatisfaction among teachers in this study was student behavior, even among teachers who stated that student behavior was not a problem for them in the classroom. Dave described it as “my main area of dissatisfaction.” Glen added, “That [student behavior] is the most dissatisfying part of this job.” One participant left their previous teaching assignment due to the school’s approach to discipline and another considered leaving as a result of one incident. Jonathan concluded, based on his experiences with discipline problems, “[behavior] lowers the overall morale of the teachers . . . [and] severely impacted my job satisfaction.” Based on teacher responses, the specific discipline related problems were: insufficient punishment, inconsistency among administrators, lack of parental support, severity of behaviors, impact on teaching, lack of student accountability, lack of student motivation, and lack of student interest. Teachers considered student discipline to be outside of their responsibility as teachers. Lane stated, “I believe it falls into the hands of the administrators to do whatever necessary.”
The negative impact of student behavior on the teaching experience is seen in several studies (Anderson, 2000; Ingersoll, 2001; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009), especially among novice teachers. While the beginning teachers in this study did indicate a concern about student behavior, the veteran teachers were just as vocal about discipline-related problems. Nancy, who has 30 years of experience, described the impact student behavior had on her: “I felt abused and was tired of the emotional and physical drain . . . I still haven’t recovered totally.” Marie, a teacher of 22 years, stated, “Discipline problems have definitely affected my job satisfaction.” More time in the interviews was spent on student behavior than any other topic. Every teacher, with the exception of one who participated in a pilot interview, expressed concerns related to student behavior, most indicating that student behavior has the greatest impact on their teaching experience and on their satisfaction with the profession.

While teachers indicated that experiences with student behavior, administrators, and parents contributed the most to their job dissatisfaction, other areas of dissatisfaction were also mentioned including salary, benefits, required duties, teacher preparation, isolation, and teacher accountability. These areas are mentioned several times in prior studies with the exception of feeling isolated, though isolation may be alluded to in some of those studies. Concerning this sense of isolation, Ian stated, “I do not like being confined to one particular area for the entire work day . . . being in the same place all day gets monotonous.” This sense of isolation is addressed later as an area for further research. As for salary, benefits, required duties, and teacher preparation, participant responses were mixed as to the impact of these areas on teacher satisfaction, with some
participants indicating satisfaction and dissatisfaction concerning the same area, for example salary.

2. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job satisfaction?

Experiences that increase teacher job satisfaction among participants include a sense of efficacy, positive relationships with administrators, job security, relationships with colleagues, and working with students. Teachers indicated that administrative relationships were positive when personal interest in the teacher was demonstrated (Margolis & Nagel, 2006), the administrator was approachable (Brown & Wynn, 2007), work was recognized (Berry et al., 2007), positive feedback was given (Margolis and Nagel, 2006), teachers’ needs were addressed (Certo & Fox, 2002), confidence in teachers was exhibited (Berry et al., 2007), and teachers felt appreciated (Ingersoll, 2001; Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Positive comments concerning the administrator-teacher relationship included, “I like my administrators all the way up to the superintendent” (Amy), “Overall, I have a good relationship” (Cathy), and “I think I have a good relationship with them” (Ian). An overall sense of having a good relationship with administrators was evident even among teachers who had bad experiences with an administrator.

A sense of efficacy as a teacher seemed to be a strong job satisfaction factor (Perrachione et al., 2008). Several participants indicated that efficacy was important to them and that they were having a positive impact on the lives of students, in regard to content knowledge and behavior. Andy, one of the pilot interview participants, described teacher efficacy as “the best part of my job. It’s great to be able to track your successes
and failures in real time and over time.” Similarly, Kevin added, “You hope that what you have been able to do will carry over into every aspect of their experience.” As for the evidence of efficacy, several teachers described what they had seen and heard regarding the successes of former students. Heather stated, “Several of them [former students] are graduating and they passed the graduation tests.” Kevin added, “Having spoken to former students, I know I am helping them in their life.” Participants indicated that trying to help students and seeing their progress beyond the classroom is very satisfying and motivates participants to continue in the profession. According to the Locke and Latham’s (2002) “high performance cycle” (p. 712), when these successes are recognized and rewarded, worker’s efficacy is further increased and workers are encouraged in reference to job-related challenges in the future.

Participants clearly indicated that collegiality has the largest impact on their job satisfaction, making up in many instances for their other areas of frustration (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). Responses to prompts regarding the impact of collegiality included “my strongest job satisfaction factor” (Cathy) and “it is definitely one of the best parts” (Dave). Previous studies have found that collegiality is a strong component of teacher satisfaction and teacher retention (Berry et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Brunetti, 2001; Busch et al., 2001; Certo & Fox, 2002; Miller et al., 1999; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). One of the participants who left her previous teaching job because of a bad relationship with an administrator noted, “I probably hated to leave a circle of colleagues when I left the high school worse than anything I have ever done” (Faith). Participants spent more time commenting on their relationships with colleagues than they
did on any other topic with the exception of student behavior. Certainly, no other topic was discussed more in terms of job satisfaction.

3. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the difficulties of teaching?

Participants made a distinction between the daily work of teaching and the work of the teacher overall. As for the daily work of the teacher, responses indicated that student behavior has the greatest negative impact on the teacher’s experience. When student behavior is not managed, “no learning takes place and everything is in chaos” (Amy). Behavioral problems create a “very stressful” (Emily) experience for the teacher. Moreover, required duties such as paperwork and the non-stop monitoring of students can be frustrating. Andy stated, “The three things I don’t like about school are paperwork, ugly children, and ugly parents”, and Glen noted that “my next job I am going to get a bathroom break when I want and a 30 minutes lunch be myself.” As for their work overall, teachers indicated that increased accountability (Guarino et al., 2006), initial misconceptions concerning teaching, and a sense of isolation (Brown and Wynn, 2007) make their job more difficult. Teachers perceived that student and parental accountability has decreased while teacher accountability (Huysman, 2008; Tye & O’Brien, 2002), especially in reference to standardized testing, has increased. In addition, participants believed that increased teacher accountability has a negative impact on other areas of the teaching experience such as collegiality.

As for feeling isolated, some of the teachers stated that their teaching assignment was monotonous. They stayed in the same classroom each day and taught the same content throughout the day and from year to year. The lack of opportunity to work in
different areas throughout the school creates a feeling of isolation. The feeling of isolation may become entrenched in the teacher’s emotions when the teacher also feels shunned by the administration, colleagues, students, or parents. The teachers that mentioned isolation also had significant concerns with student behavior and the administration. In one case, a beginning teacher stated he had a positive but not close relationship with the administration, interacted with only certain staff members, and that student behavior is his most serious concern.

A lack of understanding as to the realities of the classroom was addressed by participants in response to prompts dealing with teacher preparation. Several of the participants stated that they had misconceptions about teaching prior to entering the profession. Glen stated, “I feel lied to” and Lane remarked, “It’s absolute culture shock.”

4. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the impact of teacher job dissatisfaction on teacher performance?

The responses to the prompts on the interview guide yielded little data related to the impact of teacher job dissatisfaction on teacher performance. Some of the teachers participated in an additional interview and were asked this question specifically. Responses indicated different beliefs about the impact on performance. Some participants believed that dissatisfied teachers would not perform well. For example, Andy responded, “I find that if you don’t like what you do, be it teaching or ditch digging, you don’t put much effort into it.” Cathy also stated, “Teacher not happy, nobody happy and not much learning or effective teaching going on.” However, other teachers believed that the teacher determined if their dissatisfaction impacted performance. Glen stated, “I think a
lot of teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs, but you make the decision whether you allow that to affect your job performance.”

If motivation theories are considered, Vroom’s expectancy theory proposes that people are motivated by the expectation that their behavior will result in a desired outcome (Vroom, 1994). If a teacher is dissatisfied because their experiences in the profession are not meeting their desires (Plant, 1975) or needs (Maslow, 1943) then motivation will decrease. A decrease in motivation would seemingly translate into poor performance. If living in poverty hinders student learning (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2008), and Title I schools are by definition poverty stricken, then a large step of faith is not required to conclude that dissatisfied teachers would compound the obstacles to learning and teaching already present for students in rural Title I schools.

5. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers continue to teach in rural Title I schools?

Teachers were mixed in terms of their willingness to stay or leave their current teaching assignment and in their willingness to stay in the profession. Their responses helped address the last two research questions. As for those who indicated that they would stay, reasons provided included job security, salary, working with students, relationship with the community, and the personal connection one has to the geographical area. Participants never complained in their responses about being in rural or Title 1 schools (Huysman, 2008). Dave stated, “I think teachers stay in rural schools because they know everybody. . . . Most of us grew up here and it’s home.” Although there are better paying jobs elsewhere, we prefer to stay here for the quality of life offered.” And Andy commented, “I have stayed in a rural school because I like the fact I know my
students, their parents and grandparents. If you live in . . . [the] county and are
between the ages of 10 and 38 I’ve taught you. It’s great to be able to track your
successes and failures in real time and over time.” As for working with students, some
teachers are drawn to students with the needs common to students in Title I schools. Amy
addressed this idea in the following statement: “Because education is not valued by
families in these areas, the students are often behind. This means that there are more
opportunities for students to suddenly get it. Seeing that you’ve made a difference . . .
that you’ve succeeded . . . is exhilarating. It’s worth coming in to work another day for.”

6. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why
teachers leave rural Title I schools?

Amy also addressed the reasons teachers leave rural Title I schools: “The shortage
of funding, supplies, local out-of-school learning opportunities for students, community
educational role models, and personal intellectual stimulation just add to the problem.”
Only six of the fourteen participants in the study indicated they wanted to stay in their
current position. Of those who wanted to leave their current teaching assignment, only
two indicated they would do something else in education. Since student behavior was a
major concern of nearly all participants, a reasonable conclusion would be that teachers’
experiences with discipline-related problems have an effect on their decision to stay or
go. The relationship between student behavior and teacher frustration was apparent
during the interviews. Moreover, problems in other areas such as with administrators and
parents often had a discipline connection.
Summary

The participants in the study represented a combination of 201 years of teaching experience. By sharing their experiences during the interview process, as summarized in first section of this chapter, these participants provided teachers with a voice to express the high and low points of the profession. Three of the major themes pertain to the “relatedness needs” (Alderfer, 1969) of teachers. These three themes are the teacher’s relationships with the administration, with parents, and with colleagues. Other themes include student behavior and teacher efficacy. In terms of factors influencing teacher dissatisfaction, student behavior was significant. Responses related to student behavior were passionate and numerous.

Several participants indicated that they would leave education for a comparable job. Teacher relationships with their colleagues, a familiarity with the community, and the opportunity to see the long-term progress of students influence teacher retention at rural schools. Difficult managing student behavior and the perception that teachers are not supported by the administration influence teacher migration and attrition. Participants provided educational leaders with several pieces of data that can be used to improve the experiences of teachers. The interview summaries and direct quotes from participants provided throughout the chapter demonstrate the difficulties of the teaching experience and the aspects of the profession that encourage resolve on the part of those who remain committed to the cause.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to determine the perceptions of teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the work-related experiences that impact job satisfaction. Qualitative data was collected through the use of interviews. These interviews were summarized and analyzed to determine major themes and subthemes. This data was then used to address the previously established research questions, draw implications for the field of education, and identify areas related to the topic that are in need of further research.

Theoretical Implications

Results indicated that dissatisfied teachers will avoid the profession if they can, affirming Bentham’s utility theory (Bentham, 1781/1988; Plant, 1975) and Vroom’s (1994) expectancy theory, and supporting the implementation of policies to improve the experiences of teachers. The results of the study indicated that teachers, especially in terms of student behavior problems and poor relationships with administrators, do not see the teaching profession as being instrumental in obtaining a desired outcome such as being a pivotal part in student learning or improving society (Behling & Starke, 1973; Quick, 1988). For some of the participants the realization of desired outcomes was experienced only in the form of extrinsic rewards related to stable well-paying employment. This explains why several participants would leave for another profession comparable in terms of compensation and job security.

Student behavior being the most often discussed factor among participants affirms Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943). Participant needs appear
hierarchical. Few responses addressed physiological or safety needs. The meeting of these basic needs also appear to provide little motivation for participants. The struggles teachers face with student behavior prevents them from sensing that their higher level needs are being met; therefore, responses related to student behavior were lengthier and more passionate. Clayton Alderfer’s (1969) use of the term “relatedness needs” is perhaps a more appropriate way to categorize the needs of teachers impacted by the behavior of students. Further research on the needs of teachers and student behavior within the context of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs may reveal which category of needs student behavior would best fit. Perhaps this aspect of the teacher’s experience is related to more than one level of needs.

The results of this study suggest the possibility that the lack of teacher satisfaction in reference to student behavior problems or poor relationships with administrators is in proportion to the discrepancy between the teachers’ goal of student learning and the level of student learning obtained. If a teacher perceives that student behavior, for example, is hindering student learning and student learning is a primary goal for the teacher, then student behavior is generating job dissatisfaction and poor performance on the part of the teacher (Locke & Latham, 2002; Mento, Locke & Klein, 1992). This may be the reason participants indicated strong feelings concerning experiences when they learned of the positive impact they had on the lives of certain students. The results of the study certainly indicate plausibility as to teachers’ satisfaction/dissatisfaction being in proportion to the difference between their classroom or teaching goals and what they, as teachers, actually achieve or sense that they will achieve in the profession.
While participant responses did not support Herzberg’s theory (Herzberg, 1974) concerning the types of factors that satisfy or dissatisfy workers, motivators or hygienes, the responses clearly showed, in some instances, that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are on separate dimensions. Certain factors do not affect teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction to the same degree (Huysman, 2008). For example, while problems between teachers and administrators may cause significant degrees of dissatisfaction, a positive teacher-administrator relationship may result in little job satisfaction. On the other hand, certain participants indicated significant degrees of satisfaction from a sense of efficacy but little dissatisfaction as a result of experiences which they perceived indicated a lack of positive impact on the lives of students.

