

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT ASSESSMENT, TEACHER EVALUATION,  
AND TEACHER CLIMATE

by

Cheryl Dayan Owens Buchanan

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University

March 11, 2019

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENT ASSESSMENT, TEACHER EVALUATION,  
AND TEACHER CLIMATE

by Cheryl Dayan Owens Buchanan

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

March, 2019

APPROVED BY:

David Gorman, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Robin McClellan, Ed.D., Committee Member

## ABSTRACT

High-stakes testing has been a key component in the educational landscape since policies have focused on pedagogical quality in the classroom. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. The theoretical framework of Herzberg's motivation theory guided this study. The researcher used a correlational design to analyze the relationship between student assessment, teacher evaluations, and teacher climate. The survey was given to 109 participants who were selected from a convenience sample of middle school teachers in a rural school district in Tennessee during the 2017-2018 school year. The *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and the *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale* (PS-HST) were used to measure teacher attitude and stress. A correlational analysis was used to determine teachers' perceptions on student assessment, teacher evaluations, and climate. Results revealed a strong positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluation model. However, no relationship was found between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and the climate of the teachers or between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and the climate of the teachers.

*Keywords:* high-stakes testing, student assessment, teacher evaluation, teacher effectiveness, teacher climate, teacher retention, TVAAS

**Copyright Page**

© 2019 Cheryl Dayan Owens Buchanan

### **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. My parents, Dayton and Gladys Owens, have always been wonderful role models and have supported me all my life. I can never repay them for their sacrifices they have made for me. It is also dedicated to my husband, Bryan, and my son, Garrison. I am so grateful for the strength they gave me when I felt like I could not continue. Thank you for your encouragement and patience. Thank you all for your love and support, for you are blessings from the Lord.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to give God all the glory and honor for helping me complete this journey. I am so grateful that God provided Dr. David Gorman as chair of my committee. Dr. Gorman was always faithful in ensuring that I created a quality document. His encouraging words helped me as I continued through the process. I would like to thank Dr. Robin McClellan for her encouragement and participation on my committee. Also, I would like to thank Dr. Scott Watson for his guidance as my research consultant.

Many others supported me in this process. I am sincerely grateful to Dr. Wendy Davis as she mentored me as I completed my dissertation and research. Her guidance and advice was greatly appreciated. I am especially thankful for Kelli McKinney who was faithful in her continuous help as my editor. Also, I would like to thank Arved Harding in his assistance with the data analysis.

## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	3
Copyright Page.....	4
Dedication.....	5
Acknowledgements.....	6
List of Tables .....	10
List of Figures.....	11
List of Abbreviations .....	12
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	13
Background.....	13
Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM).....	15
Educational Influences & Shifts .....	16
Problem Statement.....	19
Purpose Statement.....	20
Significance of the Study .....	21
Research Questions.....	22
Definitions.....	23
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	25
Introduction.....	25
Theoretical Framework.....	25
Related Literature.....	27
History of Testing.....	27

Corporate Influence .....	32
Financial Impact.....	33
Student Assessment .....	34
Teacher Evaluation .....	43
Climate.....	48
Summary.....	55
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS.....	57
Overview.....	57
Correlational Design.....	57
Research Questions.....	58
Null Hypotheses.....	59
Participants and Setting.....	59
Instrumentation .....	60
Procedures.....	63
Data Analysis.....	64
CHAPTER FOUR.....	65
Overview.....	65
Research Questions.....	65
Null Hypotheses.....	65
Descriptive Statistics.....	66
Results.....	66
Null Hypothesis One.....	67
Null Hypothesis Two .....	70

Null Hypothesis Three .....	71
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS .....	73
Overview.....	73
Discussion.....	73
Research Question 1 .....	73
Research Question 2 .....	74
Research Question 3 .....	75
Implications.....	77
Limitations .....	78
Recommendations for Future Research .....	79
REFERENCES .....	81
APPENDICES .....	99

**List of Tables**

Table 1 Correlation of Research Questions to Survey Questions.....	62
Table 2 Variables' Descriptive Statistics.....	66
Table 3 Correlations of the Sums of Teachers' Perceptions.....	68

**List of Figures**

Figure 1 Scatterplot Matrix of the Sum of Teachers' Perceptions.....	69
Figure 2 Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions of TVAAS.....	70
Figure 3 Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions of Evaluations.....	71
Figure 4 Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions on Climate.....	72

### **List of Abbreviations**

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

Race to the Top (RTTT)

Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)

Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)

Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Background

High-stakes testing has made teachers believe that they are labeled based on their students' scores on an end-of-the-year standardized test and that they are limited to teaching only the academic standards that are tested (Breiner, 2015). Conversely, Ydesen (2014) referenced John Dewey in stating that teachers should be empowered to teach what they felt was necessary, and students should be free to learn creatively. Teachers do not enter the profession because of the pay or prestige; they answer a calling or see it as a mission (Santoro, 2011). However, student achievement is the tool used by the state to measure the teacher's pedagogical ability. Tennessee's objective is "to be the fastest improving state in the nation" (Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), 2012, p. 8). The TDOE (2015a) realized standardized testing is a fundamental component of education intended to equalize the expectations for all students rather than to dismiss the expertise of the teachers.

In 1983, TDOE (2015a) identified a need and created a statewide Tennessee Proficiency Test; however, in 1988, the state chose an outside vendor and began using the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP). Tennessee's assessment framework is based on federal and state laws along with policies established by districts and schools. In 2005, a majority of students in Tennessee rated as proficient in math and reading, but according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the proficiency level of Tennessee students was much lower than that of students across the United States. In 2007, the state of Tennessee received an "F" from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce because the state's definition of proficiency was not as rigorous as the nation's definition, resulting in students being proficient at the state level but not at the national level as measured by NAEP (TDOE, 2015a).

In 2009, the state of Tennessee aligned its state standards with the national standards and increased student proficiency at a more rigorous level. Proficiency levels help identify whether or not students have achieved the preset academic learning goals for the year and clarify any gaps students may have. This information is then provided to teachers and parents on each student's progress toward mastery of his or her grade level material (TDOE, 2015a). In the 2011-2012 school year, Tennessee began administering the Constructed Response Assessment and planning a transition to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) in order to identify an appropriate test that aligned with upcoming Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In Tennessee, the number of high-stakes tests that students were administered during a school year and the time for test preparations became a concern for many (TDOE, 2015a). In 2015, TDOE cancelled the contract because the vendor was unable to deliver the tests by the agreed upon date (Rainwater, 2016).

Since the implementation of No Child Left Behind in 2001, school systems have felt the added stress to increase students' test scores in order to obtain federal funding. Consequently, schools place additional stress on teachers to teach to the test, which results in standardized instruction (Bhattacharyya, Junot, & Clark, 2013). The Race to the Top initiative (RTTT) prompted Tennessee to revise teacher evaluations. RTTT guidelines required the states and districts to include student growth as part of the teacher evaluation score (Buzick & Jones, 2015).

Steward and Varner (2012) noted that the fundamental concept of CCSS shifts the focus from the individual needs of each student to the needs of all students. CCSS dictates that more students are tested and that all students demonstrate a mastery of grade-level skills, which is reflected in teacher evaluation scores. In 2010, 45 states adopted CCSS, but 32 of those states asked for waivers concerning the achievement requirements set forth in NCLB, which meant that

not all their students had to demonstrate grade-level proficiency in math and reading (Stewart & Varner, 2012). Educational leaders argued that the more rigorous standards would cause student performance to improve; however, educators vocalized concern that the standards were not grounded in research, as implied (Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014).

### **Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)**

The methods of observation and evaluation of teachers have intensified as the standardized list of academic skills has transitioned. The implementation of the First to the Top Act caused Tennessee to transition to a new teacher evaluation method called the Tennessee Educator Acceleration model (TEAM) in 2011 (Davis, Lampley, & Foley, 2016). With the implementation of TEAM, teachers experienced an increase in the number of evaluations per year, and schools used student test scores to measure teacher effectiveness. Student performance scores are based on the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) and the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) (Davis et al., 2016). According to TDOE (2012), when the evaluation is complete, a teacher receives a rating from 1 to 5 (1 – significantly below expectations to 5 – significantly above expectations). If a teacher receives a low score, the school district needs to conduct additional evaluations; however, if a teacher scores a 5, the school district conducts only one complete classroom observation and two brief snapshot observations for the school year. As the overall score goes down, the number of evaluations increases. This form of evaluation accounts for 50% of the teacher's cumulative score originating from teacher observations, which includes pre and post conferences, and the other 50% consists of student growth (35%) and additional data (15%) as determined by the state (Tennessee Department of Education, 2012). A TVAAS growth score is also given to each

school by the TDOE. Davis et al. (2016) questioned if this numerical score creates a false correlation with TVAAS growth scores and TEAM observation scores.

### **Educational Influences & Shifts**

In 2011, Ayers and the Center for American Progress reported that countries such as Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and Finland excelled in educational achievement. Finland placed first out of 50 countries, despite the country placing less of an emphasis on standardized testing in comparison to the United States. In 2012, the United States was ranked 17 out of 50 countries (Bhattacharyya et al., 2013). This information led Congress to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), with the intention to create a sense of competition among schools. ESEA reinforces the initial goal that the United States should be able to maintain its place as one of the leaders in education throughout the world by ensuring all schools and students have effective teachers. A federal recommendation, A Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund, would equip states and school systems with support to enlist, guide, assess, and keep effective teachers for schools (Ayers & Center for American Progress, 2011).

In 2015, Dr. Candice McQueen, Tennessee Commissioner of Education, implemented the Tennessee Task Force on Student Testing and Assessment. This task force consisted of school system directors, school board members, principals, teachers, parents, and students. In its final report, the task force recognized leading procedures in assessment, established that assessments are being used to increase achievement, and ensured that everyone is well informed about Tennessee testing (TDOE, 2015a). After examining the results of Tennessee State Collaborative on Reforming Education (SCORE) survey, the task force discovered four aspects that needed to be addressed: (a) improve communication concerning cultural transparency about testing and its purpose, (b) reduce testing by eliminating the SAT-10 for K-2 and EXPLORE and PLAN for

eight and tenth grade, (c) provide information and opportunities that better prepare students for postsecondary readiness, and (d) increase communication about test schedules and management (TDOE, 2015a).

Since the 1960s, public education in the United States has undergone several paradigm shifts in teacher accountability at the state and national level. These accountability theories began as an effort to create state and federal policies concerning education. Sirotnik (2004) stated that Leon Lessinger, the associate U.S. Commissioner of Education, believed that an accountability process should recognize the technological and scientific skills needed in the workforce while also realizing that inner-city and poverty-stricken areas need extra support. President Richard Nixon even noted the need for educational accountability in his presidential campaign. Thus, there is an established accountabilist theory, which relies on an educational atmosphere where students' educational abilities are equal, while ignoring the influence of race and poverty on their educational opportunities (Sirotnik, 2004). Sirotnik (2004) referred to accountabilist ideology as “consequences (high stakes), easy to obtain evidence (testing); behavioralizing outcomes (or standards and performance...); and laying the whole of the responsibility on the doorsteps of schools as if they existed in a social, political and economic vacuum” (p. 23).

Sirotnik (2004) believed that responsibility is essential to accountability. This model of accountability includes stakeholders who are responsible for assisting and promoting the educational practices and outcomes of each school. Bringing trustworthy and moral teachers into the school who have sound discernment to deliver the knowledge and skills necessary for educational achievement is essential to the success of the accountability model (Sirotnik, 2004).

Students' scores on standardized tests determine teacher effectiveness. Berliner (2011) cautioned educators about the possible impact of standardized tests on teachers and their instruction as well as the curriculum. According to Berliner, the narrowing curriculum has repressed other opportunities for students to be introduced to and learn material that may not be included in state standards. He has also noted that this emphasis on accountability has caused teachers and administrators to cheat in order to obtain acceptable scores.

Diane Ravitch, former Assistant Secretary of Education, noted that the public education system is in trouble (Ravitch, 2010). In her book, *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*, Ravitch (2010) explains that focusing on just a test is not the answer to a student's, teacher's, and school's educational success. Ravitch, Marchant, and David (2014) stated, "They cannot continue to push out teachers, to crush the spirit of people who do the actual work in the classroom, and say that they succeeded" (p. 173). Ravitch (2010) commented that the emphasis on testing and achievement from the NCLB was not sufficient.

In summary, the state of Tennessee has implemented tests such as TCAP, PARCC, and CRA to determine which test best measures the effectiveness of teachers and the overall academic growth of students. Because achievement scores are being linked to teacher evaluations, many educators are feeling the pressure to increase student achievement and thereby teach to the test. In addition, the pressures and stress that teachers are under to increase students' achievement scores and receive high evaluation scores are having adverse effects on the teachers' climates (May & Sanders, 2013; Santoro, 2011).

## **Problem Statement**

The impact of high-stakes testing has been examined for over a decade. Stefanski (2016) investigated the evolution of high-stakes testing and its impact on teacher accountability by conducting a narrative study of a 46-year veteran teacher. The authors concluded that interpersonal, caring relationships result in academic transformations. According to von der Embse and Witmer (2014), test anxiety impacts student performance on high-stakes tests, and they suggested that additional research should be conducted to find interventions to help alleviate test anxiety. Rutkowski and Wild (2015) conducted a study that examined how students' knowledge of potential consequences affected their performance on tests. Rutkowski and Wild found if students knew that test scores could affect their grade or teacher employment, then their achievement scores significantly increased. In 2010, the state of Tennessee decided that a teacher's evaluation would consist of a combination of student test scores and observations (J. Anderson, 2012). Teachers must demonstrate improvement, or they will be subjected to additional observations or even removed from their positions (Clements, 2013). High-stakes testing has created negative effects for teachers such as demoralization, frustration, and attrition (Sirotnik, 2004). Because of the intense stress created by standardized testing, both veteran and novice teachers who are overwhelmed with these conditions are leaving the profession (Bhattacharyya et al., 2013).

Low test scores can result in a cycle of blame. The public and educational policymakers blame teachers for their instructional practices, and teachers blame the parents for their lack of interest in their children's education (Cormack & Comber, 2013). The publication of low test results have a tendency to humiliate teachers (Bhattacharyya et al., 2013). The scrutiny has led to a decrease in job satisfaction among teachers. In February 2013, the National Education

Association (NEA) reported that the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher revealed that the job satisfaction among teachers had decreased from 62% in 2008 to 39% in 2012 (National Education Association [NEA], 2013). Martin (2012) stated, “Unless we want to hold teachers at least partly accountable for their students’ family income, home language, and disabilities, it seems to be a mistake to use high-stakes test scores for teacher and school accountability purposes” (p. 7). Even though the accountability system measures the results of high-stakes testing and each school’s yearly progress, the emphasis on high-stakes testing has created a ripple effect of pressure and stress on teachers and students affecting the classroom environment. Previous studies have focused on examining only one or two variables of high-stakes testing, but few studies have examined three variables (student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate) simultaneously. Therefore, the problem is that high-stakes testing is disproportionately impacting the overall teacher evaluation score as measured by the TEAM rubric thus affecting teacher climate.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this non-experimental, correlational study was to examine the relationship between teachers’ perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. The *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* (Thomas, 2014) and the *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale* (PS-HST) (Dawson, 2012) were modified and combined into one survey. The survey was given to teachers in a rural district of northeast Tennessee and was used to determine if a correlation existed between teachers’ perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate.

Ydesen (2014) stated that student assessment “is a tool for evaluating individuals and educational system performances that cannot be treated in isolation from society at large” (p. 97).

According to Minarechová (2012), high-stakes testing is a series of tests that result in evaluating students, teachers, and schools. TEAM is the teacher evaluation process that uses a rubric to evaluate teachers based on professionalism, planning of the lesson, instruction, and learning environment (TDOE, 2015a). The TEAM model is a measure of teacher effectiveness based on student performance data and evaluation scores from the TEAM rubric.

J. Anderson (2012) noted that student achievement could be attributed to school climate. According to Jones and Shindler (2016), school climate was a strong predicting factor in elevating student achievement. Ali and Siddiqui (2016) found that school climate, more specifically the learning environment, impacts student achievement performance. Goddard, Goddard, and Minjung (2015) discovered a positive correlation between student achievement and instructional climate, especially in math and reading test scores.

### **Significance of the Study**

The literature examining student assessment and teacher evaluation is robust. In order for an evaluation system to be effective, it is important that teachers willingly participate and see the value of the evaluation process (Ballou & Springer, 2015). According to Lazarev, and Newman Sharp (2014), teacher evaluation models were utilized to determine teacher performance. Correlations were found between academic progress and observations (Lazarev et al., 2014). The goal of this study was to add to current literature regarding student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. The researcher examined teachers' perceptions of the evaluation process. Teacher climate and teacher evaluation was measured using Likert scale survey questions.

According to May and Sanders (2013), student achievement can be attributed to school climate, which includes committed teachers who understand the importance of developing

relationships with students, which creates a compassionate and supportive classroom environment. Bear, Yang, Pell, and Gaskins (2014) found that the use of the Delaware School Climate Survey-Teacher/Staff (DSCS-T/S) was beneficial in measuring school climate, and the teachers' perceptions related to academic achievement and various other school programs. Wang and Degol (2016) noted that the sense of community, academics, safety, and school environment were major components of school climate, which affect student achievement.

Other studies have evaluated teachers' perceptions of student assessment and teacher evaluations. Glazerman and Seifullah (2012) investigated the impact of Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) on Chicago's public school teachers. They reported an increase in teacher retention but no impact was found on student test scores. Almost 50% of teachers are leaving the profession within the first five years (Glazerman et al., 2012). Incorporating collaborative teaching, increasing salaries, providing active mentors, and educating teachers with strategies that aid in dealing with the daily stressors encourage teacher retention (Langley, Martin, & Kitchel, 2014). Kirtley (2012) found that the quality of leadership and the accountability of students for their test scores influenced teachers' professional climate. However, impacting students' lives, building relationships with peers, experiencing positive administration, and having the sense of success in teaching encouraged many teachers to remain in their current position or the teaching profession (Kirtley, 2012). The significance of the study was to increase the body of knowledge regarding high-stakes testing by investigating the relationship between student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate.

### **Research Questions**

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluations model?

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between teachers’ perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate?

**RQ3:** What is the relationship between teachers’ perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and teacher climate?

### **Definitions**

The following terms are listed and defined for the vocabulary mentioned throughout the study.

1. *Accountability* - In the educational realm, accountability is defined as the responsibility of teachers and educational leaders for a “student’s academic achievement by meeting agreed-upon state and national standards evidenced in standardized test results” (Clements, 2013, p. 3).
2. *Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)* - AYP is a school’s report of the yearly progress that students make on standardized tests (Martin, 2012).
3. *Common Core State Standards (CCSS)* - Common Core is a reform based on establishing grade-level standards and communicating those standards to teachers, students, parents, and stakeholders (Stewart & Varner, 2012).
4. *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)*- In 1965, President Johnson enacted this educational policy to commence his fight on poverty (Wexler, 2014).
5. *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* - In 2015, President Obama revamped the previous ESEA to the current ESSA, thereby allowing states to use several measures to define progress and gives the states the option of using student achievement toward teacher evaluations (Darrow, 2016).

6. *High-stakes testing* - High-stakes testing is test scores that are connected to an award or retribution (Ydesen, 2014).
7. *No Child Left Behind (NCLB)* - The NCLB Act was implemented in 2002. Its objective was to utilize test scores of all students in grades 3-12 with the intention of rating schools (Breiner, 2015; Duncan & Stevens, 2011).
8. *Race to the Top (RTTT)* - In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was a grant for states that encouraged educational reform. The goal is to award funding to schools with poor performance on testing and to increase effectiveness for teachers and principals (Ballou & Springer, 2015).
9. *Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM)* - TEAM is one evaluation system that the state of Tennessee is using in order to evaluate teachers based on a 1-5 scale (1 = significantly below expectations to 5 = significantly above expectations) (TDOE, 2015a).
10. *Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP)* - Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Act is the assessment tool that satisfies state and federal demands that consists of achievement tests and End of Course Exams (EOC) (TDOE, 2015a).
11. *Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)* - TVAAS evaluates student growth and its affect on teachers and schools (TDOE, 2017).
12. *Value-added models (VAMs)* - Value-added models analyze test scores from year to year, as well as examining other elements that could affect achievement (Darling-Hammond, Amrein-Beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012).

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluations, and teacher climate. An educational cycle has evolved in which high-stakes testing creates a climate that influences student assessment scores and impacts both student assessment scores and teacher evaluations (Levine & Levine, 2013). The evaluation can affect a teacher's educational climate and job performance, which can have either a positive or a negative impact on student learning. While the literature review will demonstrate an overview of standardized testing, there is a need for research on the effect of testing on the learning environment for students and teachers. The purpose of the literature review is to provide the theoretical framework for the study and related literature that includes the background of the implementation of high-stakes testing, student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate.

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study will be Herzberg's motivation theory or the two-factor theory. In Herzberg's publication of *The Motivation to Work*, he posited two factors that affected motivation in the workplace: hygiene and motivators (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Hygiene factors consist of extrinsic elements stemming from job security, work climate, administration, salary, or policy. On the other hand, motivators are considered intrinsic factors such as a sense of pride and responsibility in achievement, recognition, and possible advancement (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005; Larkin, Brantley-Dias, & Lokey-Vega, 2016).