**Comparison to Previous Research**

Results affirm the multi-faceted nature of teachers’ job satisfaction (Evans, 1969; Certo & Fox, 2002), satisfaction being impacted to varying degrees by several different factors. These factors include the teacher-administrator relationship, student behavior, and collegiality and teacher efficacy. While prior research has established the impact of these factors on job satisfaction, participant responses provided detailed data related to each factor. The additional data adds relevance to this study within the context of a myriad of quantitative studies on teacher satisfaction and teacher mobility decisions, and thus, provides a portion of the data needed to offer practical suggestions aimed at improving the satisfaction of teachers.

The teacher-administrator relationship has a significant impact on teacher satisfaction. Results negate studies (Anderson, 2000; Hunter-Boykin & Evans, 1995) that show only a minimal impact of leadership on teacher satisfaction. Responses
demonstrated that leadership was a problem for beginning and veteran teachers. While participants did not indicate a compulsion to leave their position over leadership, except in reference to policies related to student behavior, their responses certainly show the plausibility of a gap existing concerning the perceptions of teachers and administrators in the area of student discipline policy. Responses supported prior research which shows teacher autonomy and administrative support impact teacher mobility decisions (Guarino et al., 2006) and is more influential than salary (Berry et al., 2007). Responses did not indicate that the teacher-administrator relationship is the most influential factor, as seen in a study by Certo and Fox (2002). However, as with other research, administrators utilizing teacher input, giving frequent and direct feedback, supporting collegiality, having an open-door policy, reducing isolation, and recognizing teachers' professionalism and accomplishments (Berry et al., 2007; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Margolis & Nagel, 2006) are supported by the results as steps administrators can take to improve the teacher-administrator relationship.

Participants indicated that student behavior is the most influential factor in determining teachers’ job satisfaction, greater than the influence of the teacher-administrator relationship (Anderson, 2000; Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). The influence was especially strong among novice teachers (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). Ingersoll’s (2001) research affirmed student discipline as a key area in reference to lowering attrition rates. The results of this study highlight the pivotal and preeminent role student behavior plays in the experience of teachers.

Participant responses also demonstrated the influence of collegiality upon teacher satisfaction (Berry et al., 2007; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Busch et al., 2001; Certo &
Fox, 2002; Miller et al., 1999; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). While several participants expressed significant frustration concerning student behavior, a number of participants also expressed profound satisfaction concerning their relationship with colleagues. Even more momentous was the indication by participants that collegiality makes up for other areas of frustration (Denton, 2009; Elfers et al., 2006). There was little difference between beginning teachers and veterans concerning the role and amount of collegial interaction unlike studies, such as Marston et al. (2006), which show a tendency among experienced teachers to isolate themselves.

The results also affirm prior research on teacher efficacy (Perrachione et al, 2008). Teachers are motivated by the idea of making a difference in the lives of children (Brunetti, 2001; Easley, 2006; Johnson & The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004), even in very difficult working conditions (Nieto, 2003). Most of the participants shared specific examples of how their prior students demonstrated that they, as teachers, had made a positive impact on their lives. Most of the participants also expressed a strong desire to work with students and play a pivotal part in their lives.

As I expected, teachers do want to leave because of dissatisfaction and, as seen in the responses of at least half of the participants, would leave if they could (Berry et al., 2007; Guarino et al., 2006; Ingersoll, 2001; Perrachione et al., 2008). However, the desire to stay in one’s current position may be stronger for the teacher who is native to the area where they work (Huysman, 2008). Experienced teachers are also encouraged to continue working with the same community out of a desire to see the long term results of their efforts in the classroom.
Results did support the mixed results of prior research concerning teacher compensation. Contrary to the results from other studies which place compensation ahead of collegiality (Berry et al., 2007), results suggest a weak relationship between salary and teacher satisfaction (Brunetti, 2001; Skinner, 2008; Tye & O’Brien, 2002). Novice teachers did make more negative comments about compensation (Berry et al., 2007). However, within the context of compensation, several participants did indicate the influence of job security upon their feelings about the teaching profession. Inman and Marlow (2004), in their study of Georgia teachers, found perceived job security as the top employment factor influencing teacher retention. The results of the study demonstrate the significant influence of job security upon how teachers view their job. Given the current economic problems in our country and the reduction in the number of teachers in school districts throughout Georgia, this preoccupation with job security among participants is understandable.

**Implications**

Several steps can be taken to mitigate the factors that diminish teacher job satisfaction and intensify the factors that increase satisfaction. These factors include the teacher’s relationship with the administration, parental involvement and support, discipline-related problems, collegiality, working with students, teacher efficacy, isolation, and misconceptions about teaching. The steps provided in this section may be viewed as a model for intensifying these factors within the context of improving teacher satisfaction.

Concerning administrator-teacher relationships, the results of this study support school and district level policies that provide a clear and easy protocol for teachers to
express their needs and concerns to administrators. When teachers do not perceive that the administration is willing to listen to them or they are unsure as to how the administration will respond to them, satisfaction is diminished. Teachers need an administrator who has confidence in them and is approachable. Providing feedback and engaging in activities that communicate personal concern for staff members as well as appreciation for their work and respect for them as professionals will increase teacher satisfaction. The results may signal that seemingly insignificant problems with the teacher-administrator relationship have a significant impact on teacher dissatisfaction, while very positive teacher-administrator relationships have a minimal impact on job satisfaction. As seen in others areas of the teaching experience, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not on a sliding scale. Different factors have an impact on satisfaction and dissatisfaction and to different degrees (Herzberg, 1974).

Since a lack of parental involvement is discouraging for some teachers, steps should be taken to encourage positive parent-teacher and school-parent relationships. Improving communication between home and school and communicating respect for the teaching staff may foster parental interest and involvement. The results of this study show that positive relationships with parents are advantageous for reasons beyond improving student performance. If teacher satisfaction impacts teacher performance, then improving upon the relationships with parents will improve teacher performance through increasing teacher satisfaction. Students learning will be enhanced not only by having parents involved but also by their teacher’s performance being improved as a result of increased teacher satisfaction which is the result of more positive parental involvement.
Since participants indicated great concern over student behavior, steps should be taken to improve behavior and more effectively address discipline-related concerns. Even teachers who considered student behavior to be a minor issue in their own classroom believed student behavior to be the most negative aspect of the teaching experience. The perception of the teacher not being responsible for correcting student behavior and the administration not being effective in addressing the concerns of teachers regarding this issue must be addressed. This study supports increased efforts to address student behavior, including more classroom management courses for teachers, clearly written and adhered to student discipline policies, more administrator involvement in the classroom, and increased communication between the administration and teachers regarding student behavior concerns. Given that several participants in this study indicated a desire to leave the profession in large part due to their experiences with student behavior, this area must be addressed if teachers are to be effective in the classroom and high performing teachers are to be encouraged to remain in the classroom.

Collegiality appeared very important to participants, making up for other areas of frustration with the teaching experience. Administrators should encourage teacher collaboration and support activities, inside and outside of the school environment, that bring teachers together, especially teachers who do not normally interact with each other. These additional opportunities that encourage collaboration and interaction may also help mitigate the effects of teacher isolation. Given the impact of collegiality on teacher satisfaction, schools would do well to refocus their attention on this aspect of the teaching experience.
Working with students and teacher efficacy also had a positive impact on teacher satisfaction. School leaders should encourage education programs that give teachers the opportunity to work with students outside of the regular classroom environment. Having the opportunity to work with students in smaller groups and in a different atmosphere may provide teachers with more of that relationship building time with students. These additional opportunities may also help and encourage teachers to assess the progress of their students and former students. Since teacher efficacy has an enormous impact on teacher satisfaction, monitoring student progress will increase the chance of teachers understanding the impact they have had on the lives of students.

And finally, teacher responses supported improvements in the area of hands-on experiences for teacher candidates. Several teachers commented on the misconceptions they had concerning the teaching profession, especially concerning student behavior. Teacher preparation programs should provide and schools should encourage additional, quality classroom experiences for aspiring teachers. These additional experiences will lessen the possibility of teachers feeling they have been lied to and will better prepare them for the realities of the classroom.

Limitations

The three rural Title I schools chosen for the study is a small sample of the target population. There are 1285 schools that are classified by the Georgia Department of Education as Title I Schools (Georgia Department of Education, 2009). While this study included teachers at different grade levels, in different school districts, and with different amounts of educational experience, the participants are a small representative sample of
teachers in Title I Schools in Georgia and schools with similar student populations in the
United States.

The data collection period covered a period of one month during the middle of the
school year. The timing of data collection may have significantly impacted the responses
of participants. I expect the results of a teacher interview during the middle of the school
year to vary significantly from the results of an identical teacher interview at the
beginning or the end of the school year. Since morale is a function of one’s feelings about
situations that are subject to change quickly, research over time is needed to determine
which factors are brief irritants to morale and which factors result in long-lasting damage
to the job satisfaction of teachers. This study would provide more accurate results with a
data collection period of at least one calendar year, with interviews being administered at
different points throughout the year.

Results indicated that additional interviews are needed to determine the influence
of certain variables on teacher satisfaction. I asked participants to expand their
commentary on certain ideas, but additional interviews are needed to determine the true
impact of various unexpected themes revealed in the data. Examples of such themes
include teacher isolation and job security. Resources related to time and scope limited the
areas that could be explored by this particular study. More attention should be devoted to
those themes that are briefly mentioned by participants but, at the same time, reveal
additional areas in need of exploration.

Since the interview participants were made aware that I am an administrator, this
factor may be considered a limitation as well. Responses to the interview prompts, in a
particular prompts related to the teacher-administrator relationship, may have been
influenced by participant knowledge of my position. Participants may have assumed that I hold certain beliefs concerning teachers and education and may have tailored their responses to support or change what they perceive to be my philosophy. Participants may also have assumed that I, as an administrator, would be more likely to report back to their administrator negative responses that may in turn threaten their job security.

And finally, this study was conducted during a period of economic distress in our country. Given the concern over job security in many professions, I expect teachers to be more satisfied with their career choice and experiences than they would be when the economy is healthy. Teachers may have been apprehensive about expressing their frustrations as a participant in this research study, given the number of Georgians experiencing unemployment. The rural area of the state upon which this study focused was cutting teaching positions in an effort to address budgetary shortfalls.

**Delimitations**

Concerning delimitations, I chose to use one type of data collection, interviews. I found early in the study that teachers were very apprehensive about expressing their frustrations. Therefore, I determined that the most reliable tool for data collection would be one-on-one interviews with participants. As mentioned above, the goal was to get past brief irritants to job satisfaction and look at teacher experiences overall. Face-to-face pilot interviews, interviews, and follow-up interviews, carefully and painstakingly recorded for purposes of accuracy, provided rich data related to teacher perceptions. Several of these interviews lasted an hour, not including follow-up interviews. Survey data on teacher satisfaction is plentiful. Focus groups would not provide a forum for teachers to speak confidentially about their job-related concerns. Observations were not
applicable given the focus of the study (i.e., teacher perceptions). The only option, other than some type of interview (face-to-face, telephone, or via computer-mediated communication), would be journaling. However, journal entries in this instance would have been difficult to compare to the interviews. If teachers entered their experiences in a journal for a six week period, for example, these entries would only address their day-to-day experiences. These experiences, within such a short period of time, may be radically different from the experiences spanning a career. A given teacher may have very little in terms of job dissatisfying experiences in that brief six week time period. How would a researcher then compare those journal entries to the same teacher’s responses to the interview prompts utilized in this study? The goal of this study was to look at how teachers view their career. While the use of additional types of data collection tools can be useful for establishing credibility, this study provides data sufficient to the researcher in terms of determining the perceptions of teachers, in addition to providing teachers with a much needed voice concerning their experiences.

An additional delimitation of the study was the selection of teachers from rural Title I schools. These teachers were selected in an attempt to focus the study upon one particular group within the teaching profession. Prior studies indicate differences in job satisfaction among rural and urban teachers along with teachers in Title I and non-Title I schools. A follow-up study may include or even focus entirely upon teachers who are not teaching in a rural poverty-stricken area.

Further Research

This results of this study support additional research in several areas of the teaching experience. Student discipline is one example of these areas. Teachers who
stated that student behavior was not a problem in their classroom also indicated behavior was a major concern for them, to the point of them wanting to get out of the profession. Additional research is needed as to why they feel this way. These teachers have strong feelings related to student discipline. The questions remains: What is it about your experiences that make you feel this way, especially when you indicate that discipline is not a problem in your classroom?

Questions also remain concerning what specific experiences cause teachers to believe their administration is unapproachable. Is this a general feeling that they have? What specific experiences make teachers feel this way? Also, further research is needed to determine why administrator-teacher relationships have a strong impact on teacher dissatisfaction but not as much on teacher satisfaction. Teachers get frustrated when they dislike or disapprove of the administration, but they show little in the way of positive emotions when the relationship is healthy.