Maslow and Herzberg primarily introduced theories of motivation concerning job satisfaction. Motivation can be explained as the intrinsic drive to accomplish a goal, or it can be

defined as what positively or negatively inspires individuals to act (Islam & Ali, 2013). Motivated individuals attempt to find satisfaction in new situations whereas individuals influenced by hygiene factors tend to avoid them (Kahoe, 1966). Therefore, internal motivation encourages individuals to strive to attain achievement (Kahoe, 1966). In a 2014 study, Shirol examined male and female teachers' motivational factors and attitudes toward their job. No significant difference was found between the responsibility, achievement, development, growth, and recognition concerning their job motivation. Shirol noted motivation in the workplace drives productivity and performance. Individuals without defined workplace objectives and an encouraging environment will not be productive without adequate motivation (Shirol 2014). According to Alfayad and Mohd Arif (2017), Herzberg's motivation theory validated the relationship between job satisfaction and an employee's voice. As employees are able to share ideas and make decisions, the sense of involvement increases the level of job satisfaction in the workplace (Alfayad & Mohd Arif, 2017). The factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction can influence a teacher's commitment, effectiveness, and full potential in the classroom (Islam & Ali, 2013).

A school's climate can affect teachers' job satisfaction and promote teacher retention. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (2008) stated that a person's appreciation of his/her work is one of the most influential motivators for job satisfaction. According to Frey, Bayon, and Totzek (2013), employee satisfaction can influence retention. Cardina and Fegley (2016) found that teachers who displayed job satisfaction have increased motivation, which, in turn, improves their students' academic achievement. Therefore, motivated teachers create a classroom climate that supports students and builds a positive outlook toward learning. Elma (2013) found that strong relationships with other teachers and administration led to collaboration and cooperation, which

fosters a positive school climate. Principals have the power to ensure that job satisfaction is established and maintained (Elma, 2013). Along with the support of the principal, a positive school environment increases job satisfaction and self-efficacy of the teachers while decreasing pressures related to the job (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016). This sense of job satisfaction is rooted in organizational support systems involving “sincerity, trust, cooperation, equality, and the novelty in common culture” wherein the individual is invested in the job with intense motivation (Bektaş & Fatih Öçal, 2012, p. 296).

## **Related Literature**

### **History of Testing**

The creation of testing dates back to Socrates having discussions with his students. In the 7th century, Wu Zetian, the first female emperor of China, required applicants to write an essay on Confucian philosophy in order to apply for a government job (Duncan & Stevens, 2011). In the mid 1800s, teachers would test their students by having them recite facts and read aloud. In the latter part of the 19th century, Horace Mann led a mission for the use of standardized written exams (Duncan & Stevens, 2011; Huddleston & Rockwell, 2015). To encourage conformity, a movement began wherein students answered multiple-choice questions rather than essay questions (Duncan & Stevens, 2011). When Sputnik was launched in 1957, educators decided to put more emphasis on the education of American students (Minarechová, 2012).

In 1965, President Johnson enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to commence his fight on poverty (Wexler, 2014). As testing became more important, an emphasis on improving achievement scores and intensifying academic expectations were required (Minarechová, 2012). Initially, no one was held accountable for the state-mandated

tests. As time passed, the need to increase high school graduation rates became a reason for teacher and school accountability (Pinder, 2013).

In the 1980s, politicians in the United States became extremely concerned when “A Nation at Risk” reported that American students were not achieving as well as students from other industrialized nations (Thompson & Allen, 2012). In 2002, Congress revised the ESEA with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (Thompson & Allen, 2012). As a result, President George W. Bush required the distribution of Title I funds to be linked to student performance on high-stakes testing (Au & Gourd, 2013). NCLB consisted of four components: (a) yearly testing for grades 3 through 8, (b) state accountability and reform, (c) resources given to low-performing schools, and (d) school choice for students in schools not meeting government achievement (Wexler, 2014). However, many of the low-performing schools did not receive the funding promised from the NCLB Act. Also, students who decided to transfer were placed in overcrowded schools or turned away (Wexler, 2014).

In 2015, President Obama put into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which reauthorized the ESEA (United States Department of Education (USDOE), n.d.). This act allows school districts to utilize a part of their Title 1 funds for interventions in schools. ESSA permits the states to use several measures to define progress and gives the states the option of using student achievement for teacher evaluations (Darrow, 2016). NCLB stated that 95% of students need to be tested, whereas ESSA puts the responsibility on the state to decide what happens to the school if it does not meet the threshold required (Klein, 2016a). By placing responsibility on the state, ESSA limits the federal government’s role and enables the states to have more power with educational policies such as testing requirements (Egalite, Fusarelli, & Fusarelli, 2017). Dennis (2016) stated that ESSA focuses on a change in literacy learning and teaching. This shift

allows teachers to utilize their expertise in their curriculum and to embrace children's literacy behaviors.

Some components of ESSA focus on protecting at-risk students, providing information about educational progress by using annual state tests, maintaining accountability in schools with low performance scores and graduation rates, and teaching educational standards in preparation for college and career success (USDOE, n.d.). Johns and Kachel (2017) noted that ESSA encourages teachers to participate in joint planning, collaboration, and professional development. Klein (2016b) stated that the implementation of ESSA has authorized states to opt-out of testing, choose what happens to schools that fail to reach target scores, and decide how they will implement challenging standards. Schools that opt-out of testing or have a high number of students who opt-out could possibly lose funding (Camera, 2015). These standards may include the implementation of CCSS (McGuinn, 2016). Even though the directive for high-stakes testing continues, states and districts have the autonomy to determine how to utilize these assessments (Peterson, 2016).

There is limited research supporting the effectiveness of high-stakes testing to improve student achievement, even though billions of dollars have been spent on testing (Breiner, 2015). The emphasis on high-stakes testing significantly increased because of the implementation of CCSS during RTTT (Breiner, 2015). In 2013, 46 states, three territories, and Washington D.C., implemented the math and English CCSS (Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014; Wexler, 2014). The agreement to incorporate CCSS and the promise of funding based on participating in Race to the Top are being used to justify evaluating teachers and schools based on students' test scores (Breiner, 2015; Sulzer, 2014). These high-stakes tests, which are based on CCSS, have generated intense pressure and negative attitudes towards testing for teachers and students.

Anxiety that was associated with high school students taking the ACT or SAT now begins in third grade and continues throughout the educational experience (Ferguson, 2015).

When RTTT was implemented in 2009, states were promised grants for incorporating various school reforms and a more rigorous teacher evaluation model. These reforms included evaluation models that based 50% of teachers' yearly evaluations on their students' test scores (Popham & DeSander, 2014). On December 10, 2015, President Obama finalized the ESSA, which enforced rigorous standards for all students and monitored accountability in low-achieving schools (Every Student Succeeds Act, n.d.). In 2015, the Obama administration stated that only 2% of instructional time could be devoted to testing but did not decrease the reliance on student test scores when calculating teacher evaluations (Morgan, 2016).

Other countries take a different approach to evaluating teachers. Lewis and Hardy (2015) reported that schools in the UK are evaluated and defined by how students perform on the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and the Standard Assessment Testing (SATs). Thus, the pressure to perform causes their teachers to alter teaching techniques and define their educational worth. However, in 2009, New Zealand chose to distinguish themselves from other countries by creating national standards aimed at avoiding curriculum that caused teachers to teach to a test (Lewis & Hardy, 2015).

Williams and Engel (2012) noted that Singapore used several data points to evaluate teachers. Singapore incorporated Currently Estimated Potential into their evaluation process. This measures the extended potential of the teacher and recognizes possible needs for improvement (Williams & Engel, 2012). Singapore does use standardized tests as one data point in determining teacher accountability, along with other factors. These factors include character

building with students, colleague interaction, school involvement, and parental and community relations (Morgan, 2016).

Smith and Douglas (2017) noted that some countries do not include students with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in their Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) report so that the national level score will not be influenced. Countries such as Australia, Shanghai-China, and Finland include a low number of special education scores. However, the United States has a high inclusion rate for special education scores (Smith & Douglas, 2017).

According to the 2006 PISA report, Finland took first place in reading, math, and science among 15-year-old students (Onosko, 2011). However, the 2015 PISA report found that Denmark, Estonia, Canada, and parts of China received high scores in education equity and performance. During 2006 and 2015, the United States demonstrated the greatest improvement in equity education (Schleicher, 2015). In Finland, educators are actually an elite profession because all of their teachers graduate in the top one-third of their class in college (Onosko, 2011). Finland developed a teacher evaluation system based on trust. Teaching and learning are a communal event, as teachers are evaluated for working with their fellow colleagues as well as students and the school leaders (Morgan, 2016; Williams & Engel, 2012). This system of professional accountability is based on building relationships with the principals and teachers where feedback, guidance, and advice on improvement are shared. The Finns embrace “guidance and coordination” (Morgan, 2016, p. 71).

Since 2007, Japan has used national testing as a form of accountability because of a growing concern that the academics in schools were declining (Katsuno, 2012). Morgan (2016) found Japan’s primary focus is on its university entrance exam. The teachers do not feel the pressure of losing their job because the pressure to raise students’ test scores is primarily

shouldered on the students and parents. Japan's evaluation system uses group evaluations of teachers rather than individual observations of teachers. The country's belief is students succeed when all teachers work together. This system relies on the ability to share teaching strategies and work collaboratively; thus, a sense of unity is created instead of a sense of competition (Morgan, 2016).

### **Corporate Influence**

As RTTT was implemented, corporate America and various industries became invested in the education system so that future employees would be better prepared to join the workforce (Onosko, 2011). In 2010, foundations such as the Broad Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation financed an educational reform based on CCSS (Wexler, 2014). These corporate foundations began suggesting that changes should occur such as narrowing the learning gaps, establishing high academic standards, and enhancing schools (Croft, Roberts, & Stenhouse, 2016). Therefore, the intent of CCSS was to teach students how to think critically and apply knowledge to real-world situations (Elish-Piper, Matthews, & Risko, 2013). These changes were to be given the utmost priority so that the U.S. may maintain its position in the global economy (Croft, Roberts, & Stenhouse, 2016). The Gates Foundation also gave \$2.3 billion to launch and implement CCSS (Hursh & Martina, 2016).

In addition to the Gates Foundation, Pearson, Inc. has been able to monopolize the educational world by creating and selling tests for teacher certification, the academic curriculum of schools, and professional development materials for low achieving schools (Breiner, 2015; Hursh & Martina, 2016; Wexler, 2014). Pearson Inc. also controls the "tests for students that dictate if teachers keep their job and schools are performing well" (Breiner, 2015, p. 103).

Breiner (2015) recommended that higher educational institutions partner with the states to develop student assessments in order to remove the power from private companies.

### **Financial Impact**

During the 2009-2010 school year, RTTT granted federal funds in the amount of \$4.35 billion to states, with the state of Tennessee being one of the first beneficiaries, receiving \$502,000,000. States with budget constraints accepted the grants and agreed to implement the guidelines set forth by RTTT and to focus on CCSS and high-stakes testing (Onosko, 2011). As a condition of receiving the grant money, the states had to include test scores as part of teachers' evaluations (Wexler, 2014). Breiner (2015) highlighted an eastern school district and a midwestern school district were evaluated. The eastern school district recorded 165 hours devoted to test preparation and testing while spending \$1,100 per student. The midwestern school district committed to 75 hours for test preparation and testing and spent \$400-\$600 per student. Because of the amount of money spent on testing and the increase in spending expected from CCSS, some states have opted out and have decided to create their own tests. For example, the state of Georgia decided to create a more cost-effective assessment (Breiner, 2015). Even though the financial incentives of RTTT can be very tempting in times of budget crises, the state of Georgia decided not to participate. By deciding not to participate, Georgia will save money by developing its own form of assessment (Croft et al., 2016).

Breiner (2015) discussed the results of the 45<sup>th</sup> annual PDK-Gallup poll concerning the people's perception of public education. Breiner found that only 33% of the American population knew about CCSS, 22% agree that testing increases student achievement, and 58% disagree that testing should influence teacher evaluations. Levine and Levine (2013) noted that after the implementation of the NCLB, states were presented with financial incentives to test

students in grades 3-8. In the beginning, Congress issued \$400 million for testing and then allotted around the same in the following years for grants. The testing industry has invested \$2.8 billion a year in testing. Instead of using the money for testing, states could use the money for laboratories, field trips, new buildings, additional buildings, and smaller teacher to student-ratios while allowing for aides in classrooms where necessary. The financial stress of testing has eliminated art, music, and recess from their educational experiences (Levine & Levine, 2013).

### **Student Assessment**

**Purpose.** As early as the mid 1800s, Horace Mann believed all people should have access to an education; therefore, immigrants would be given an education as well as the elite (Huddleston & Rockwell, 2015). Horace Mann alluded to the promise of awards and the fear of penalties becoming a part of education (Nichols, Glass, & Berliner, 2012). In the early 1900s, educational policy makers introduced standardized testing so that an impartial evaluation was available because people were questioning the validity of teachers' grading procedures. Schools also used testing results to rank students from low to high, placing students in ability groups, and determining whether students should pursue the vocational track or college (Huddleston & Rockwell, 2015). Since the 1970s, the United States has embraced the importance of testing in the education system. One of the first states to lead the way in accountability testing has been New York. Before standardized testing became the norm, New York required school districts to implement student assessments and to report schools' test scores to the public (Nichols et al., 2012).

Currently, improving students' test scores is the primary purpose of state and federal student assessment (Nichols et al., 2012). In the United States, testing has become the primary means of evaluating the accountability of teachers, schools, and districts (Elish-Piper et al., 2013;

Lewis & Hardy, 2015). However, the improvement and gains found in student achievement has been considered satisfactory (Lewis & Hardy, 2015).

Nichols et al. (2012) found that positive and negative consequences have been put in place in order to encourage teachers and students to be educationally productive on high-stakes tests. Positive outcomes have mostly been financial and media exposure that praises schools and teachers for outstanding performance. However, negative consequences have included threatening the jobs of teachers and school administrators and even threatening the possibility of school takeovers by the government. Students can fail their grade level and even be prohibited from graduating (Nichols et al., 2012). Advocates of high-stakes testing believe that tests are unbiased, and the tools used to analyze the results are unobtrusive and fair (Xie & Andrews, 2012). These advocates also argue that testing can decrease the percentage of low performance scores and can academically challenge teachers and students in the classroom. This combination of these consequences and the use of the test as factor in determining student promotions or graduation can give students the necessary push to work harder in the classroom (Mueller & Colley, 2015).

Student assessment was to become the standard by which schools measure student achievement (Nichols et al., 2012). Education has changed its focus to instructional standards, yearly progress, and accountability in American public school systems (Jackson, 2011). Even though many understand the need of using high-stakes testing for accountability purposes, one must question whether or not these form of assessments are fair, precise, or functional (Watson, Johanson, Loder, & Dankiw, 2014). This emphasis on accountability through test scores has several educators quite concerned. Science educators are disturbed by the amount of time devoted to rote-memorization of facts for a test while ignoring research-based learning (K.

Anderson, 2012). Goals consisting of closing educational gaps and ameliorating the learning results have been the primary focus in order to improve education (Jackson, 2011). Phelps (2015) explained that if the test is based on the standards and the teachers use their pedagogical methods to focus on the curriculum, then students would be taught the skills covered on the test.

**Student factors.** In the past 20 years, the demographics of the educational classroom in the United States have changed drastically. The socioeconomic, racial, and cultural groups have become quite diverse. This has caused a shift in the ethnic make-up of American classrooms. In public school districts, the percentage of Caucasian students decreased from 68% to 55%, whereas the percentage of Hispanic students has increased twofold from 11% to 22%. In 2002, the number of Hispanic students exceeded the number of Black students in the United States public school system. Since 1979, the number of students speaking English as a second language has tripled (Jackson & Ash, 2011). In high-poverty public schools, the student population consisted of approximately 46% Hispanic and 34% Black students while 75% of the total student population qualified for free or reduced lunch (Jackson & Ash, 2011).

Cawthon and Leppo (2013) reported that accommodations for testing could consist of reading aloud test instructions and questions and answers, providing extended time to complete the test, or taking the test in a more secluded room to aid in eliminating distractions. In order to include all student scores for AYP, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 mandated that students with disabilities would participate in high-stakes testing. The intent of the accommodations is that all students are included and therefore evaluated in the same manner as those that take tests without accommodations. It is important to maintain the validity of the test since it is being used for educational reform (Cawthon & Leppo, 2013).

Wexler (2014) found that schools in poor communities have lower standardized scores than schools in middle class communities. Students who live in poverty tend to be punished more for their high-stakes testing scores. Additionally, research has revealed that many of the test questions display biased connotations toward Caucasian, middle class students ergo giving them an advantage (Wexler, 2014). Watson et al. (2014) found that students use their performance on the high-stakes tests to create an academic hierarchy in that the better scoring students did not associate with the lower scoring students. As the pressure to succeed academically intensified, bullying occurred in the classroom (Watson et al., 2014). Students who live in poverty also have a tendency to be exposed to violence and drugs and often have no or limited health care. These circumstances can contribute to physical or learning disabilities in students and can impact their emotional outlook, attendance, attention spans, motivation, and performance in school (Wexler, 2014).

Morgan (2016) found that the poverty level of children in the United States has increased since 2008, while in 18 other countries it has decreased. Policymakers fail to acknowledge the struggle that the increasing number of immigrants and low-income students face when dealing with family violence, hunger, and inadequate health care (Morgan, 2016). Other student risk factors include minority or ethnic status, poverty, English as a second language, single-parent homes, teen pregnancy, homelessness, low levels of educational attainment among parents, and the rural location of the home. Risk factors can be described as characteristics of a student's circumstances that may increase the probability of not achieving educational success. Many students have more than one of these risk factors (Vesely, 2013). These factors can affect their achievement but is by no means a reflection of the quality of education. Many of these students become transient, going from school to school (Morgan, 2016). Students and teachers from low

socioeconomic schools experience more stress and pressure from high-stakes tests than those in schools with higher socioeconomic status (Nichols et al., 2012).

**Impact on students.** Since students' attitudes and motivation can be a predictor of their effort on high-stakes testing, it is essential for educators to discover strategies that will encourage and stimulate students to take an active role in learning (Belcastro & Boon, 2012). Banks and Smyth (2015) noted that students did not appreciate how teachers emphasized standardized tests because that emphasis had a tendency to intensify the stress level. Students who had a close relationship with their parents had low levels of stress and better behavior than students with poor relationships with their parents; however, parents have to be careful about pushing their own expectations onto their children (Banks & Smyth, 2015).

Due to the stress of standardized tests, many students suffer from anxiety, insomnia, illness, and shame concerning their performance (Croft et al., 2016). Minarechová (2012) stated, "If a child constantly works under pressure, we cannot expect there to be no impact on their psychological or emotional well-being" (p. 91). Some forms of stress and anxiety are associated with behavioral, physiological, and psychological issues (Segool, Carlson, Goforth, von der Embse, & Barterian, 2013). More specifically, these issues can raise body temperature, cause headaches, and elevate blood pressure, and contribute to behavior issues, lack of appetite, and low self-esteem. These issues can impact students' learning, which in turn affects their academic performance (Minarechová, 2012).

Watson et al. (2014) investigated the effect that high-stakes testing had on third through fifth grade students. Students conveyed confidence at the beginning of the three-week testing period. As time passed, the students experienced anxiety, nausea, exhaustion, and even back and chest pain. At the beginning of the testing window, students were aiming for Proficient or

Advanced scores, but by the end of the testing window, students just wanted to finish (Watson et al., 2014).

Olivant (2015) pointed out that standardized tests are created for students with certain learning styles. Nelson, McMahan, and Torres (2012) found students who were impacted by high-stakes testing become bored because of the continual emphasis on the standardized tests. Consequently, students viewed school as an unpleasant experience. Gifted, under-achieving students and those less compliant have a tendency to disengage when learning is not engaging or challenging, but gifted students are willing to do the task that is given (Nelson et al., 2012). To avoid failure, gifted students will develop tactics and techniques to camouflage an inability to complete a task (Clinkenbeard, 2012).

When examining these standardized tests as well as their effects, Breiner (2015) suggested that more research should be devoted to the impact “on student motivation, achievement, and growth” (p. 104). A student’s learning is based on extrinsic elements that impact the student’s conduct and motivation (Belcastro & Boon, 2012). Motivation can be interpreted as an individual’s inner drive or as behavior prompted by positive or negative outcomes. When students have a goal and believe they can accomplish it, their personal sense of motivation is provoked (Clinkenbeard, 2012). Belcastro and Boon (2012) suggested students’ motivation encompassed three essential goals: mastery, performance, and avoidance. Students who demonstrate the goal of mastery are self-motivators who regulate their learning, problem solve, work hard, and seek assistance. Students displaying the performance goal strive for recognition, refuse help, evade challenging assignments, and superficially learn material through rote memorization/drill and practice. Students exhibiting the avoidance goal are known to

procrastinate, avoid asking for assistance, and disengage intellectually either from the fear of scoring poorly or the lack of desire to learn (Belcastro &Boon, 2012).

Dever (2016) reviewed achievement expectations of sixth through eighth grade students and noted that achievement goals can affect the achievement outcomes. Bourque (2015) stated that standardized testing should not be the most important measurement of learning because it is essential for students to understand what they learned and not just demonstrate proficiency on a standardized test. According to Watson et al. (2014), teachers, principals, and stakeholders cannot ignore the debilitating stress that students endure. This stress must be confronted in order for students to achieve academic success while also maintaining their health. Erlich and Russ-Eft's (2011) suggested significant pedagogical techniques that would aid teachers in evaluating how students learn and interventions that could help improve learning outcomes by encouraging students to set goals and take an active role in their learning. Even though test scores provide some insight into what students have learned, a teacher cannot be held accountable for each student's achievement score and those tests are not an indication of the teaching that has taken place in the classroom (Martin, 2012).