More data is also needed as to what aspects of collegiality impact teacher satisfaction. Having this data may help school leaders plan activities that address this aspect of the teaching experience. Given the impact of collegiality on teachers, this key area needs to be exploited. A positive sense of collegiality may counterbalance the difficulties of the teaching environment.

And finally, the impact of a tight job market on how teachers view their job was apparent in this study. Even very dissatisfied teachers indicated an appreciation for their job. Additional studies on how the economy impacts teacher satisfaction and teacher performance are needed.
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Appendix A

IRB Application

APPLICATION TO USE HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS
Liberty University
Committee On The Use of Human Research Subjects

1. Project Title: Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

2. Full Review □ Expedited Review X

3. Funding Source (State N/A if not applicable): N/A

4. Principal Investigator:
   Michael S Slaven
   Doctoral Candidate EdD
   
   mslaven@liberty.edu

5. Faculty Sponsor (if student is PI), also list co-investigators below Faculty Sponsor, and key personnel:
   Dr. Michelle Goodwin
   Associate Professor of Education
   Teacher Education
   
   mbgoodwin@liberty.edu

6. Key personnel:
   Dr. Reginald Kimball
   Adjunct Faculty
   Teacher Education
   
   rskimball@liberty.edu
   Dr. Michael Schlabra
   Adjunct Faculty
   Teacher Education
   
   mschlabra@liberty.edu

7. Consultants:
   Dr. Lucinda Spaulding
   Assistant Professor of Education
   Teacher Education
   
   lsspaulding@liberty.edu
8. The principal investigator agrees to carry out the proposed project as stated in the application and to promptly report to the Human Subjects Committee any proposed changes and/or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others participating in approved project in accordance with the Liberty Way and the Confidentiality Statement. The principal investigator has access to copies of 45 CFR 46 and the Belmont Report. The principal investigator agrees to inform the Human Subjects Committee and complete all necessary reports should the principal investigator terminate University association. Additionally s/he agrees to maintain records and keep informed consent documents for three years after completion of the project even if the principal investigator terminates association with the University.

Principal Investigator Signature

Date

Faculty Sponsor (If applicable)

Date

Submit the original request to: Liberty University Institutional Review Board, CN Suite 1582, 1971 University Blvd., Lynchburg, VA 24502. Submit also via email to irb@liberty.edu

APPLICATION TO USE HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECTS

10. This project will be conducted at the following location(s): (please indicate city & state)
   □ Liberty University Campus
   X Other (Specify):

11. This project will involve the following subject types: (check-mark types to be studied)
   X Normal Volunteers (Age 18-65) □ Subjects Incapable Of Giving Consent
   □ In Patients
   □ Out Patients
   □ Patient Controls
   □ Fetuses
   □ Cognitively Disabled
   □ Physically Disabled
   □ Pregnant Women
   □ Prisoners Or Institutionalized Individuals
   □ Minors (Under Age 18)
   □ Over Age 65
   □ University Students (PSYC Dept. subject pool)
   □ Other Potentially Elevated Risk Populations

12. Do you intend to use LU students, staff or faculty as participants in your study? If you do not intend to use LU participants in your study, please check “no” and proceed directly to item 13.

   YES □ NO X

If so, please list the department and/classes you hope to enlist and the number of participants you would like to enroll.

In order to process your request to use LU subjects, we must ensure that you have contacted the appropriate department and gained permission to collect data from them.
Signature of Department Chair: ___________________________  ___________________________

Department Chair Signature(s)  Date

13. Estimated number of subjects to be enrolled in this protocol: 9-12

14. Does this project call for: (check-mark all that apply to this study)
   X Use of Voice, Video, Digital, or Image Recordings?
   ☐ Subject Compensation? Patients $  Volunteers $
   ☐ More Than Minimal Risk?
   ☐ More Than Minimal Psychological Stress?
   ☐ Confidential Material (questionnaires, photos, etc.)?
   ☐ Extra Costs To The Subjects (tests, hospitalization, etc.)?
   ☐ The Exclusion of Pregnant Women?
   ☐ The Use of Blood?  Total Amount of Blood __________
   Over Time Period (days) __________
   ☐ The Use of rDNA or Biohazardous materials?
   ☐ The Use of Human Tissue or Cell Lines?
   ☐ The Use of Other Fluids that Could Mask the Presence of Blood (Including Urine and Feces)?
   ☐ The Use of Protected Health Information (Obtained from Healthcare Practitioners or Institutions)?

15. This project involves the use of an Investigational New Drug (IND) or an Approved Drug For An Unapproved Use.
   ☐ YES  X NO

Drug name, IND number and company: ________________________________

16. This project involves the use of an Investigational Medical Device or an Approved Medical Device For An Unapproved Use.
   ☐ YES  X NO

Device name, IDE number and company: ________________________________

17. The project involves the use of Radiation or Radioisotopes:
   ☐ YES  X NO

18. Does investigator or key personnel have a potential conflict of interest in this study?
   ☐ YES  X NO

EXPEDITED/FULL REVIEW APPLICATION NARRATIVE

A. PROPOSED RESEARCH RATIONALE (Why are you doing this study? [Excluding degree requirement])

The purpose of this study is to determine the experiences of teachers which influence teacher satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the context of rural Title I schools in Georgia. Data collected will provide a greater understanding of how teachers serving in rural poverty-stricken schools feel about their teaching
experiences and will provide clarity concerning the phenomenon of teacher job dissatisfaction and low job-related morale. Data collected will also help the educational community address the problems associated with teacher mobility. While the results of this study are applicable for improving student achievement through teacher improvement, the researcher’s primary mission is one of service toward those in the teaching profession, a service on the researcher’s part which is influenced by a Christian worldview (Philippians 2:1-4, New King James Version).

B. SPECIFIC PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED

- In a step-by-step manner, using simple, nonscientific language, provide a description of the procedures of the study and data collection process. Also, describe what your subjects will be required to do. (Note: Sections C and D deal with type of subjects and their recruitment. That information does not need to be included here.)

Teachers at three rural Title I middle schools in South Georgia will be asked to participate in this study. The researcher will conduct interviews with nine to twelve teachers, with at least three teachers from each school. Multiple interviews may be held, ensuring theme saturation has been reached. These interviews will be held at the respective school site or at a comparable site. Two pilot interviews will be held with teachers outside the sample group to determine how well prompts on the Interview Guide (Appendix D) elicit responses related to the research questions. The pilot interviews will also test the success of the prompts in providing data rich in detail for purposes of data collection.

Participant responses to the interviews will be audio taped. The researcher will ask clarifying and elaborating probes during the interviews to ensure that the following research questions are addressed:

1. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job dissatisfaction?
2. Which experiences among teachers in rural Title I schools commonly lead to job satisfaction?
3. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the difficulties of teaching?
4. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools concerning the impact of teacher job dissatisfaction on teacher performance?
5. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers continue to teach in rural Title I schools?
6. What are the common perceptions among teachers in rural Title I schools as to why teachers leave rural Title I schools or the teaching profession?

Interviews will also be transcribed based on the audio recordings. Each participant will be provided with his/her transcribed interview(s). Participants may retract any statements made during the interview(s) and/or provide clarification. The researcher will transcribe the audio recordings. Transcription software will not be utilized; however, audio recordings will be uploaded and stored on the researcher’s personal computer. These files will be password protected.

C. SUBJECTS

Who do you want to include in your study? Please describe in nonscientific language:

- The inclusion criteria for the subject populations including gender, age ranges, ethnic background, health status and any other applicable information. Provide a rationale for targeting those populations.

Teachers will vary in terms of gender and teaching experience. Research shows gender related differences in terms of job satisfaction/dissatisfaction among teachers. The literature also shows a difference in job satisfaction and job satisfaction factors for beginning and veteran teachers. Therefore, the researcher will attempt to attain an equal number of male and female participants along with an equal number of veteran (more than 5 years of experience in education) and beginning teachers.
• The exclusion criteria for subjects.

Participants will be excluded based on gender or experience if their inclusion would result in too few males, females, beginning or veteran teachers.

• Explain the rationale for the involvement of any special populations (Examples: children, specific focus on ethnic populations, mentally retarded, lower socio-economic status, prisoners)

Participants will be employed as teachers in Title I schools. The Title I designation is given to those schools/districts serving a significant portion of low income families. Research indicates that teachers in low-income schools may significantly vary from those serving different student populations in terms of factors or experiences that create job satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

• Provide the maximum number of subjects you seek approval to enroll from all of the subject populations you intend to use and justify the sample size. You will not be approved to enroll a number greater than this. If at a later time it becomes apparent you need to increase your sample size, you will need to submit a Revision Request.

The sample size for this study is twelve participants. In a qualitative phenomenology, the researcher selects a small sample and focuses, through interviews and observations, on the collection of thick rich qualitative data. In this particular study, participants may be interviewed more than once to ensure theme saturation has occurred. In addition, the interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed. Each transcribed interview will be sent to the interviewee to ensure accuracy in data collection. During this process, the researcher may be asked additional questions for clarification.

• For NIH, federal, or state funded protocols only: If you do not include women, minorities and children in your subject pool, you must include a justification for their exclusion. The justification must meet the exclusionary criteria established by the NIH.

D. RECRUITMENT OF SUBJECTS AND OBTAINING INFORMED CONSENT

• Describe your recruitment process in a straightforward, step-by-step manner. The IRB needs to know all the steps you will take to recruit subjects in order to ensure subjects are properly informed and are participating in a voluntary manner. An incomplete description will cause a delay in the approval of your protocol application.

The respective school districts will be contacted via letter/phone/email and permission obtained to conduct the study. The principal for each school will then be contacted via letter/phone/email and asked to participate. Letters on letterhead will be ascertained to document that permission has been granted by each school district and school. The researcher will explain to the principals the criteria for selection. The researcher desires an equal number of male and female participants along with an equal number of teachers with less than five years of experience and teachers with more than five years of experience for the sample A list of possible candidates will be compiled with the assistance of each school administration. These teachers will then be contacted by the researcher via letter/phone/email. Once a teacher agrees to participate, then the researcher will establish with the teacher a time and place for the interview as well as provide the teacher with the consent form approved by the Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board.

E. PROCEDURES FOR PAYMENT OF SUBJECTS

• Describe any compensation that subjects will receive. Please note that Liberty University Business Office policies might affect how you can compensate subjects. Please contact your
department's business office to ensure your compensation procedures are allowable by these policies.

F. CONFIDENTIALITY

- Describe what steps you will take to maintain the confidentiality of subjects.

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I may publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Pseudonyms will be used for teacher names in any type report related to this study or when another professional in the field cross-examines the data. While the list of possible interviewees will be developed with the help of the school administration, the actual participant list will not be shared with the school administration. Therefore, only the researcher will know the names of the teachers who participated in the interviews. A code book will be developed and kept to decipher data since pseudonyms will be utilized. The code book will be kept in a separate locked file cabinet as the audio tapes and written transcripts. All research records will be stored securely in two locked file cabinets and only the researcher will have access to the records. These cabinets will be located in the researcher’s office in Fitzgerald, Georgia. All records will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

Each interview participant will be given the opportunity to listen to their interview, withdraw their comments, and have the audio immediately erased. Once interviews are transcribed and the participant has been asked to comment on the transcript, the audio-taped version of their interview will be securely stored and erased three years after the conclusion of the study. Transcribed interviews will be hand delivered or mailed USPS with delivery confirmation to each participant. Any computer file, including but not limited to email correspondence, related to the identification of the interview participant will be password protected and erased three years after the completion of the study.

- Describe how research records, data, specimens, etc. will be stored and for how long.

Audio-taped recordings, code books, written transcripts and interview observation notes will be kept in locked file cabinets. These records will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study. Electronic files will be password protected and also destroyed after three years.

- Describe if the research records, data, specimens, etc. will be destroyed at a certain time. Additionally, address if they may be used for future research purposes.

In compliance with federal mandate, records will be stored for three years after the study’s completion. These records will not be used for future research purposes.

G. POTENTIAL RISKS TO SUBJECTS

- There are always risks associated with research. If the research is minimal risk, which is no greater than every day activities, then please describe this fact.

The risks associated with this study are moderate. The inadvertent revelation of a participant’s identity may negatively impact the participant’s work experience and/or endanger the participant’s employment.

- Describe the risks to participants and steps that will be taken to minimize those risks. Risks can be physical, psychological, economic, social, legal, etc.

Participants are asked to respond to interview prompts related to job satisfaction/dissatisfaction variables. The exposure to these prompts may increase or diminish the participants’ emotions.
regarding their experience(s) in education. Additional consideration of these variables, as a result of the interview process, may result in teachers experiencing a higher level of dissatisfaction and/or depression concerning their job related duties and/or their career in education.

While aggressive steps have been taken to protect the identity of participants, the possibility of participant anonymity being compromised does exist. A small group of districts and schools are participating in this study. A teacher may reveal information during an interview that would allow his/her supervisor(s) to determine their identity through a process of deduction. This revelation could injure the relationship between the teacher and other teachers and/or between the teacher and their supervisor(s).

- Where appropriate, describe alternative procedures or treatments that might be advantageous to the participants.

- Describe provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to participants or additional resources for participants.

H. BENEFITS TO BE GAINED BY THE INDIVIDUAL AND/OR SOCIETY

- Describe the possible direct benefits to the subjects. If there are no direct benefits, please state this fact.

Participants may gain a sense of emotional relief from sharing with a fellow educator the difficulties they have encountered in the educational profession. This emotional relief would be akin to the satisfaction gained through collegiality in any profession.