**Impact of adequate yearly progress.** When Congress passed NCLB in 2001, schools were required to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), which was a measure of a school's achievement progress based on how students score on standardized tests; each school's goal is to meet AYP (Martin, 2012). Bridwell (2012) stated schools that failed to meet AYP faced disciplinary action. The possibility of these disciplinary actions invoked fear in teachers and schools, especially schools with extreme poverty or minority students. These penalties were intended to compel schools, teachers, and students to improve test scores, but the penalties had an adverse effect in that many schools narrowed the curriculum in order to prepare students for

the test (Bridwell, 2012). If a school had a 10% decrease in the number of students achieving a proficient score and its students did meet the performance benchmark, the school would be given a Safe Harbor status. This meant the school's AYP was unchanged, and it was searching for ways to make improvements or changes (Martin, 2012).

In California, schools that are classified as "Program Improvement Schools" are required to provide additional tests to the point that students' "eyes glaze over" (Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014, p. 179). Students will be tested more than 100 hours over the course of the year while teachers spend countless hours planning and analyzing student test data. One school in Oregon tested students one to two periods a day for 45 days (Erskine, 2014; Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014). Schools that fear losing federal funding are constantly placing students in intervention programs and extra practice sessions; whereas, schools that meet AYP are able to provide band, music, physical education, and other opportunities for students. The teachers in schools where AYP is met had more freedom in the classroom to creatively teach and incorporate high-order thinking activities (Erskine, 2014). Principals must "ponder the ethical decision of weighing short-term overall school performance with student and long-term school interest" (Willis, 2011, p. 47). Many schools are faced with making the decision between helping students learn or focusing on teaching to the test in order to keep the doors of their school open. High schools must focus on achieving acceptable scores from required exams for graduation in order to meet AYP goals (Willis, 2011).

Ohmstede Beckman, Messersmith, Shepard, and Cates (2012) noted schools that have a high percentage of students who are English language learners (ELL), students who have low socio-economic backgrounds, and students who receive free or reduced lunch have a tendency to score lower on standardized tests than schools that have a lower percentage of these students.

Nichols, Glass, and Berliner (2012) developed “a measure that would more closely represent high-stakes testing policy implementation,” which was called the Accountability Pressure Rating (APR) (p. 5). This tool measured how each state met the required accountability score of 25 states. Kentucky received the lowest score (APR = .54), while the highest score belonged to the state of Texas (APR = 4.78). Tennessee’s score ranked close to the top as well with an APR score of 3.50 (Nichols et al., 2012).

The national educational goals required students and schools to demonstrate growth and meet benchmarks in each grade level (Martin, 2012). Tennessee decided to award each district for growth rather than benchmarks after obtaining a waiver in 2012 since all districts cannot duplicate the same benchmark score every year (TDOE, 2015a). When the NCLB Act was relevant, student assessment tests dictated what, how, and when educational objectives were taught for all subject areas in the classroom (Nichols et al., 2012). However, Nichols et al. (2012) expressed that testing has had minimal influence on achievement in reading and math. Howard Gardner, a professor at Harvard University, stated that too much focus is spent on the mathematical and linguistic intelligences while the musical, kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligences receive minimal attention (Morgan, 2016).

From 2001 to the implementation of ESEA, the concern of using AYP was the validity of the tests that are being used for student assessment which in turn are affecting teacher evaluations (Harris, 2012). Teaching practices such as memorization and drilling of facts were common teaching practices found in schools with low-income student populations. Policymakers advocated that these tests effectively measured student learning in spite of the harmful effects on teaching techniques and the motivation of student learning. Many educators questioned whether or not learning had become more rigorous or the test preparation had been

perfected (Nichols et al., 2012). Martin (2016) suggested that maybe teachers and families should just move to wealthier communities and out of the poorer and lower scoring schools.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

Before the Obama administration, many school districts granted tenure to teachers automatically on the first day of their fourth year teaching. Teacher evaluations and effectiveness did not affect an individual's job security. From 2009 to 2012, 36 states implemented new teacher evaluations while 32 states included student achievement in the teacher evaluation process (McGuinn, 2016).

According to the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) (n.d.), with the introduction of the Team Educator Acceleration Model (TEAM) in 2011, the state became one of the first to adopt “a comprehensive, student outcomes-based, statewide educator evaluation system” (Evaluation Overview, para. 1). With the previous evaluation system, TDOE evaluated teachers only twice in a 10-year period; these minimal evaluations led to insufficient accountability (McGuinn, 2012; TDOE, 2014). These evaluations were found to be routine, purposeless, and disorganized with limited direction (Dee & Wyckoff, 2015). Bogart (2013) reported that TEAM caused teachers' planning and instruction to be more directed toward the evaluation rubric and to be centered on higher order thinking activities.

TEAM will impart insight concerning the influence of teachers' strategies on student performance; thus, open communication will provide feedback that will allow teachers to reflect on methods and strive for pedagogical improvement. The goal is as the teacher grows so does student achievement (TDOE, n.d.). TEAM necessitates that tenured teachers receive four observations consisting of at least 60 minutes each while apprentice teachers undergo six observations consisting of at least 90 minutes each. Teachers are ranked from Level 1

(significantly below expectation) to Level 5 (significantly above expectation). These scores are also used to determine if the teacher gains tenure status. According to the Tennessee General Assembly, a teacher obtaining a four or five in the last two years of the pre-probationary term will be awarded tenure. If a teacher does not acquire tenure status at the end of the fifth year of the probationary term, administration will give the teacher either a year-by-year contract or terminate him or her (Koedel, Li, Tan, & Springer, 2017). In preparation for the 2013-2014 year, TDOE implemented beneficial changes to the TEAM model. These changes included evaluation coaches, a newly drafted rubric, an additional component that can examine the world language teachers, the incorporation of student surveys in some school districts, and the idea that all educators will now be examined by a more in-depth and exacting teacher certification (TDOE, 2014). According to the Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) survey given in 2011 and 2013, stronger, supportive environments have evolved as well as teachers' outlooks on the evaluation model, but not all teachers displayed satisfaction with the evaluation model (TDOE, 2014).

In order to enhance teacher quality, McGuinn (2012) stated a teacher evaluation system must incorporate student performance. To measure teacher effectiveness, state agencies utilize data to improve teaching strategies and advance educational reform. Arne Duncan, U.S. Department of Education Secretary, stated the importance of providing feedback so that mistakes can lead to improvements (McGuinn, 2012). However, Popham and DeSander (2014) believed it was not fair to link teacher effectiveness to test scores because of the lack of evidence that student success is linked to teacher competence or pedagogical expertise, but it was important to acknowledge that test scores could be influenced by the socioeconomics of the school's demographics. Au and Gourd (2013) suggested that in order to accomplish the goal of

narrowing the performance gap, the number of students who passed or failed should be parallel in all racial and socioeconomic subgroups. In addition to these factors, the scores themselves need to be valid and accurate when used to assess teachers. Au and Gourd (2013) revealed “a statistical error rate of 35 percent when using one year’s worth of test data to measure a teacher’s effectiveness, and an error rate of 25 percent when using data from three years” (p. 16).

Nonetheless, the 2011 National Research Council published that high-stakes testing has not closed this gap in the past 10 years (Au & Gourd, 2013.)

Many educators oppose teacher evaluations as the primary means of determining teacher pay and teacher dismissal. Dee and Wyckoff (2015) discovered that financial incentives are not effective when linked to the students’ test performance. On the other hand, the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project found that teacher effectiveness can be determined by student performance, observations, and surveys completed by students (MET, 2013). Allowing students to provide feedback was found to have a positive impact on teacher evaluations and the learning environment (Barlie et al., 2012). Taylor and Tyler (2012) examined the intense teacher evaluations in Cincinnati schools and provided evidence that showed the standard deviation of achievement had increased by 10 percent.

Testing allows teachers to focus on what needs to be taught, the necessary pace to cover material, and the creation for more higher order thinking. Mueller and Colley (2015) found that new teachers accept the methods of accountability because it provided them with direction. Teachers understand that they must prepare students for testing while providing meaningful instruction that helps students become lifelong learners and productive citizens (Welsh, Eastwood, & D’ Agostino, 2014).

Conversely, those who were opposed to high-stakes testing believe that it is a means for policymakers to gain power and for teachers to lose their independence in the classroom leaving them feeling defeated. Teachers' concerns consisted of excessive time devoted to test prepping, the lack of intervention programs, large class sizes, and narrowing of the curriculum (Elish-Piper, Matthews, & Risko, 2013; Mueller & Colley, 2015). Erskine (2014) believed that teachers who associate testing with learning have the mentality of "drones" (p. 39). Nelson (2012) noted that if testing was eliminated, a school district could recover 20 to 40 minutes instructional time per day while another school district gained an entire period in the upper grades. Lunenburg (2013) stated, "It is misguided to hold a teacher accountable for his or her students' test scores when those scores reflect all that has happened to the children before they even arrived at the classroom" (p. 4). Lunenburg (2013) also suggested that it is essential that testing should enhance and not hinder the curriculum and instruction.

The NCLB Act focused on ensuring that teachers were considered highly qualified but shifted to teacher effectiveness since the implementation of RTTT (Stumbo & McWalters, 2011). Along with RTTT, ESSA legislation encouraged the application of student achievement data as a part of the evaluation process. In 2015, the ESSA issued 43 states waivers to include teacher effectiveness with student data. As a part of this evaluation process, annual teacher observations are conducted which are considered to be reliable and a valid tool; however, some question the practicality of teacher evaluations in measuring teacher effectiveness. Many times teachers bear the stigma of low teacher effectiveness scores because many of their students do not score well on standardized tests (Steinbrecher, Fix, Mahal, Serna, & McKeown, 2015). Donder (2011) suggested novice teachers grow and learn by placing them in the classrooms of the most

effective veteran teachers. This allows the novice teachers to observe the smooth pedagogical delivery of the content (Donder, 2011).

Donaldson and Donaldson (2012) suggested five steps in order to encourage teacher growth and a support system. The first step is teachers are to take an active role in formulating a “performance evaluation system” (p. 79). The second step is to find opportunities for growth through self-evaluation, conversations with colleagues and administrators, and review of teaching strategies and lessons. The third step is that principals and coaches should be well trained in providing critical and constructive criticism. The fourth step is that many principals are overwhelmed with their workload, but it is essential to include time for teacher evaluations. The last step is that districts need to make pedagogical growth a prime concern. Most teachers can possibly improve without formal evaluations, but average or poor teachers will remain ineffective in the classroom (Donaldson & Donaldson, 2012).

The intent of national educational policies was to ensure all students received a quality education, compete internationally, and maintain accountability in the schools; however, it ignored the various components that teachers and schools are facing. Student assessment cannot hold a teacher responsible for students’ disability, home life, income, or their language (Thompson & Allen, 2012). Even though standardized tests can quickly and easily assess student academic achievement, it only examines a narrow section of what has been taught in the classroom. However, Davis (2015) reminds educators and policymakers that there are certain aspects of a teacher that cannot be evaluated, such the connection made with the students, parents, and community.

## Climate

**Impact on teachers and the classroom.** Even in the late 1800s, the results of written exams were published in local newspapers. These publications affected whether or not teachers received endorsements or promotions (Huddleston & Rockwell, 2015). Emerson White (1886), head of the National Education Association (NEA), stated that standardized tests have corrupted teachers' best teaching practices, constricted instruction, increased pressure on schools, and caused dishonesty among teachers. It has been debated whether academic achievement or the education of the whole child determines successful learning; teaching the whole child includes considering the students' home lives (Colombo, McMakin, Jacobs, & Shestok, 2013; Davis, 2015).

Frederick Hess suggested that effective teaching includes commitment, knowledge, guidance, leadership, and life experience as well as research-based pedagogical methods (Davis, 2015). Teachers play numerous roles in the classroom including nurturer, professional expert, and even politician (Davis, 2015). Wexler (2004) noted that teachers are expected to guide students to be pensive citizens when many in society do not view teachers as such. Testing has created a climate in which teachers deal with micromanagement and unneeded supervision. Test scores and evaluations do not include the love, care, time, and financial investment that teachers provide to their students, schools, and community (Levine & Levine, 2013). Lake (2012) emphasized that learning can be more successful when caring relationships are built. Student motivation and student achievement have a tendency to improve when teachers develop caring and respectful relationships with students (Elish-Piper et al., 2013).

As RTTT emphasized CCSS, the education system shifted learning to encompass a real-world perspective. Sulzer (2014) warned that advocates of CCSS are trying to pass off

unrealistic step-by-step procedures as new and creative techniques and strategies (Sulzer, 2014). Even though CCSS may be given new acronyms, teachers continue to adapt and teach the standards effectively to students (Sulzer, 2014). Bulgar (2012) conducted a study that examined the inner conflict teachers experience as they cover state standards using traditional versus non-traditional teaching techniques. Bulgar stated, “It is not until teachers and administrators thoroughly accept that good teaching is the key to success, without any ‘test-besting’ practices or the use of commercially prepared materials that we will see these dilemmas dissipate” (2012, p. 42). Apple (2013) asserted that teachers need to be given the ability to mold and develop the curriculum as they see fit.

The emphasis on teaching to the test has caused many teachers to question the ethics of this mindset and deem it incompatible with their philosophy of education. Teachers understand that they must prepare students for testing, but they argue that meaningful instruction should not be lost in the process (Welsh et al., 2014). In MetLife’s survey of American teachers, it was discovered that discontentment among teachers was its highest in 20 years (MetLife, 2012). Elish-Piper et al. (2013) underscored the importance of teaching with students in mind, incorporating real-life learning, and promoting a creative educational environment. High-stakes testing has created a climate that enforces drilling skills and strategies that constrain teacher creativity and flexibility with the curriculum. These creative skills are needed in the 21st century (Olivant, 2015).

Morgan (2016) reported that teachers have lost control of their classrooms along with the joy of educating students due to the shift of teaching to the test. In a California school, a 30-year veteran teacher was told to strictly follow the math and reading curriculum after her students did not meet the state’s achievement benchmark on the standardized test. The pressure trickled from

the state, to the district, to the principal, and to the teacher. Due to the pressure to increase scores in this California school, music and art were eventually eliminated from the curriculum (Morgan, 2016). The pressure of high-stakes testing on teachers is even greater for those who are trying to educate students from low socioeconomic communities (Lewis & Hardy, 2015). Nelson et al. (2012) found the faculty to be extremely discouraged and demoralized that low-performing students were no longer perceived as a challenge, but a liability.

Pinder (2013) interviewed Maryland teachers about the impact of testing. The teachers expressed concern about having to focus on material for the test rather than teach the needed curriculum. Pinder found that 75% of the teachers believed the tests were ineffective and pressure was intensified to teach to the test. In addition, all the teachers believed NCLB's mandates were unrealistic and students were unprepared for constant testing (Pinder, 2013).

Teachers experiencing "high anxiety, frustration, and hopelessness have published open letters of resignation, brought lawsuits against the state, and have been fired for expressing dissent" (Croft et al., 2016, p. 85). Von der Embse, Pendergast, Segool, Saeki, and Ryan (2016) stated that policies regarding teacher accountability have negative relationships concerning stress on teachers and the learning environment. Elish-Piper et al. (2013) found that teachers and students felt invisible because their personalities and abilities were not appreciated. Teachers felt embarrassed and guilty and thereby experienced lower morale (Watson et al., 2014). To counteract these negative outcomes, Croft et al. (2016) recommended that educators receive emotional, physical, psychological, and financial support, which would then ensure educational quality. Watson et al. (2014) explained that administration and teachers can help alleviate the stress levels in their schools by encouraging and empowering students with self-confidence. By fostering a healthy and positive climate, the stress levels associated with high-stakes testing can

diminish (Watson et al., 2014). Ackerman's (2013) findings recommended that better predictors of student achievement be found to reevaluate the intent of the Purpose in Life test may have on academic scores and the learning environment.

Thompson and Allen (2012) noted many teachers in public schools have been caught lying and cheating in order to help their scores because they were afraid of the ramifications that testing could have on their jobs. Multiple states have been involved in testing improprieties, including Maryland, New York, Texas, and Georgia. In an investigation concerning the Atlanta Public School System, 80% of the schools were discovered to have been cheating. Todd Farley, a 15-year employee of a testing company, divulged that cheating occurred even in the test-scoring industry. For example, testing companies were known to compromise the reliability, validity, and calibration scores. Farley commented that testing companies are primarily focused on making money (Thompson & Allen, 2012).

Another negative component of high-stakes testing is a sense of competition develops for a higher test score. Many teachers may try to avoid having certain groups of students in their classroom (Morgan, 2016). Colombo et al. (2013) noted that these students are being asked to score proficient on a test in a language that is not their own. Many teachers consider these expectations for ELL students to be unrealistic, causing a climate of despondency. Many teachers are not prepared or qualified to meet the needs of ELL students and help them reach proficiency. ELLs and students with disabilities may affect overall teacher and school scores. Gifted students may be another group to avoid because they do not provide much room for growth (Colombo et al., 2013). McConnell, Little, and Martin (2014) reported many teachers have suggested that they do not feel sufficiently trained to teach students with disabilities even though teachers must prepare these students for high-stakes testing. So that all students receive a

quality education, it is prudent for special education teachers and regular education teachers to collaborate in order to understand the content in academic areas (Donder, 2011). Morgan (2016) noted challenges could cause teachers to desire middle class students because they are more apt to show progress.

Nichols et al. (2012) questioned whether pressure from high-stakes testing caused teachers to train students for the test rather than teach the curriculum. Punitive measures were intended to motivate teachers and students to be more aggressive about learning, which in turn would improve schools. Even though various studies suggest that high-stakes testing have harmful consequences on instruction, decision-makers and politicians still support the usefulness of the tests in the education system (Nichols et al., 2012). Many teachers are burned out because of the educational mandates placed on teachers by policymakers (Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014; Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015).

According to Wisneski (2012), Members of the Save Our School Campaign implored policymakers to think about the children and teachers and the effect that these policies have on learning and teaching practices. Policymakers need to be warned that standardized tests should be used very cautiously to influence teacher evaluations, school curriculum, student outcomes, and the funding of schools (Wisneski, 2012). Another suggestion is to allow curriculum to be outlined by teachers who practice and incorporate it everyday in their classroom (Olivant, 2015). Teachers would like to reclaim the diagnostic test that they once used to assess what had been taught, what needed to be reviewed, and if students were ready for the next objective (Pease-Alvarez & Thompson, 2014). Lewis and Hardy (2015) warned against constantly comparing schools and school systems because it can exacerbate and intensify political power and manipulation of the learning environment. Policymakers need to discover other means, such as

authentic assessment, in order to determine the achievement of students, effectiveness of teachers, and quality of schools (Thompson & Allen, 2012).

**Teacher attrition.** Internationally competitive academic performance was the primary objective of NCLB, but the teacher attrition rate was an unexpected expense that directly affects students' educational quality. Sass, Flores, Claeys, and Pérez (2012) reported that many teachers are leaving the field of education because of the amount of stress and accountability due to high-stakes testing. Many teachers find themselves taking more time instructing their students for the test rather than teaching material that is more pertinent to the subject taught. In high-achieving public schools, the pressure of maintaining high scores came not only from the principal but also the parents. At the same time, in low-achieving schools, pressure was amplified to increase scores in order to avoid demoralization and loss of state and federal funding. The pressures caused teachers to discharge dissatisfaction instead of enjoyment in their jobs (Sass, Flores, Claeys, & Pérez, 2012). Many effective teachers are leaving underperforming schools for schools that do not have a record of failing (Olivant, 2015).

Attrition is not just a problem with veteran teachers retiring as many novice teachers are also leaving education. Only 12% of the attrition rate involves teacher retirements, whereas 37% of the novice teachers quit the teaching profession entirely (Sass et al., 2012). Less than five years after entering the classroom, 30-50% of new teachers are leaving the teaching profession in order to pursue other careers (Larkin et al., 2016). Torres (2012) noted that the younger generation of teachers is complacent with having several careers instead of retiring from the profession. Many teachers feel alone while dealing with issues in the classroom but long to have meaningful conversations about learning and pedagogical methods (Torres, 2012). According to Sass et al. (2012), a primary reason may be that today's young adults are still developing the

loyalty, dedication, and strategies to deal with classroom situations. The attrition of new teachers has increased because they are not prepared for the pressures of the classroom (Sass et al., 2012). Many teachers are leaving urban schools, low socio-economic schools, and schools with a high percentage of minority students (Torres, 2012).

In order to avoid teacher burnout and attrition, Pucella (2014) suggested providing teachers the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process. This encourages teachers to take on the role of leadership, which will influence their self-respect and job satisfaction. Since 50% of teachers are baby boomers and will be retiring soon, it is essential to foster teacher leaders so that the retention is not an issue (Pucella, 2014).

Job dissatisfaction can foster attrition (Torres, 2012). Various circumstances attribute to job dissatisfaction such as insufficient administrative support, limited resources, school climate, low salary, and a lack of student motivation and discipline. Eliminating these negative aspects will help retain teachers in the workforce, which will ultimately improve school performance and quality. Torres (2012) reinforced that success and commitment in education is affected by various components in schools.

According to Sass et al. (2012), teacher shortages are the result of excessive attrition rates, particularly in special education, mathematics, and science. These attrition rates are especially high in low-income public schools with a large number of minority students. In order to encourage retention, teachers should be monetarily rewarded for remaining in schools that are academically struggling. It is vital to find solutions to ameliorate attrition because the lack of having high quality teachers is directly affecting learning in classrooms (Sass et al., 2012).

Thibodeaux et al. (2015) emphasized that standardized testing has placed additional stress on teachers by adding more work and responsibility. These excessive stressors include excessive

paperwork, minimal administrative support, and students' lack of respect. As teacher stress increases, moral and job satisfaction decreases leading to attrition (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). In her study, Bridwell's (2012) interview with teachers revealed that if administration would offer support and attempt to decrease the stressors, then teachers would be more apt to stay in their positions. In addition to the pressure produced by high-stakes testing, the stressors of discipline, class size, language barriers, and paperwork negatively impact the classroom environment and job satisfaction. One of the teachers interviewed described the positive and negative aspects of teaching. The positive aspect was the relationships with students, but the negative aspects encompassed the various mandates that come from the administration and government (Bridwell, 2012).