- Describe the possible benefits to society. In other words, how will doing this project be a positive contribution and for whom?

School leaders and the teachers where the study is being conducted will be provided with information that can be used to improve the experience of their teachers. Due to confidentiality requirements, these educators will not have access to the actual interviews. However, the schools will have the opportunity to view the results of the interviews in a published report. The interview responses overall will help the educational community overall understand the experiences of teachers and develop strategies aimed at addressing factors which can negatively influence teacher satisfaction. Given the educational and financial costs associated with teacher migration and attrition, this data may be monetarily and instructionally valuable to our educational system.

I. INVESTIGATOR'S EVALUATION OF THE RISK-BENEFIT RATIO

Here you explain why you believe the study is still worth doing even with any identified risks.

This study attempts to improve the experiences of teachers by identifying the job-related difficulties teachers currently experience. Individual interviews are an appropriate tool for gathering detailed, rich data related to the topic. Risks in participating are minimal. Participants will have the opportunity to review responses, retract statements, and withdraw from participation at any time. Given the process by which possible participants will be identified and the manner in which data will be reported in the completed study, school administrations will not be able to easily ascertain the identity of a given participant in the completed report. Strong measures will be taken to maintain anonymity and is of primary importance.

J. WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Please attach to the Application Narrative. See Informed Consent IRB materials for assistance in developing an appropriate form. See K below if considering waiving signed consent or informed consent)
K. WAIVER OF INFORMED CONSENT OR SIGNED CONSENT

Waiver of consent is sometimes used in research involving a deception element. Waiver of signed consent is sometimes used in anonymous surveys or research involving secondary data. See Waiver of Informed Consent information on the IRB website. If requesting either a waiver of consent or a waiver of signed consent, please address the following:

1. For a Waiver of Signed Consent, address the following:
   a. Does the research pose greater than minimal risk to subjects (greater than everyday activities)?
   b. Does a breech of confidentiality constitute the principal risk to subjects?
   c. Would the signed consent form be the only record linking the subject and the research?
   d. Does the research include any activities that would require signed consent in a non-research context?
   e. Will you provide the subjects with a written statement about the research (an information sheet that contains all the elements of the consent form but without the signature lines)?

2. For a Waiver of Consent Request, address the following:
   a. Does the research pose greater than minimal risk to subjects (greater than everyday activities)?
   b. Will the waiver adversely affect subjects' rights and welfare? Please justify?
   c. Why would the research be impracticable without the waiver?
   d. How will subject debriefing occur (i.e., how will pertinent information about the real purposes of the study be reported to subjects, if appropriate, at a later date?)

L. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (to be attached to the Application Narrative)

Consent Form – Appendix A
Interview Guide – Appendix B
Letter to School District – Appendix C
Letter to Principal – Appendix D

M. COPIES:

For investigators requesting Expedited Review or Full Review, email the application along with all supporting materials to the IRB (irb@liberty.edu). Submit one hard copy with all supporting documents as well to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board, Campus North Suite 1582, 1971 University Blvd., Lynchburg, VA 24502.
CONSENT FORM

Teacher Perception of Experiences that Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

Teacher Interviews

Michael Stephen Slaven

Liberty University

School of Education

You are invited to be in a research study of experiences that negatively influence teacher job satisfaction. Teachers in rural Title I schools in Georgia are the focus of this study. You were selected as a possible participant because you teach in a rural Title I school located in Georgia. An equal number of male and female teachers as well as beginning and veteran teachers are participating. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Michael Slaven, School of Education, Liberty University.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to determine which teacher experiences result in low teacher morale among teachers in rural Title I schools in Georgia. The primary research questions being addressed are:

1. Which job-related experiences lead to teacher satisfaction?
2. Which job-related experiences lead to teacher dissatisfaction?
3. Which factors influence teacher attrition?
4. Which factors influence teacher retention?
5. Which factors make teaching difficult?
6. What impact does teacher satisfaction/dissatisfaction have on the learning environment?

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to participate in a teacher satisfaction interview. The interview process should take no longer than 30 minutes. For analysis purposes, the interview will be audio-taped and transcribed. The participant will be
provided with a copy of the interview transcript and asked to comment as to the accuracy of transcript. Additional interviews may be requested with the participant based on their initial responses to the interview prompts. Please note that participants can retract responses and/or withdraw from the study at any time prior to the study’s completion.

**Risks and Benefits of being in the Study**

Concerning risks, participants are asked to respond to interview prompts related to job satisfaction/dissatisfaction variables. The exposure to these prompts may increase or diminish the participants’ emotions regarding their experience in education. Additional consideration of these variables, as a result of the interview process, may result in teachers experiencing a higher level of dissatisfaction and/or depression concerning their job.

School leaders and the teachers where the study is being conducted will be provided with information that can be used to improve the experience of their teachers. Due to confidentiality requirements, these educators will not have access to the actual interviews. However, the schools will have the opportunity to view the results of the interviews in a published report. The interview responses overall will help the educational community overall understand the experiences of teachers and develop strategies aimed at addressing factors which can negatively influence teacher satisfaction. Given the educational and financial costs associated with teacher migration and attrition, this data may be monetarily and instructionally valuable to our educational system.

**Confidentiality:**

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Pseudonyms will be used for teacher names in any type report related to this study or when another professional in the field cross-examines the data. A code book will be developed and kept to decipher data since pseudonyms will be utilized for teacher names. The code book will be kept in a separate locked file cabinet as the audio tapes and written transcripts. All research records will be stored securely in two locked file cabinets and only the researcher will have access to the records. In compliance with federal mandate, all records will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

Each interview participant will be given the opportunity to listen to their interview, withdraw their comments, and have the audio immediately erased. Once interviews are transcribed and the participant has been asked to comment on the transcript, the audio-taped version of their interview will be kept three years after the completion of the study and then erased. Furthermore, any computer file, including but not limited to email correspondence, related to the identification of the interview participant will be password protected and erased three years after the study’s completion.
Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Michael Slaven. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at 478-867-0121 or mslaven@liberty.edu, or Dr. Michelle Goodwin, School of Education Liberty University at (434)582-2265 or mbgoodwin@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understand the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_________________________________________Date:__________________

Signature of Investigator:_______________________________Date:________________
I am conducting a research study on teacher satisfaction as part of the requirements for a doctorate degree in Educational Leadership at Liberty University. I would like the opportunity to conduct part of my research in your school district. I have selected three school districts for my research, all three in the southern portion of the state. Within those three districts, I would like to focus on middle school teachers. The context of my study is rural Title I schools in Georgia and your middle school falls into that category.

Participants in the study will be asked to participate in a teacher satisfaction interview (interview guide enclosed). The amount of time for each interview will be based on the amount of detail provided in participant responses. Data from the individual interviews will be summarized and patterns or themes will be identified. This information will be available to the participating districts and schools via a published report which will be completed at the end of the study.

All of the data collected will be safeguarded in terms of participant identification. Interview data will be kept in a secure area. Three years after the study is completed, all data will be erased or shredded. The enclosed interview guide addresses each aspect of the study in terms of protecting the welfare of participants. Teachers will be informed that participation is voluntary and that teachers can halt participation at any point in the study for any reason stated or not stated.

To comply with the requirements of Liberty University, I must receive written permission from the appropriate district level person before continuing. This written permission must be in the form of a letter on district letterhead. If you are comfortable with teachers in your system participating in this study, a faxed copy of the letter sent to 229-409-5580 will be suitable. You may also email me with the letter attached as a PDF at mslaven@liberty.edu. I can be reached with any questions at 478-867-0121 or at the email provided above.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Michael Slaven
Dear ________:

I am conducting a research study on teacher satisfaction as part of the requirements for a doctorate degree in Educational Leadership at Liberty University. I have contacted and received approval from the appropriate district level administrator to include your school in this study. Participation will include teachers participating in a one-on-one interview related to teacher satisfaction and job-related morale. The length of the interview will depend on the responses of the participating teacher. The time, date, and location of the interview will also be dependent on the teacher.

Data from the individual interviews will be summarized and patterns or themes will be identified. This information will also be available to the participating districts and schools via a completed dissertation at the culmination of the study. Anonymity will be maintained and is of primary importance.

All of the data collected will be safeguarded in terms of participant identification. Interview data will be kept in a secure area. Three years after the study is completed, all data will be erased or shredded. The enclosed interview guide addresses each aspect of the study in terms of protecting the welfare of participants. Teachers will be informed that participation is voluntary and that teachers can halt participation at any point in the study for any reason stated or not stated.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to email me or contact me by phone at 478-867-0121. At this point, a date has not been established for the interviews; however, my goal is to have all data collected before the end of the February 2011. Please be assured that I will work diligently to minimize any interruption to your school environment. I will rely on communication with you to address any problems or concerns that may arise.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Michael Slaven
We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. Attached you’ll find the forms for those cases.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project. We will be glad to send you a written memo from the Liberty IRB, as needed, upon request.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
IRB Chair
Associate Professor
Liberty University
1971 University Blvd.
Lynchburg, VA 24502
(434) 592-4054

https://webmail.liberty.edu/owa/?ae=1te...
January 10, 2011

Mr. Michael Slaven,

You are approved to conduct teacher interviews in the County School System as part of your research on teacher job satisfaction. Interviews will be conducted as described in the research application submitted to and approved by Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board. Interruption to the learning environment should be minimal and any problems/questions should be submitted to the appropriate school administrator. Participant anonymity is to be protected and teachers must be allowed to withdraw from participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

I applaud your efforts in research in as a part of your doctorate degree and look forward to reviewing your results when completed. Please contact me if I can be of any other assistance.

Regards,

Superintendent of Schools
January 12, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

County Middle School teachers may voluntarily participate in the research study on teacher satisfactory with Michael Slaven. I understand that all data will be kept confidential pertaining to the study. Mr. Slaven may contact at Middle School to continue the process.

Thank you,
February 17, 2011

Michael S Slaven
Assistant Principal
Ben Hill Middle School
501 West Palm Street
Fitzgerald, GA 31750-3253

Dear Michael:

You are approved to conduct teacher interviews in our school/school system as part of your research on teacher job satisfaction. Interviews will be conducted as described in the research application submitted to and approved by Liberty University’s Institutional Review Board. Interruption to the learning environment should be minimal and any problems/questions should be submitted to the appropriate school administrator. Participant anonymity is to be protected and teachers must be allowed to withdraw from participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

If you need anything, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Superintendent
Appendix C

Interview Guide

1. How long have you been in education? Was this your first career choice?

2. Describe the school(s) you have worked in and the type of duties performed.

3. Describe your relationship with the administration. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

4. Describe your relationship with your colleagues. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

5. Describe your relationship with parents and the community. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

6. Have discipline problems diminished your job satisfaction? Can you give an example?

7. Do you see yourself positively impacting the lives of students? How does this impact your satisfaction?

8. Are you satisfied with your salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties?

9. What experiences in education, not previously mentioned, have diminished your desire to teach?

10. What experiences in education, not previously mentioned, have increased your desire to teach?

11. Do you feel that you were prepared to handle being a teacher? How has your preparation affected your job satisfaction?

12. If you could quit, would you? Why?
Appendix D
Revised Interview Guide

1. How long have you been in education? Was this your first career choice?

2. Describe the school(s) you have worked in and the type of duties performed.

3. Describe your relationship with the administration. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

4. Describe your relationship with your colleagues. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

5. Describe your relationship with parents and the community. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

6. Have discipline problems affected your job satisfaction? Can you give an example?

7. Do you see yourself positively impacting the lives of students? How does this impact your satisfaction?

8. Are you satisfied with your salary, benefits, work hours, and required duties?

9. What experiences in education, not previously mentioned, have diminished your desire to teach?

10. What experiences in education, not previously mentioned, have increased your desire to teach?

11. Do you feel that you were prepared to handle being a teacher? How has your preparation affected your job satisfaction?

12. If you could quit, would you? Why?
CHANGE-IN-PROTOCOL FORM

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

LOG NUMBER _____

ORIGINAL REVIEW DATE _____

LEVEL _____

Principal Investigator Michael Slaven  
Phone Number 478-867-0121

Correspondence Address 68 Richards Drive Suite 32, Tifton, Georgia 31794  
Email mshaven@liberty.edu

Department School of Education  
Campus Liberty Online  
Faculty Sponsor (if needed) Dr. Michelle Goodwin

Project Title Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

Type of Project:  
FACULTY RESEARCH ___

STUDENT DIRECTED RESEARCH ___

Thesis ___  Dissertation X ___  Other (Specify: )

Course Requirement: 16 week ___  8/9 week ___  (course #: )

Duration of Project:  
Starting Date February 1, 2011  
Expected End Date May 31, 2011

Principal Investigator  
Date 2-7-11

Faculty Advisor (if necessary)  
Date 2-7-11

******************************************************************************

1. X Minor Changes. (e.g., adding non-vulnerable subjects, change of location, deleting something, minor instrument question revisions, etc.)

Describe in detail below and attach any revised instruments:

Based on two pilot interviews, I have modified some of the interview prompts in an effort to collect the thick, rich qualitative data necessary to address the research questions. I have attached to this document the revised prompts.

******************************************************************************

ACTION TAKEN: Changes ___  Approved (for one year) ___  Contingent ___  Disapproved

Chairperson, IRB  
Date

******************************************************************************

2. ___  More Significant Changes. (e.g., change in procedures, adding something, changing consent form, adding vulnerable populations, major instrument revisions, etc.)

Explain in detail, attaching revised instruments/forms as needed. Use additional space than that provided below if necessary.
RE: IRB Approval 1041.10611: Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

IRB, IRB

Sent: Monday, February 21, 2011 3:00 PM
To: Slaven, Michael
Cc: Goodwin, Michele Elaine; IRB, IRB

Hi Michael,

We apologize for the delay in processing your changes. Your updated questions are approved and you may use them in your interviews.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Hartin, M.A.
IRB Coordinator
Liberty University
1971 University Blvd
Lynchburg, VA 24502
Fax (434) 592-0546
irb@liberty.edu

-----Original Message-----
From: Slaven, Michael
Sent: Saturday, February 19, 2011 7:45 PM
To: Hartin, Tiffany Erin
Subject: RE: IRB Approval 1041.10611: Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

Just checking on the status of my IRB change in protocol.

From: Slaven, Michael
Sent: Friday, February 04, 2011 12:21 PM
To: Hartin, Tiffany Erin
Subject: RE: IRB Approval 1041.10611: Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

I am waiting to hear back from Dr. Goodwin, my chair. I have attached the documents if you could look them over. I figured Dr. Goodwin would have to sign off on the IRB form before it could be officially approved.

From: Hartin, Tiffany Erin
Sent: Friday, February 04, 2011 10:56 AM
To: IRB, IRB Slaven, Michael
Subject: RE: IRB Approval 1041.10611: Teacher Perceptions of Experiences That Negatively Influence Job Satisfaction

Good Morning Michael,

I haven’t heard back from you regarding the below email and wanted to follow up with you to make sure you submitted the appropriate form for your interview question changes prior to completing your interviews. If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to email me.
Appendix E

Example of Coded Interview

R: Describe your relationship with parents and the community. What impact has this had on job satisfaction?

T7: I have had some issues with parents. Because I teach 8th grade, I figure most of them are 13/14 years old and in four years they will be able to die for their country, buy as much porn, lottery tickets, and cigarettes as possible so if they are 14 and they can’t bring a pencil to class, that aggravates me more than anything. Due dates and things like that, I am not reminding you of when something is due. I am going to give you the date and a paper. You know kids fail my class because of that. I have a pretty high fail rate and a very high pass rates on the CRCT. A kid has never failed my class and passed the CRCT. I am pretty accurate on that and parents don’t like that so they come to me asking for a... I had a parent actually come to me today asking for an extension on a project we had for two and a half weeks. They may get it approved by an administrator or by the board but I told them “no”. They don’t like me for that so that has created a little tension because I feel that parents very much take the kid’s side. That has caused a little dissatisfaction with the job. Yet you can’t fight against that home life and that parenty. I spend more time with the kids than they probably do but yet I am really out to get their kids and stuff like that. That has been a hard thing to deal with.

R: Have discipline problems affected your job satisfaction? Can you give an example?

T7: (Well, I am going to tell you that discipline in general I teach 8th grade and it is why I dislike teaching 8th grade. I did not sign up to babysit. I did not get a degree in education to come in here and say “sit down”, “be quiet”. To me you sitting down in your seat after a certain point becomes disrespect but a lot of time they are thinking “Well, that is just classroom management. I cannot make a child do anything if they don’t want to. I tell them—Well they say “Do we have to do this?” Man, you don’t have to do anything. Now, you are going to fail if you are going to face consequences but discipline and having to be in 8th grade in the middle school, you have to be an angry person. You have to be ugly to children. That is the most dissatisfaction part of this job, having to be aggressive and not being able to teach what you love. I love English. I love Social Studies. Doing the discipline on a daily basis stuff that has been outlined—These kids have been in school for how many years? Since they have been five? They have been in school. They do not know yet that they don’t throw stuff in class. That is ridiculous. We should be moving past that. They are in 8th grade. In four years, they will have to be an adult. That is the part I dislike the most. That is it right there for me. I can’t teach and with high stakes testing and everything, discipline interferes with that so much. That is the toughest part to me. I will not say too much but I can just say that the little stuff—I can handle the big things. I can handle fights. I can handle name calling. It is the throwing paper, getting up out of the desk, forgetting when to do this. That stuff just gets old quick. You are a bad person if you get mad at a child. You spend 8 hours with them and you say “That little guy right there, gets on my nerves.” You are a bad person. You are a bad person if you say, “You know I teach 8th grade and I teach English. I love the educational process. I think education empowers people but the kids are discipline problems and so I don’t like teaching right now.” You are a bad person. You are a bad teacher. That kind of stuff gets a little old. School life is isn’t anywhere where reality is. We are putting these kids at a disadvantage to say “You just threw a chair. Now we are going to put you in a room for a day but you get to come back. In the real world, your tail is fired if you throw a chair. You are gone. So we pat them on—it is alright darling. You will still be an engineer one day. It is a discipline
Appendix F
Coding Guide & Coding Tables

1. Relationship with administration
   1.1 Confidence in teacher
   1.2 Appreciation for teacher
   1.3 Personal interest in teacher
   1.4 Relationship impacts satisfaction
   1.5 Critical administrator
   1.6 Approachable
   1.7 Positive relationship
   1.8 Respect for teacher
   1.9 Recognition of work
   1.11 Positive feedback given
   1.12 Negative relationship
   1.13 Unpredictable administrator
   1.14 Relationship has not impacted satisfaction
   1.15 Teacher tries not to bother administration
   1.16 Teacher understands the work of administrators
   1.17 Responds to teacher needs
   1.18 Teacher feels abused
   1.19 Shows understanding of teacher frustrations

2. Relationship with colleagues
   2.1 Relationship impacts satisfaction
   2.2 Relieves stress
   2.3 Provides feedback
2.4 Positive relationship
2.5 Mutual respect
2.6 Mutual understanding of teaching experience
2.7 Makes up for other areas of frustration
2.8 Only interacts with some of faculty
2.9 Shares concerns with
2.10 Negative relationships

3. Relationship with parents
  3.1 Positive relationship with parents
  3.2 Relationship supports learning
  3.3 Relationship improves behavior
  3.4 Minimal parental involvement
  3.5 Relationship does not impact satisfaction
  3.6 Willing to help
  3.7 Demoralizing to teacher
  3.8 Difficult to contact
  3.9 Negative relationship
  3.11 Not supportive
  3.12 Not going to change
  3.13 No work ethic
  3.14 Impacts satisfaction
  3.15 Accountability

4. Relationship with community
  4.1 Supportive
  4.2 Improves education
4.3 Impacts mobility
4.4 Not supportive

5. Student discipline

5.1 Important to teacher
5.2 School too lenient
5.3 Inconsistent enforcement
5.4 No parental help
5.5 Important to teaching
5.6 Negative impact on satisfaction
5.7 Types of behavior
5.8 Lack of motivation
5.9 Lack of interest
5.11 Societal problem
5.12 Difficult for teacher
5.13 Biggest problem
5.14 Small number of students
5.15 Not changing or going to change
5.16 Lack of accountability
5.17 Not teacher’s responsibility
5.18 Creates misconception about teacher
5.19 Student behavior manageable
5.20 School not effective in addressing

6. Teacher efficacy

6.1 Important to teacher
6.2 Teacher sees evidence
6.3 Type of Impact
   6.3a Content knowledge
   6.3b Behavior
6.4 Teaching is making impact
6.5 Teacher is not making impact
6.6 Difficult to determine
6.7 Improves satisfaction

7. Salary and Benefits
   7.1 Not satisfied
   7.2 Satisfied

8. Work hours
   8.1 Not satisfied
   8.2 Satisfied

9. Required duties
   9.1 Not satisfied
   9.2 Satisfied

10. Teacher preparation
    10.1 Appropriate
    10.2 Increased satisfaction
    10.3 Experience is needed
    10.4 Important to teacher
    10.5 Misconceptions about teaching
    10.6 Not prepared for student behavior
    10.7 Does not impact satisfaction
    10.8 Negative satisfaction
10.9 Partially prepared

10.11 Content Knowledge

11. Desire to stay

11.1 Would not quit

11.2 Would quit

11.3 Would move to another area in education

12. Likes children/school environment/ teaching

13. Job security/better off than others

14. Isolation

15. Relationship with students

16. Teacher accountability

17. Job satisfaction and student performance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Relationship with administration</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Personal interest in teacher</td>
<td>There is a desire for me to do better and a desire for me to succeed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In most cases, they were very personal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>It completely affects the day, with a good administrator you feel more comfortable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Overall, your relationship has an effect but I would not say it is the most influential for most teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Critical administrator</td>
<td>Nothing that I could do in or out of the classroom was going to be right</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I worked for a couple of micro-managers and I do not enjoy that at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Approachable</td>
<td>They will listen to me, I feel that the doors are open</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Positive relationship</td>
<td>I like my administrators all the way up to the superintendent, I feel comfortable</td>
<td>I have gotten along with all of my principals except for one.</td>
<td>Overall, I have a good relationship.</td>
<td>Most have been very supportive of what I was trying to do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 Recognition of work</td>
<td>They are seeming to recognize what I am doing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.11 Positive feedback given</td>
<td>They’ll tell me that I am doing a good job</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 Negative relationship</td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Dave</td>
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<tr>
<td>Had a principal one time that was not only willing to throw me under the bus, difficult to teach whenever I was constantly afraid of how what I was doing was going to be presented, seriously considered getting out of teaching</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.14 Relationship has not impacted satisfaction</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My relationship with the administration has not decreased my job satisfaction… has not really increased my job satisfaction either</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.17 Responds to teacher needs</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That nourishment coming from above makes a difference</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…just about anything you say you need, you just about got it as long as funding is available, we have what we need</td>
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<td>They were financially supportive and in other ways.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Dave</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Relationship with colleagues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1 Relationship impacts satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>It is very comfortable and that is nice</td>
<td>My strongest job satisfaction factor</td>
<td>It is definitely one of the best parts…Everybody knows each other. They do stuff a lot of times together</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.3 Provides feedback</strong></td>
<td>If I am having trouble with something, somebody can go “Well try this”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.4 Positive relationship</strong></td>
<td>Pretty good relationship with the school as a whole, it has really become a family, very close and comforting, supportive of one another</td>
<td>I really like the colleagues that I work with…They are more student-oriented</td>
<td>The relationship with this staff is wonderful. It is a true team effort on this hall.</td>
<td>At both schools that I have worked at, I could not ask for a better group of people to work with. They are very supportive…Some of them are the closest friends that I have.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.7 Makes up for other areas of frustration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>The bond that I have with my co-workers offsets the frustration experienced with other areas of this job.</td>
<td>This makes up for some of the issues that I deal with, and they deal with, associated with student behavior.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 Only interacts with some of faculty</td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Dave</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ones I do not get along with very well…I can avoid them pretty easily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.9 Shares concerns with</th>
<th>If something is going on, they are there to back me</th>
<th>If I have a problem inside or outside of school, other teachers are willing to step in and help.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 2.10 Negative relationships | Sometimes with the school as a whole I feel dismissed, There are other people…who work very hard on doing exactly what they want to no matter what is expected of them……That becomes really irritating. You are competing against others. It is difficult to be friends and to be supportive, truly supportive of your opponents, there are different approaches… | | |
Table 4.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Relationship with parents</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Positive relationship with parents</td>
<td>They are showing up automatically on my side, They do not feel bad coming in, They know me and they can ask questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…I know almost all the kid’s parents or grandparents. This is real good… Probably 95% of them have been very supportive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Minimal parental involvement</td>
<td>I see daily that some of my parents don’t care.</td>
<td>They have not been taught a skill that you would expect their parent to have taught them before they came to school.</td>
<td>…there is not enough relationships with parents and the community, do not know to be concerned or don’t care to be concerned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Negative relationship</td>
<td>They do know me. They know where I live. If they don’t like me, they can make my life not fun, doesn’t give you time to relax</td>
<td>We do not have enough of a relationship and that is one of the negative aspects of this job. In this area you still got the black/white thing…</td>
<td></td>
<td>The parents drove me not to coach again. I loved the game. I love the kids but I did not love the sunshine and I did not love the parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.14 Impacts satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negative Impact</td>
<td>I think this could hurt your satisfaction, especially if you feel they are out to get you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.15 Accountability</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Makes me want to try harder, They are watching everything</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 4. Relationship with community | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|-------|
| 4.1 Supportive | I do like that teachers…are … pretty revered, If you are a teacher, people are…very nice to you and everything | By and large, there is an excellent situation with the community in this county. |

| 4.3 Impacts mobility | | |
|---------------------|------|
| I think teachers stay…because they know everybody…this is also why they leave. They want something new, something different. |

| 4.4 Not supportive | Education is seen as a money wasting frivolity. | The community overall is simply no interested in what goes on here. |

| 5. Student discipline | | |
|---------------------|------|
| | | | |
Table 4.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.1 Important to teacher</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student behavior is a major issue for me and many of my colleagues. The change and attitude of the teenagers and the fact that the teenagers feel they are the rule makers</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.2 School too lenient</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discipline is not where I would like to see it…I think this whole staff feels that it is too lenient here.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.3 Inconsistent enforcement</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel like discipline is simply not consistent. We have a handbook or agenda for the kids to go by and for us to go by. Sometimes it is not followed.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.4 No parental help</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…stems from parental concern, just comes from home</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.5 Important to teaching</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key element in what is going on in the classroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