Retention and teacher effectiveness can be achieved by directing a teacher's mind and heart back to the original pedagogical beliefs of helping children. Torres (2012) emphasized that the success that a teacher experiences in the classroom is a key element in whether or not a teacher stays in the teaching profession. Student achievement has been affected by teacher attrition and schools are facing a lack of experienced, committed teachers; retaining teachers is important for student growth and improving schools. As teachers leave, a school's impact in the community is breached. When teachers stay in their schools, they are able to develop their identity, a sense of commitment, and encourage a strong, supportive community. (Torres, 2012).

### **Summary**

Over the past 20 years, the education system has become reliant on accountability measures from high-stakes testing to determine the worth of students, teachers, and schools. As teachers prepare their students all year for the test, it transfers the power of success and failure to students' performance on one test. Breiner (2015) warned that even though testing has become a

component of education, it should not be considered normal. Corporations have now become involved in testing as a result of trying to maintain the nation's economic status. As education fails so does the nation's standing in the global economy (Islam & Ali, 2013).

From the implementation of NCLB to the ESSA, teacher attrition has become a concern in the educational workforce. Sass et al. (2012) noted that many teachers have found that job dissatisfaction due to the pressure and stress of high-stakes testing has diminished the joy of teaching. Thibodeaux et al. (2015) emphasized that high-stakes testing has increased the stress level among teachers causing new and veteran teachers to leave the classroom.

Employee satisfaction can influence teacher retention (Frey, Bayon, and Totzek, 2013). Herzberg's motivation theory suggested employee satisfaction is related to involvement in decision making and sharing of ideas. The appreciation of teachers' work is an important motivator of job satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 2008).

Levine and Levine (2013) paralleled the educational system to a production factory in that "students are the raw materials processed by teachers; teachers are the line factory workers in need of close supervision; test scores are the product" (p. 17). Teachers diligently work to prepare students for a one-day test toward the end of the year that does not come with a warranty of maintaining accreditation. The pressure and stress of knowing that student test scores can affect teacher evaluation causes their confidence level to change constantly. This apprehension produces an assembly line type learning environment consisting of drills and memorization instead of embracing a holistic style of learning. Thus, the climate is impacted by the emphasis on high-stakes testing (Levine & Levine, 2013).

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODS**

### **Overview**

The intent of this correlational study was to analyze the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. Many studies have compared a combination of two of the variables. Lee (2014) and Matthus (2017) investigated the relationship between teacher evaluation and student assessment. Ackerman (2013), Krzemienski (2012), von der Embse, Pendergast, Segool, Saeki, and Ryan (2016) noted that student assessment could affect school climate. Barlie et al. (2012) as well as Riordan, Lacireno-Paquet, Shakman, and Bocala (2016) studied the effects of teacher evaluations on school climate. However, researchers have not compared all three variables concerning student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate (Bogart, 2013). Correlational analyses were used to examine the relationship between the variables being studied. This chapter will provide an overview of the correlational design, the research questions, the hypotheses, the participants and setting, the instrumentation used in the study, the procedures, and the data analysis.

### **Correlational Design**

The researcher used a correlational design to analyze the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluations, and their climate. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2007) noted that correlational research uncovers the relationships between variables by analyzing correlational statistics. The intent of this study was to determine the strength of the relationships between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate.

Similar studies have utilized a correlational design in order to analyze the relationship between variables. Kennedy (2014) used a correlational design in order to evaluate the relationship among job satisfaction, teacher self-efficacy, and burnout. Ermold (2011) conducted a correlational study that examined the relationship between school climate and student achievement. In addition, Evans (2014) used a correlational design in examining the relationship between teacher evaluation scores and student achievement in mathematics or communications arts.

In 2013, Bogart studied the impact of the TEAM on teachers' classrooms and teaching strategies. Duncan and Stevens (2011) reported that Schroder referred to the pressures that teachers and students are under as, "the high-stakes horrors of standardized testing" (p. 37). According to Segool et al. (2013), test anxiety has triggered excessive stress on the job and a decrease in job contentment among teachers. This emphasis on rigorous standards and accountability has caused many teachers to leave the classroom (Segool, 2013). There is limited research investigating the correlation of student assessment and school climate on teacher evaluation.

The researcher examined the scatterplot matrix, histograms, and descriptive statistics and determined a correlation coefficient. A correlational design was appropriate because the researcher investigated several variables at one time and determined the strength of the relationships between these variables. A correlational design was appropriate for determining the relationship between the variables of student assessment scores, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate.

### **Research Questions**

This quantitative correlational study was purposed to answer the following questions:

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluations model?

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate?

**RQ3:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and teacher climate?

### **Null Hypotheses**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluation model as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and teacher climate as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

### **Participants and Setting**

The participants were selected from a convenience sample of middle school teachers in a rural school district in Tennessee during the 2017-2018 school year. Warner (2013) suggested that when conducting correlational research, that an *N* of at least 100 is recommended, as larger sample sizes increase the validity of the results. All middle school teachers in the school district were asked to participate in the study; however, participation was optional. As stated by Gall et

al. (2007), researchers will frequently use a statistical significance of .05, which is used to determine the likelihood that a pattern within the data is due to chance.

The researcher conducted this study in a rural public school district in Northeast Tennessee. The school district consists of 10 elementary schools, two K-8 schools, seven middle schools and four high schools that serve 10,402 students (Sullivan County Schools, n.d.). The school district consists of 47 administrators, 722 educators, and 649 support staff members. According to a 2014 census conducted by the United States Census Bureau, the majority of the students in the district were Caucasian (95.1%). Other racial groups include African-American (2.4%), American Indian and Alaska Native (0.4%), Asian (0.7%), Hispanic (1.7%), and those students of two or more races (1.4%). In the school district, 18.5% of households were considered to be below the poverty level (Sullivan County Schools, n.d. b). In 2015, it was reported that 15.5% of students received special education services, not including those identified as functionally delayed or gifted. Also, 38.4% of the students in the school district participate in the free and reduced lunch program, which is a more accurate indicator of socioeconomic status than poverty level (Indicator Selection, n.d.).

### **Instrumentation**

The researcher used surveys in order to measure the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. Teacher effectiveness is measured by TVAAS, which evaluates student data and influences teacher evaluation scores (Kupermintz, 2003). Since NCLB and most recently ESSA, these scores have been incorporated into the TEAM evaluation model.

The school district implemented the TEAM evaluation model in 2012, which changed the way that teachers were evaluated and could have impacted teachers' stress and their working

conditions. Teacher evaluations and teaching practices influence student assessment scores. Evans (2014) conducted a correlational study analyzing the impact of teacher observation scores on the achievement of students and found no statistically significant relationship. However, there is limited research that has examined how student assessment scores affect teacher evaluations. Ermold (2011) conducted a correlational study measuring the relationship of student assessment scores and school climate. Ermold did not find a significant relationship but suggested that school leaders create a climate that encourages teachers in order for them to more successful in their teaching. The TCAP test is considered to be valid and reliable based on the following criteria: the test is aligned with the Tennessee curriculum; Tennessee teachers designed the test questions, and the state gains demonstrate how the curriculum and test are correlated (Using and Interpreting, n.d.).

Because a single survey could not be found to address the research questions concerning teachers' perceptions on student assessment, teacher evaluations and teacher climate, the *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* (Thomas, 2014) and the *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale* (PS-HST) (Dawson, 2012) were found to be appropriate for the study. Thomas' *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* addressed questions concerning teachers' perceptions on student assessment and teacher evaluations. Dawson's *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale* (PS-HST) focused on questions concerning teachers' perceptions on teacher climate. These two surveys were modified and combined into one survey consisting of 35 items including a general demographics section. The scale was modified to a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree. Survey questions pertaining to the TVAAS school composite scores obtained a summed score ranging from 10 to 40 points, survey questions pertaining to the TEAM evaluation model also obtained a summed

score ranging from 8 to 32 points, and survey questions pertaining to teacher climate obtained a summed score ranging from 9 to 36 points. Table 1 includes a description concerning the relationship of the survey questions to the research questions.

Table 1

*Correlation of Research Questions to Survey Questions*

Research Question	Survey Question
RQ1	9 - 18
RQ2	19 - 26
RQ3	27 - 35

Google Forms were used to distribute the surveys to middle school teachers in the school district. The surveys required approximately 15 minutes or less to complete. In order to ensure confidentiality, the participants were not identified. Participation in the survey was optional, and the individual survey results will not be shared with the administration at each school or the district's central office.

Thomas (2014) developed the *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* in order to determine the attitudes of teachers concerning the impact of Ohio EVAAS data on teachers' evaluations. After conducting a pilot study and several analyses, the scale was found to be valid and reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of .94. Thomas' original survey, *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale*, consisted of 23 items and uses a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Reverse scoring was conducted for negatively stated items. The *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* was modified since it was inquiring about TVAAS scores in Tennessee. Permission for use of the instrument was granted September 22, 2017 (Appendix A).

The intent of the *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale* (PS-HST) was to analyze the perceived stress and pressures on teachers because of high-stakes testing, which in turn, could affect the teaching styles and classroom/school climate (Dawson, 2012). Dawson's original survey consisted of 16 items and used a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Possible responses consisted of 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree. Negatively stated items received a reverse scoring. An accumulating possible score on the PS-HST ranged from 16 to 80 points. A low score of 16 points meant that the high-stakes testing places no stress or pressure on the teacher; whereas, a high score of 80 points reflected high levels of stress and pressure as a result of the high-stakes testing. Surveys have been used in previous research to analyze student assessment and school climate (Ethier, 2017; Treadwell, 2016); however, the PS-HST does not seem to have been used in other studies. Dawson (2012) developed the PS-HST in order to measure the teachers' perception of their stress level because of high-stakes testing and how it affected their teaching practices. During the development of the survey, Dawson (2012) found the PS-HST to be valid with a Cronbach's alpha of .89. Permission for use of the instrument was granted October, 25, 2017 (Appendix C).

### **Procedures**

Before the study began, the researcher gained IRB approval and received permission to conduct the study from the school district superintendent (Appendix C). The surveys were sent via email to all middle school teachers in the school district using Google Forms. Teachers were given a three-week window to complete the survey. One week after the initial survey was sent, the email with the survey link was sent again to all middle school teachers in the district asking that any teacher who had not completed the survey to please do so. Two weeks later, a reminder

email was sent to all middle school teachers to request they fill out the survey before the end of the school year. Teachers were given the option to take the survey or decline. Once collected, the researcher input the results into the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software for data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

A correlational analysis was used to analyze the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluations, and teacher climate. Thus, the purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between teachers' perception of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. A correlational analysis has been used in other studies to examine the relationship between two or more variables. Hanford's (2016) conducted a correlational study and found no statistically significant relationship between reading achievement and school climate. Marcos (2015) also used a correlational study in order to determine the relationship between benchmark exams and the performance on state standardized test but found no positive linear relationship.