215
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.6 Negative impact on satisfaction</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My house gets egged at least once a year…That is upsetting, parents want me to raise their children instead of teaching them, that frustrates me</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.7 Types of behavior</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They do not respect adults like they used to.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Violence is the word I think of when I think of that school and maybe chaos. It stayed like a riot.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.8 Lack of motivation</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.9 Lack of interest</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can see so much of a decline in the morals and just the desire to be here.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.11 Societal problem</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is a matter that they are feral and they don’t know, I think a lot of these children, a lot of our problems stem from many of our students have never seen a man…a man who does what they are supposed to do</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Dave</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.12 Difficult for teacher</td>
<td>Then no learning takes place and everything is in chaos.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13 Biggest problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This is probably my main area of dissatisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.14 Small number of students</td>
<td>Small number of kids give all the kids a bad name and control what happens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.16 Lack of accountability</td>
<td>Student do what they do because they can</td>
<td>Parents are letting their child be a friend and letting their child rule.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.17 Not teachers responsibility</td>
<td>It doesn’t seem that I am getting to do what I was educated to do, I have to tell your kids about sex…bullying …race relationships… , Be a parent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Teacher efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Important to teacher</td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>Dave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>That there are people who are doing things because of something you did, It is a way to live forever, Knowing the difference they [teachers] have made in her [child’s] life, I want to do that, one light bulb moment makes it all worth it, There is no high like that</td>
<td>…that is the best part of my job, It’s great to be able to track your successes and failures in real time and over time.</td>
<td>I do. I hope I do. I try to dwell on that…, Teachers need to know that what they are doing does matter, it does affect the lives of student beyond the classroom</td>
<td>…if I could positively impact one or two each year I am doing something good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6.2 Teacher sees evidence | I have students who come back, I have had other students who told me, Those moments of understanding, those moments of seeing that kid graduate that nobody thought would, that moment of hearing this kid sing |

| 6.3 Type of Impact |       |      |       |      |
### Table 4.1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.3a Content knowledge</strong></td>
<td>My students who are music teachers now, I taught them, the immediate gratification of seeing what your students learn makes it easier for you to know you are doing a good job and to not feel as self-conscious around other people.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.3b Behavior</strong></td>
<td>I am changing them, I can affect the world, I can make things better</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.4 Teaching is making impact</strong></td>
<td>I do. I know I do…. I had touched this child and didn’t even know</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I followed her through high school and that was very rewarding. No one had ever told this kid that she could get a scholarship or run in the Olympics. That was really all it took.</td>
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Table 4.1 (Continued)

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<th></th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Improves</td>
<td>Their lives are better because of something I have done…That is just good, Seeing that you’ve made a difference that you’ve succeeded, is exhilarating. It’s worth coming into work another day for</td>
<td></td>
<td>One of the most satisfying things for a teacher is to have a child…come back and say “Thank you.”</td>
<td>I get a lot of satisfaction from that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfaction</td>
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<td>7. Salary and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Not satisfied</td>
<td>Far short from what I am actually expected to do</td>
<td>They have started taking money away from me and then give me more duties.</td>
<td>Benefits could be better. I and other teachers are concerned about cuts that may be made in the future.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>Pretty good…for what my contract tells me I am supposed to go, good benefits, overall I think my salary is good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Benefits I think are excellent. I wish I made a few more bucks but I have a government job seven miles from my house and that is the way I look at it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Work hours</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8.2 Satisfied</strong></td>
<td>I work many hours every day but I only do it for 180-190 days a year. I get a lot of holidays.</td>
<td>Work hours can’t get much better…We work a four day week. That is perfect, I think there is a desire to teach among the young married women in this area. The work hours are almost 8 to 5, that aspect of it…</td>
<td>We have gone to a four day week…In that area I am pretty satisfied.</td>
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<td><strong>9. Required duties</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9.1 Not satisfied</strong></td>
<td>The three things I don’t like about school are paperwork, ugly children, and ugly parents.</td>
<td>It could be worse.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10 Teacher preparation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10.3 Experience is needed</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I think the best preparation is your first year of teaching. As long as you got somebody to fall back on like you do when you are student teaching, it’s not the same.</td>
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</table>
### Table 4.1 (Continued)

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<th></th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Andy</th>
<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.5</strong> Misconceptions about teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I thought all of the kids were perfect, well-behaved, smart and well-mannered…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.6</strong> Not prepared for student behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The difficulties of managing the classroom has impacted my satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.7</strong> Does not impact satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The lack of preparation has not really impacted my satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.9</strong> Partially prepared</td>
<td>There is much more than just the classroom. I was prepared for the ideal classroom. We spent little time talking about the children with needs.</td>
<td>…they do not prepare you well for being a teacher, I do not feel that the school of education does very well. They teach you how to write a lesson plan but you don’t have a whole semester to write a lesson plan like you do in college.</td>
<td>I had an idea of what to expect but did not truly know what to expect.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.11</strong> Content Knowledge</td>
<td>My understanding of my content is incredible.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> Desire to stay</td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Cathy</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.1 Would not quit</td>
<td>I feel that I have been called to teach. I feel that this is what God wants me to do...the way I serve mankind, No I wouldn’t, I will never get out of it, stable basis upon which to build a career and a life</td>
<td>I don’t see me doing it. I just don’t see me being ready to retire from teaching.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Would quit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes. Most definitely. Ten years ago I would not have answered that way.</td>
<td>Yes, in the morning. I could go right now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 Would move to another area in education</td>
<td>I would go into private teaching</td>
<td>If I could retire from the middle school and move down to the PreK</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>Andy</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Likes children/school environment/teaching</td>
<td>I like working with children, I like most children most of the time. I did not want to do a club…They finally pushed me into it…Kids actually want to come in and do something and learn. I cannot complain. I love that.</td>
<td>I like working with middle school students because, in general, they have a pretty good sense of humor…I do feel a special bond with some of the kids.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Job security/better off than others</td>
<td>Living a lot better than a lot of other people, make a lot more than many other people do, you are scared for your job constantly, You want to be the first string teacher because if I sit on the bench no one is going to pay attention to you and they will fire you for a cheaper teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>A lot of people do not have a job at all in this economy so I gripe when I probably shouldn’t.</td>
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<td>14. Isolation</td>
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Table 4.1 (Continued)

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<tr>
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<th>Amy</th>
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<th>Cathy</th>
<th>Dave</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Relationship with students</td>
<td>Some of the worse kids in our schools are the first ones that run up to you in the parking lot at Walmart. It is not always what you are teaching. It is that you have a place in a child’s life that is important.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some of the kids that are hard to love, I try to help them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Teacher accountability</td>
<td>Academic area teachers, they have the enormous stress of CRCT…There is a lot of stress that you do not see in some of the other areas. That makes it a little more difficult to trust and relax.</td>
<td>In the regular classroom, you are drilled from above…You find yourself competing against other teachers in your subject area as opposed to collaborating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Job satisfaction and student performance</td>
<td>I find that if you don’t like what you do, be it teaching or ditch digging, you don’t put much effort into it.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher not happy, nobody happy and not much learning or effective teaching going on.</td>
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Table 4.2

Coded Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Relationship with administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Confidence in teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>I didn’t appreciate the fact that if I had a major issue in my class somebody else thought it wasn’t major.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>Feeling a bond of friendship with co-workers and administration does help in job satisfaction, enjoying the work environment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.6 Approachable</td>
<td>As far as… listening to some of my concerns I really like them</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.7 Positive relationship</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel as if I have a very good relationship with my principal and assistant principal</td>
<td>I have had a very positive experience for the most part with principals and assistant principals,… for the most part the majority of my years have been quite pleasant</td>
<td></td>
<td>I have always fortunately gotten along with the administration,...I always had very good relationships with them.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.12 Negative relationship</th>
<th></th>
<th>I spoke my peace on that and that was another issue there.</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.15 Teacher tries not to bother administration</th>
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</table>

| 1.16 Teacher understands the work of administrators |       |       | ...there is plenty that the administration has to do at the front office that like I couldn’t handle |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|
|                                                     |       |       | ...I was almost in the position where principals are here so I feel that gives me a better understanding of what they are dealing with,...I understand it is hard to do and your hands are tied in a lot of ways and there are things going on we are not always aware of... |

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Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.17 Responds to teacher needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My administration is really pretty good, like responding to teacher needs and everything like that..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.18 Teacher feels abused</td>
<td></td>
<td>I am very passive to my administrators at least so if duties come along they are going to ask me…You have to be a hard butt in order not to get trampled over a little bit by the administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relationship with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>This makes coming to work a more pleasurable experience, It they are your friends and they are on your team, it does motivate you to do better.</td>
<td>That has been one of the best parts about the job, the closeness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…adds to my satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Positive relationship</td>
<td>…I have a good relationship and friendship with the staff at the county office, I am friends with my colleagues</td>
<td>…I probably hated to leave a circle of colleagues when I left the high school worse than anything I have ever done, I have always gotten along well with my colleagues, I have really enjoyed colleagues</td>
<td>…we are pretty tight, I would say that we stick together</td>
<td>I have a good relationship with my colleagues… We are a tight group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 2.6 Mutual understanding of teaching experience | | We can talk about things and share frustrations… | Having adults to talk with and who can relate to what you are dealing with in the classroom. |
| 2.7 Makes up for other areas of frustration | | That has made my job more bearable at times. | This helps when the job gets difficult. |
| 2.8 Only interacts with some of faculty | | …guarded with my relationships..., we didn’t have anything in common so we didn’t do a whole lot together |

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Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.9 Shares concerns with</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We tend to help each other more to take up the slack at different times knowing what each one may be going through. Whether it is a home issue, a death in the family, just something you can help with.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We share concerns and stuff like that.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| 2.10 Negative relationships | | | ...not being treated as a professional often times… | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Relationship with parents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Positive relationship with parents</td>
<td>I know many of the parents either by attending grade school, high school, or church with them.</td>
<td>I have always had pleasant experiences with parents.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Most of it is positive, Overall it has been very positive with the parents that you do see.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.2 Relationship supports learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is easy to have a good relationship with your students when their parents respect and like you.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.4 Minimal parental involvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have seen less parental involvement over the years…</td>
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<td>The problem is, of course, those parents you don’t see…</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.6 Willing to help</td>
<td>…that is probably a key to changing …and that is for parents to step up and take a little bit of responsibility, …I always had supportive parents who would make anything or get us anywhere we needed to go.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…that helps when you know that you’ve got supportive parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Demoralizing to teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>…hard thing to deal with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Negative relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td>I have had some issues with parents.</td>
<td>There has certainly been some negative experiences.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11 Not supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td>…I feel that parents very much take the kid’s side.</td>
<td></td>
<td>…the one time you do see them in the year everything is wrong, it is all your fault, …when you meet with their parents you find the very same thing,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.12 Not going to change</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don’t know that we will ever get that [parental involvement] or have control at all but I think that is a big problem</td>
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<td></td>
<td>You can’t fight against that home life and that parent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.13 No work ethic</td>
<td></td>
<td>…when you live in a household where neither parent goes to work and gets up every day, has no responsibility, then how do you learn responsibility</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Relationship with community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4.4 Not supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td>I guess the biggest thing is the lack of respect for being a teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Student discipline</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.1 Important to teacher</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>This is what I expect and I run my classroom that way. If they want to act like a fool somewhere else, they are certainly able to but in my classroom we don’t do that.</td>
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| 5.2 School too lenient | | \(\ldots\) get detention hall when they had been right up in my face being extremely disrespectful, I think we give too many chances. | \(\ldots\) when I do write them up I don’t want them to have detention with me. I want them gone…. We don’t get them enough. | So I requested that she be moved out of my room. She was not. |

| 5.3 Inconsistent enforcement | | They were quite inconsistent. I think consistency is probably the big thing. | When a kid gets in trouble, it is very much if momma and daddy is on the board… | I will be honest with you. It depends on the administrator, That is my biggest frustration, is the lack of consistency in what’s done… |
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.4 No parental help</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The parent is young, and the parent is growing up with the child, nobody wants their child to suffer any consequences anymore for whatever reason.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.5 Important to teaching</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…not being able to teach what you love, I can’t teach and with high stakes testing and everything, discipline interferes with that so much.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…the continuing 25 students can’t learn because of three…</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.6 Negative impact on satisfaction</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At times, discipline does affect my job satisfaction, I think student discipline…has an enormous impact on whether or not teachers stay in the classroom, I hated my last period class last year.</td>
<td>It hasn’t made me want to stop teaching but it is annoying to me, the inconsistency that I have seen and that I see.</td>
<td>You have to be an angry person You have to be ugly to children. That is the most dissatisfying part of this job…. That stuff just gets old quick.</td>
<td>I actually started looking for another job because of one incident.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7 Types of behavior</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>She told two assistant principals, two counselors, and the principal if I asked her one more time to do her homework, she would make sure I never made it out of the parking lot alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Lack of motivation</td>
<td>It is stressful to see children lack the motivation to want to learn.</td>
<td>It is definitely different for the very first day...They are a lot less self-motivated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Lack of interest</td>
<td>It is stressful to see children not care...</td>
<td>When I say “Be quiet and sit down”, they should jump at it. I am giving them the opportunity to learn, to be educated.</td>
<td></td>
<td>It is almost like every single class has more apathy,..., I don’t know how you fix that level of apathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11 Societal problem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t think it is a school issue as much as it is a societal issue, It is a much bigger issue than the school, Education is not valued...</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.12 Difficult for teacher</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last year, we had an awful group of students, very stressful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It was just handling the middle school child, which are a completely different animal until themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13 Biggest problem</td>
<td></td>
<td>One of the reasons probably that I did leave the high school…was the lack of discipline.</td>
<td>…it is why I dislike teaching 8th grade, That is the part I dislike the most. That is it right there for me, To me that is the biggest problem.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.14 Small number of students</td>
<td>There may be one or two that give you a hard time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.15 Not changing or going to change</td>
<td>And I see discipline becoming more and more of an issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t see it getting any better.</td>
<td>It is frustrating from time to time when you see the same behavior from the same child and you feel like what else can we do?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.16 Lack of accountability</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>...and think life is a free ride, There seems to be no accountability for the students themselves or parents, ...student and parents seem to have little responsibility, What about the student?</td>
<td>These are the rules. If you don’t want to do it our way, then go home, These children for the most part are old enough that they know how to behave.</td>
<td>You know kids fail my class because of that [not being responsible], They do not know yet that they don’t throw stuff in class. That is ridiculous, School life isn’t anywhere reality is. We are putting these kids at a disadvantage..., You are 14-years-old. I mean in four years you are an adult, ...the hardest part, the low accountability for students in middle grades.</td>
<td>The continuing lack of accountability ...that is very frustrating..., They [parents] are not accountable for anything, so why they expect their children to be.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 5.17 Not teachers responsibility | | | | |
| I did not sign up to baby sit, I cannot make a child do anything... | | | |

| 5.18 Creates misconception about teacher | | | |
| ...a lot of time they are thinking, “Well, that is just classroom management.”, You are a bad person if you get mad at a child. | | | |
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.19 Student behavior manageable</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…you still do have an element of children who do have respect for adults and who do know how to behave.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Teacher efficacy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.1 Important to teacher</th>
<th>This is important to me and adds to my job satisfaction.</th>
<th>It is always good to see somebody that you have taught …thank you for what you did…</th>
<th>That is really nice.</th>
<th>…to me that makes it worth it.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Teacher sees evidence</td>
<td>I have seen students go on to do great things.</td>
<td>I still see a lot of them…They seem to be appreciative, I can look back over the years and there are a lot of kids that are successful…productive people in the community</td>
<td>Now I have kids that have won RESA and have done good things and on the way to college…, I have had over 90% of my students pass the writing test. And this year our school is ranked first in the RESA…</td>
<td>…several of them are graduating and they passed the graduation tests.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3 Type of Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3a Content knowledge</td>
<td>They [students] actually worked harder to me performed better than any of my classes. I went home thinking “I be damned.” That was a great day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3b Behavior</td>
<td>…I think that is part of my responsibility as a teacher too, to live a life outside the classroom that’s worthy of other people seeing and thinking.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Teaching is making impact</td>
<td>I do believe I have positively impacted the lives of students which I have taught, I know I am helping them in their lives.</td>
<td></td>
<td>…they come back and tell me that I do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 Difficult to determine</td>
<td>I hope so. I guess you never really know.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t see that I do…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Improves satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have enjoyed more and more as I have been here the kids that I see in high school and they change when they get into high school.</td>
<td>A teacher is much more satisfied with their job when they can see students being successful later in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Salary and Benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1 Not satisfied</td>
<td>…teachers are many times expected to perform miracles at a time when we are also being paid less by furloughs, ...recent cuts to our pay, though not huge, have really been discouraging. I am not satisfied with that.</td>
<td>...I am really getting kind of a crappy salary.</td>
<td>I took three years ago a $2500 a year pay decrease to come back here and I don’t like that…. I think I work, not just me, teachers work harder and more hours than anybody realizes…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>I really can’t complain about that…I really didn’t like furlough days but that was the nature of the beast.</td>
<td>...you really would be out of your mind if you didn’t think that is why people stayed with it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Work hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I come to work early because I like to come to work early…I really can’t complain about that.</td>
<td>...you get time with your family during the summer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Required Duties</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 9.1 Not satisfied |      |       | I know a lot of people do a lot of things but to pile that [duties] on…that right now is dissatisfying, Some things that maybe have diminished it is time with like paperwork, …my next job I am going to get a bathroom break when I want and a 30 minute lunch be myself. |         |         |

| 9.2 Satisfied     |      |       | You know I am satisfied with that aspect, with the duties and everything | …my duties I think are reasonable. |         |

<p>| 10 Teacher preparation |      |       |      |         |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.3 Experience is needed</td>
<td>Experience can be the best teacher.</td>
<td>I was in the process of raising three boys. That gave me much more experience than any behavior management class.</td>
<td>It takes years.</td>
<td>I think had I had some student teaching, I might would have been a little better, … once I had a few years under my belt I was ok.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6 Not prepared for student behavior</td>
<td>I feel lied to, It is not like it is made out to be. You cannot teach from a textbook classroom management.</td>
<td>I feel lied to, It is not like it is made out to be. You cannot teach from a textbook classroom management.</td>
<td>I feel lied to, It is not like it is made out to be. You cannot teach from a textbook classroom management.</td>
<td>I feel lied to, It is not like it is made out to be. You cannot teach from a textbook classroom management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.9 Partially prepared</td>
<td>I would say that my preparation affected my satisfaction with teaching initially…</td>
<td>I would say that my preparation affected my satisfaction with teaching initially…</td>
<td>I would say that my preparation affected my satisfaction with teaching initially…</td>
<td>I would say that my preparation affected my satisfaction with teaching initially…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11 Content Knowledge</td>
<td>I felt I was prepared in the content knowledge… I was not prepared for the group work and many techniques the new Georgia standards requires.</td>
<td>That part I don’t feel prepared for.</td>
<td>That part I don’t feel prepared for.</td>
<td>That part I don’t feel prepared for.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Desire to stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11.1 Would not quit</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have never thought about that. I haven’t really thought about doing anything else.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t see myself stopping teaching.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11.2 Would quit</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes I would, If somebody said, “You can go home today”, I would go.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comparable job? Yeah…I would if it was…still in education though.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11.3 Would move to another area in education</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…I do still like children. I like teaching still, I have really been quite pleased with this career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It’s made me think about going back from a regular ed teacher to a special ed teacher…. If I had a comparable job offer still in education in a different area, oh I would look very seriously at it…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Likes children/school environment/teaching</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…I do still like children. I like teaching still, I have really been quite pleased with this career.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I love English. I love Social Studies, I love the system and institution of education.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I truly enjoy it, I do love teaching, I enjoy being with the kids…. I just enjoy teaching. I really do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13. Job security/better off than others</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am fortunate to have a job.</td>
<td></td>
<td>…it is secure…a lot of places are at risk, especially right now.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.2 (Continued)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Relationship with students</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I had good relationships with students over the years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have a very good relationship with my students. I act like a middle school student when I am teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Teacher accountability</td>
<td>All that is expected by the state, Everything falls on the teacher, If a student fails, it is my fault, I have to answer for my part in the classroom, Some things I, as a classroom teacher, cannot change.</td>
<td>I get judged based on people that I can’t control, The accountability is all on the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I get judged based on people that I can’t control, The accountability is all on the teacher. …added pressure of the CRCT scores…. The more the accountability has shifted to teachers and the more that we have to do to make sure they are successful….</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Job satisfaction and student performance</td>
<td></td>
<td>I think job satisfaction affects student performance if the teacher lets it… I think a lot of teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs, but you make the decision whether you allow that to affect your job performance.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.3

Coded Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship with administration</th>
<th>Ian</th>
<th>Jonathan</th>
<th>Kevin</th>
<th>Lane</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Confidence in teacher</td>
<td>I know they are confident in my ability to meet the needs of the students in our school.</td>
<td>I feel they have confidence in my ability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Appreciation for teacher</td>
<td>They appreciate me…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Personal interest in teacher</td>
<td>They take a personal interest in me and this makes a big difference…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>…makes my job more enjoyable, A good relationship with the administration does make me more satisfied with teaching.</td>
<td>The biggest negative experience I’ve encountered that has diminished my desire to teach is the condescension that I’ve felt from our principal to the staff.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Critical administrator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Approachable</td>
<td>The administration is always very busy, but they are approachable and helpful.</td>
<td>...many teachers try to avoid her [principal] as much as possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Positive</td>
<td>I think I have a good relationship with them…</td>
<td>…relationship with all levels of administration is very positive.</td>
<td>I have no problem continuing as I am until I retire.</td>
<td>…I feel that my relationship with the administration would be described as positive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11 Positive</td>
<td>The evaluate my teaching and give me feedback.</td>
<td>I feel respected by my administration through positive feedback…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feedback given</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 Negative</td>
<td>…not a very close relationship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.13 Unpredictable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administrator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.14 Relationship has not impacted satisfaction</td>
<td>This has not had an impact on my job satisfaction…</td>
<td>The administration has not negatively affected my satisfaction with teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.15 Teacher tries not to bother administration</td>
<td>I try to handle most business on my own without intervening with the administration.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.16 Teacher understands the work of administrators</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17 Responds to teacher needs</td>
<td>If I need help or questions, they are available and this is satisfactory.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relationship with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Relationship impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>Meeting and getting to know the teachers has had a positive impact on my job satisfaction.</td>
<td>Both the professional and the personal relationship I have with my colleagues has a positive impact on my job satisfaction.</td>
<td>These relationships have made my experience pleasurable, I think this is one of the biggest factors impacting satisfaction for me along with other teachers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Relieves stress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>They give me an avenue to relieve stress…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Provides feedback</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<tr>
<td>...we work together to plan and organize lessons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have two peers who I speak with and draw suggestions from on a regular basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.4 Positive relationship</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe I have a good relationship with my colleagues.</td>
<td>Relationship with colleagues is very positive.</td>
<td></td>
<td>My relationship with my colleagues has always been one of the bog positives in my career...I have been extremely blessed...the impact of these people has been above and beyond positive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.5 Mutual respect</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a sense of mutual respect among teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.6 Mutual understanding of teaching experience</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We know what each other endures in terms of dealing with middle school students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.7 Makes up for other areas of frustration</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They make up for some the headaches of working with difficult students.</td>
<td>Having these relationships helps make it through the hard times.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Getting along well with those you work with helps take your attention off of the aspects of teaching that frustrate you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.8 Only interacts with some of faculty</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I do not associate with most teachers outside of the hallway except for other coaches.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Relationship with parents</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Positive relationship with parents</td>
<td>Most of the relationships with the parents that I come in contact with are good…</td>
<td>I have a very good relationship with parents…They like my fairness and discipline.</td>
<td>…communication often leads to a strong rapport and sometimes to friendship.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.2 Relationship supports learning</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Relationship improves behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kids get a sense that education is important and that I am to be respected as their teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.4 Minimal parental involvement</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There have been a few occasions where parents will not take an interest in their child's education…</td>
<td>…the majority of my student’s parents or guardians show very little interest in their child’s education…I have very few parents who attend IEP meetings, return information, or have any input…</td>
<td></td>
<td>…the largest group of parents is the group that is completely disengaged in the educational lives of their children.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Relationship does not impact satisfaction</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While this lack of interaction with parents is discouraging, it has no direct correlation to my job satisfaction… If parents were more involved, I am not sure if this would raise my satisfaction level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.6 Willing to help</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…they are willing to work with teachers.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.7 Demoralizing to teacher</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>…that [lack of parental involvement] is demoralizing as a teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…the non-supportive parents…make may job seem difficult and unfulfilling in regards to teacher-parent relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.8 Difficult to contact</th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have found it is very hard to contact parents of students who are not doing very well, or have behavior problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Negative relationship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…some parents have a way of blaming you for any of their child’s shortcomings, whether academic or behavioral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.14 Impacts satisfaction</td>
<td>…this [problems contacting parents] has a negative impact on job satisfaction, but very minimal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My job satisfaction is impacted by this on a variety of levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relationship with community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I feel that the community is supportive of me as a teacher. Having parents and the community on your side makes the job much easier.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Improves education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 Impacts mobility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…I am happy to have a job in the town where I wanted to live.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Not supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It’s difficult to combat that in a community where educational expectations just are not as high as I feel they should be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student discipline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Important to teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, I do believe in fairness and going by the book. Being able to manage the classroom is essential for today’s teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 School too lenient</td>
<td></td>
<td>...lack of discipline…</td>
<td>The only problem is how long it takes to work the misbehaving students out…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3 Inconsistent enforcement</td>
<td>...failure of my administration to adequately enforce even the most basic of discipline…</td>
<td>There has been a lack of consistency… Inconsistency like that is frustrating.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 No parental help</td>
<td>You would think the parents of these students would be embarrassed.</td>
<td>With parents not taking seriously their role, students seem to feel that they can behave however they want to.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.5 Important to teaching</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…we also fail the other students in the classroom because of a disrupted learning environment, … having their efforts thwarted by children who are not held accountable for their behavior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.6 Negative impact on satisfaction</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The lack of discipline and the discipline program in place at my school is directly linked to my job satisfaction, …lowers the overall morale of the teachers…, severely impacted my job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>These issues have had a negative impact on my job satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.7 Types of behavior</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>…disrespect the teacher and other students daily, girl in my class cussed me out in front of everyone.</td>
<td>…student disrespect to teachers, dress codes, electronic devices, and noise levels in the hall and cafeteria…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.8 Lack of motivation</td>
<td>... very unmotivated. They do not seem to want to put forth the effort to learn…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.9 Lack of interest</td>
<td>... school seems to be a social setting where they can gather with their friends and hang out for the day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.11 Societal problem</td>
<td>I do think it is a bigger problem, a societal problem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.13 Biggest problem</td>
<td>It is an ongoing process that doesn't end and is frustrating, Discipline is probably the single most problem that has negatively affected my job satisfaction.</td>
<td>It takes a lot to continually have others treat you with contempt. I think good people leave the classroom when they get a chance because they are tired of being abused verbally.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.14 Small number of students</td>
<td>There are only a few students in class that negatively impact the entire classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.15 Not changing or going to change</td>
<td>It is a cycle that I do not feel like I am winning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>We could pay some students to behave, and they would still disrupt the class in some way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.16 Lack of accountability</td>
<td>…thinking there is no consequences for their actions…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.17 Not teachers responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…I believe it falls into the hands of the administrators to do whatever necessary…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.18 Creates misconception about teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5.19 Student behavior manageable</td>
<td>The kids normally perform as expected and I often feel I am just a facilitator.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.20 School not effective in addressing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I believe it [discipline] is not dealt with effectively.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Teacher efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.1 Important to teacher</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will settle for small differences as long as I know I am making a difference, I think most teachers simply want to know that they matter…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Since students do not receive what they need from parents in terms of discipline, I fill that gap. You hope that what you have been able to do will carry over into every aspect of their experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6.2 Teacher sees evidence |       |       | Having spoken to former students, I know I am helping them in their life. | That was one of the moments when I felt I had made a difference in someone’s life. I made a positive impact. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.3 Type of Impact</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.3a Content knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…try to teach them both the content… Some of my students are way behind. Helping those students is very satisfying.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3b Behavior</td>
<td>Students know what I expect of them. I also try to teach them … how to behave by referring to experiences I have had.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I see my job as a ministry and an opportunity to reach people for Christ, … something I am called to do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Teaching is making impact</td>
<td>I believe I am impacting lives positively, …my actions as a role model are affecting students, They have come to me for advice and I feel that I have helped them.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6 Difficult to determine</td>
<td>…some days it is difficult to see…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.7 Improves satisfaction</td>
<td>…this impacts my satisfaction positively because I know I am making small differences.</td>
<td></td>
<td>This is encouraging to know that I am making a difference in the long run for these students.</td>
<td>Knowing I can make a difference in a person’s life increases my desire to teach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Salary and Benefits</td>
<td>I believe I should be paid $10,000 more per year as a teacher…This part of my job is discouraging for me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Do I think teachers deserve a better salary? Absolutely</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>I am satisfied with benefits…</td>
<td>I think teachers are paid pretty well…</td>
<td>…decent pay and benefits. Benefits are above average…My pay and benefits have not diminished my job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Work hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 Not satisfied</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>I am satisfied with…work hours.</td>
<td>My work hours and time off give me the opportunity to spend time with my family…makes up for the headaches I experience with students.</td>
<td>…work hours are average. The hours and time off allow me to be involved in other things outside of education.</td>
<td>This year has been especially difficult for everyone…Mainly due to a schedule that our board of ed. adopted…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Required duties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1 Not satisfied</td>
<td>I believe there are too many required duties for teachers…some required duties should eliminated.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2 Satisfied</td>
<td>I have to attend some of the extracurricular activities but not many. The duties I am assigned are tolerable.</td>
<td>I often volunteer for additional duties and the duties are necessary for our school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Teacher preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Appropriate</td>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Glen</td>
<td>Heather</td>
</tr>
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<td>------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>...the preparation I received through my program more than prepared me to become a teacher.</td>
<td>Yes...as well as I could expect</td>
<td>I don’t think college adequately prepares one to teach.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.2 Increased satisfaction</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My preparation has positively affected my job satisfaction.</td>
<td>...it has made my life very easy...This has certainly impacted my satisfaction is a good way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.3 Experience is needed</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experience teaches you a lot about the classroom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10.4 Important to teacher</th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having confidence in you knowledge and ability is important when stepping in the classroom.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.5 Misconceptions about teaching</td>
<td>I had this idea that when I became a teacher, I would be surrounded by students who wanted to learn and would work diligently toward their education, I am still shocked by what I see students doing…</td>
<td></td>
<td>But they leave out what’s really going on and what schools are really like…its absolute culture shock.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6 Not prepared for student behavior</td>
<td>The only aspect that I was not prepared for was how to handle behavior problem students… Otherwise I feel I was prepared.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.7 Does not impact satisfaction</td>
<td>…preparation has not had an impact on job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.9 Partially prepared</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>…there’s very little to nothing about how to teach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Desire to stay</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1 Would not quit</td>
<td>No, I would not quit.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>I wouldn’t quit teaching.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.3 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Emily</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Glen</th>
<th>Heather</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Would quit</td>
<td></td>
<td>All factors being equal…I would definitely change careers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I would probably teach in a different school, setting, or environment…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 Would move to another area in education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Likes children/school environment/ teaching</td>
<td>I believe that I am educating youth and I feel my job is important.</td>
<td>While I enjoy teaching…, I truly enjoy teaching.</td>
<td>I like being around the kids and the environment. This is what I prefer to do.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Job security/better off than others</td>
<td>…I thought teaching would be a safer and more stable occupation.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Right now the economy is shaky. Many people do not have the kind of job security that I have as a teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Isolation</td>
<td>I do not like being confined to one particular area for the entire work day…Being in the same place all day gets monotonous.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Relationship with students</td>
<td>I have enjoyed building relationships with players and students.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4

Coded Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marie</th>
<th>Nancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Relationship impacts</td>
<td>This has greatly affected my job satisfaction in a negative way.</td>
<td>When administrators support the staff of the school, learning can take place. When teachers are not supported, the learning environment suffers and so does job satisfaction. I have worked in excellent school and in the worst. Job satisfaction always comes back to being supported by administrators, colleagues that you work with closely, and students plus their families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8 Respect for teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td>At some schools, I felt satisfied with my job. This occurred when I was treated like a professional…. At schools where the administration showed a lack of professional respect for teachers, it drifted to the parent’s opinion as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.12 Negative relationship</td>
<td>I have had some experiences where my administrators were very supportive, but overall, as the years have gone by, that support has dwindled, The student’s word is now more important than the teacher’s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.17 Responds to teacher needs</td>
<td>…did not get the support needed to teach middle school students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.18 Teacher feels abused</td>
<td></td>
<td>At some schools I was not satisfied with my job. I felt used and abused…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Relationship with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Mutual understanding of teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Being around colleagues that have the same professional outlook as myself helped me enjoy my job lots more.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Marie</th>
<th>Nancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Relationship with parents</td>
<td>I have had some very close and meaningful relationships with many of the parents.</td>
<td>At some schools I have experienced good parental contacts and relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Positive relationship with parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Relationship supports learning</td>
<td></td>
<td>At schools where parents had respect for the teachers it was productive to meet with them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15 Accountability</td>
<td>Parents do not discipline as much at home and blame the teacher for many things…many do not want to be held responsible for their child’s actions at school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Relationship with community</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 Not supportive</td>
<td></td>
<td>The community’s opinion surrounding the school depends on how the administration is perceived…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student discipline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2 School too lenient</td>
<td>…students being allowed to abuse other students and teachers…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4 No parental help</td>
<td>Parents are not held accountable. Administrators put too much on teachers giving in to children because they do not want to upset the students of their parents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 Important to teaching</td>
<td>The presence of gangs, technology that has allowed students to abuse each other online all filtrate into the classroom daily.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6 Negative impact on satisfaction</td>
<td>Marie</td>
<td>Nancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline problems have definitely affected my job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I felt abused and was tired of the emotional and physical drain. Two years later, I still haven’t recovered totally…non-support of the administration…is what drove me away from education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.7 Types of behavior</th>
<th>...disrespecting their teachers, staying in dress code, having materials or completing work.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.8 Lack of motivation</th>
<th>...students were not motivated to learn but were motivated to be disruptive and do as little for themselves as possible.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5.16 Lack of accountability</th>
<th>Students are given too much due process, Students are not held accountable…, They are not held to a higher standard.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 6. Teacher efficacy | |
|---------------------||

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.1 Important to teacher</th>
<th>...have enjoyed being able to help them grow emotionally into better people.</th>
<th>I hope the positive is a much larger number than the negative.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.2 Teacher sees evidence</th>
<th>Some of these students have gone on to receive higher degrees…</th>
<th>I have encountered many former students who are productive adult citizens of my county.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6.4 Teaching is making impact</th>
<th>...I have positively affected many of my students.</th>
<th>I feel I positively impacted many students’ lives.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 6.5 Teacher is not making impact | | I also had zero and/or a negative impact on some students’ lives. |
|----------------------------------||------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Salary and Benefits</th>
<th>The students that let me know how I affected their lives in a positive way have given me motivation.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.2 Satisfied</th>
<th>I am satisfied…</th>
<th>For most of my career I was satisfied with my salary, benefits…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 8. Work hours | |
|--------------||

| 8.2 Satisfied | ...satisfied… | |
Table 4.4 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. Required duties</th>
<th>Marie</th>
<th>Nancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.1 Not satisfied</td>
<td>…when your administration does not treat their teachers with fairness or respect, those duties become just obligations. This greatly affects my happiness with teaching…</td>
<td>The required duties has sometimes been questionable when it really wasn’t justified, just a time waster for teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Teacher preparation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.1 Appropriate</td>
<td>Yes, I feel that I was prepared.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Increased satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.3 Experience is needed</td>
<td>… no one can understand what it is all about until they really get in the classroom and teach.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.5 Misconceptions about teaching</td>
<td>…I was not prepared for the real classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.6 Not prepared for student behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td>…I felt that there was no preparation that would prepare me for teaching in the abusive environment that was allowed by the administration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Desire to stay</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Would quit</td>
<td>To be very honest, yes I want to quit right now.</td>
<td>Yes…don’t want to jeopardize my health and well-being. It is truly horrible to have a career that you end up hating.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Likes children/school environment/teaching</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have always loved children.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 14. Isolation | | Teaching is an isolated profession so contact that is positive is a must. |

| 16. Teacher accountability | | Accountability changed for students and teachers. |
Appendix G

Transcript Example

R: How long have you been in education? Was this your first career choice?

T6: I have been teaching for 21 years. It was not my first career choice. I wanted to work for a magazine or newspaper but my personal circumstances changed that. I served on the board of education for 2 years and I decided I would go back to teach when I got divorced. That is how I got into education. While on the board of education, I was in the mix on consolidating the schools. The first vote we had was when I was on the board and that failed. Then I ended up going back to school to pick up some education courses and that is when the city gave up its charter. I was the first woman appointed to the board of education in that county.

R: Describe the schools you have worked in and the types of duties performed.

T6: I started off working in a middle school for five years. I taught Language Arts and I was the department chair there and team leader there. Then I moved to the high school and taught for 12 years. I taught mainly 10th grade honors and seniors and I was department chair. I was chair of the committee that we had when we first decided to go to block scheduling. I was a Georgia Standards redelivery person for Language Arts. I helped plan and execute the first prom that was ever at the high school. I had children there at the school, so I was involved with the booster club and athletics. I was also literary coordinator and One Act Play director and anything else they needed me to do. Then I left there and I have been for four years back teaching middle school Language Arts. I am English department chair here. I have been team leader. I am not presently. I have been on the leadership team. I help with a parliamentary procedure team here for
two years. I am pretty much just the classroom teacher. I was teacher of the year twice, one time for the system and I have been teacher of the year one time since I have been here.

R: Describe your relationship with the administration. What impact has this had on your job satisfaction?

T6: I have had very positive experiences for the most part with principals and assistant principals. I have felt like I have been supported as a teacher until the last two years I taught at the high school and that is the reason I left there because I disagreed very strongly with my principal and he was not too keen on anyone who disagreed with him whether they did their job or not so that forced me to leave. As a matter of fact, when I left I did not have a job nor did I care at that point in time. I was so unhappy. But anyway for the most part the majority of my years have been quite pleasant. I have worked with some great principals, some great assistant principals. The last experience I had almost caused me to get out completely. Had I not gotten this job I would have just gone and did something else and said “To heck with it.”
Appendix H

Examples of Email Correspondence with Participants

[Image of an email message from Michael S Slaven to Michael on 4/4/2011 with the subject "Interview Prompts" and a message that includes an attachment named "M. Slaven Revised Prompts.docx(19KB)" and contains text about interview prompts and confidentiality]

I have attached the prompts for you to look at prior to me coming over. Thank you again for your help. Again, all responses are kept strictly confidential. Actual teacher names, school and district names are not used in the study.

Michael S Slaven
Assistant Principal
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2011 12:27 PM
To: [redacted]

Thank you for participating in this. I have attached the transcript of your interview. Let me know if you would like anything added or deleted. Again, I appreciate greatly your willingness to participate.
## Appendix I

### Audit Trail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 15, 2010</td>
<td>Research Proposal Submitted to Dissertation Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8, 2010</td>
<td>Phone Conference with Committee Approving Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 24, 2010 –</td>
<td>IRB Application Submitted &amp; Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 6, 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 10, 2011 –</td>
<td>School Districts and Schools Contacted &amp; Approval Obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17, 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 20, 2011</td>
<td>Trial Interviews Held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 24, 2011 –</td>
<td>Individual Interviews Held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 11, 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 11, 2011 –</td>
<td>Transcripts Analyzed and Coded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 24, 2011</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19, 2011</td>
<td>Data Results and Conclusions Written</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19, 2011</td>
<td>Dissertation Submitted to Chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>