Pearson product moment correlations was conducted. The variables' descriptive statistics were analyzed as well. A scatter plot matrix was used in order to identify any possible outliers and linearity among the variables. The effect size was determined by the regression coefficient. An effect size closer to the absolute value of 1 is needed to confirm a correlation between student assessment, teacher evaluation, and school climate. A small effect size does not eliminate the possibility of correlation; it simply indicates that careful study is needed in order to see the effect (Warner, 2013). All analyses were administered using the SPSS software.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Overview

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the correlations between teachers' perceptions of TVAAS school composite scores, the TEAM evaluation model, and teacher climate. There were three research questions that directed this study. Each question was examined using a correlation analysis. An examination of each question, hypotheses, and descriptive statistics are discussed in this chapter.

### Research Questions

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and the TEAM evaluation model?

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate?

**RQ3:** What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and teacher climate?

### Null Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluation model as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There are no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and teacher climate as shown by *EVAAS Teacher Attitude Scale* and *Perceived Stress Due to High-Stakes Test Scale*.

### Descriptive Statistics

The study's participants consisted of 109 teachers in a school district in Northeast Tennessee. The descriptive statistics for variables concerning teachers' perceptions of TVAAS school composite scores, the TEAM evaluation model, and teacher climate are displayed in Table 2. Survey questions 9-18 addressed teachers' perceptions pertaining to TVAAS, survey questions 19-26 addressed teachers' perceptions about the TEAM evaluation model, and survey questions 27-35 addressed teachers' perception concerning the teacher climate. Teachers used a 4 – point Likert scale to rate the questions. Table 2 includes each participant's scores were summed for each set of questions.

Table 2

#### *Variables' Descriptive Statistics*

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
TVAAS	22.00	40.00	34.31	4.25
EVALUATIONS	14.00	32.00	27.51	4.32
CLIMATE	10.00	27.00	15.67	4.24

### Results

### **Null Hypothesis One**

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the strength of the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and the TEAM evaluation model from a survey administered to 109 teachers. For each participant, questions pertaining to the TVAAS school composite scores obtained a summed score ranging from 10 to 40 points; questions pertaining to the TEAM evaluation model also obtained a summed score ranging from 8 to 32 points. For both variables, most scores were close to the high end of the scale, which suggested the existence of ceiling effects. This ceiling effect was a result by the high scores to the survey questions, which revealed the teachers' strong attitudes toward the TVAAS school composite scores and toward the TEAM evaluation model. A strong positive correlation between the two variables was found using the collected data,  $r = .75, p = .000$  (see Table 3). The  $r^2$  was .56; therefore, approximately 56% of the variance of teachers' perceptions on the TVAAS model could be explained by variation in teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model.

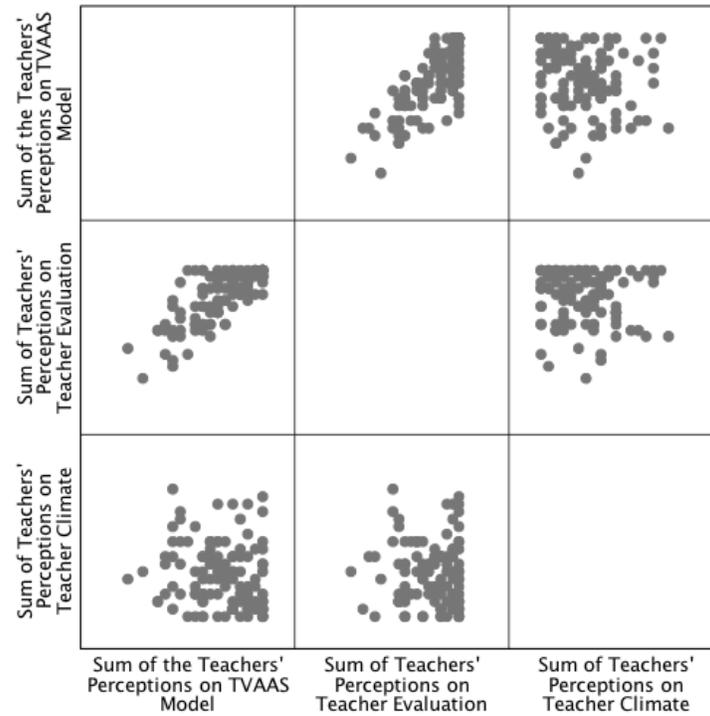
Table 3

*Correlations*

		Sum of the Teachers' Perceptions on TVAAS Model	Sum of Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Evaluation	Sum of Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Climate
Sum of the Teachers' Perceptions on TVAAS Model	Pearson Correlation	1	.750**	-.122
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.207
	N	109	109	109
Sum of Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Evaluation	Pearson Correlation	.750**	1	-.049
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.614
	N	109	109	109
Sum of Teachers' Perceptions on Teacher Climate	Pearson Correlation	-.122	-.049	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.207	.614	
	N	109	109	109

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Thus, teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite directly correlate with teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model, and null hypothesis one is rejected in the study. The results are displayed in a scatterplot matrix (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1.* Scatterplot Matrix of the Sum of Teachers' Perceptions

**Assumption Test.** According to Warner (2013), the distribution of scores for a histogram is similar enough to a normal distribution shape to allow the use of parametric statistics such as means and correlations. Therefore, based on the visual examination of Figure 2, an analysis of the histogram revealed a normal distribution shape for the summation of teachers' responses concerning TVAAS scores.

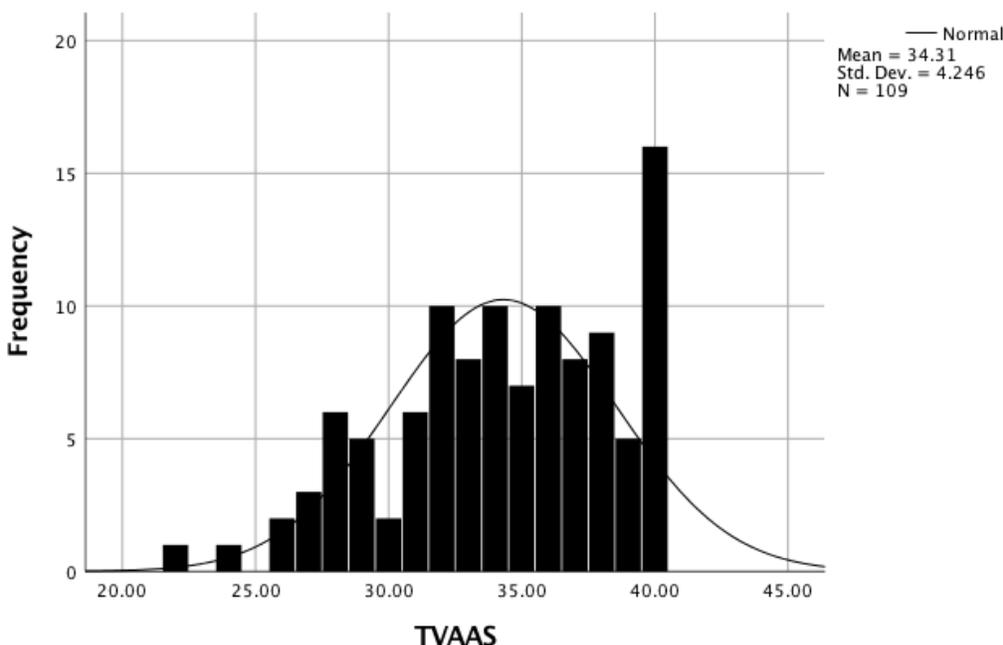


Figure 2. Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions of TVAAS

### Null Hypothesis Two

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the strength of the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and the climate of the teachers. Questions pertaining to the TVAAS school composite scores obtained a summed score ranging from 10 to 40 points, and questions pertaining to teacher climate obtained a summed score ranging from 9 to 36 points. A weak and negative correlation between the two variables was found,  $r = -.122$ ,  $p > .05$  (see Table 3). The results are displayed in a scatterplot matrix (see Figure 1). Since teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores do not correlate with climate of the teachers, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis two.

**Assumption Test.** Based on the visual examination Figure 3, an analysis of the histogram revealed a normal distribution shape for the summation of teachers' responses

concerning TEAM evaluation model; however, the high scores outside the normal distribution represented teachers' that conveyed strong negative attitudes toward teacher evaluations.

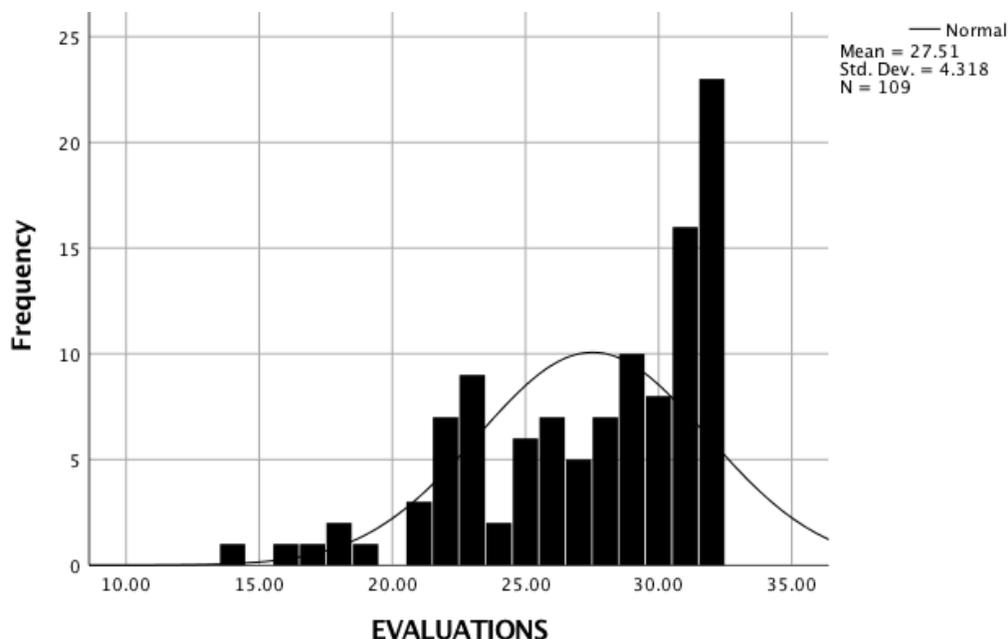


Figure 3. Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions of Evaluations

### Null Hypothesis Three

A Pearson correlation was calculated to determine the statistical significant correlation between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and the climate of the teachers. A weak and negative correlation between the two variables was found using the collected data,  $r = -.049$ ,  $p > .05$  (see Table 3). The results are displayed in a scatterplot matrix (see Figure 1). The teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model do not correlate with the climate of the teachers; therefore, null hypothesis three is not rejected in the study.

**Assumption Test.** Based on the visual examination Figure 4, an analysis of the histogram revealed that many of the scores were outside the normal distribution shape for the summation of teachers' responses concerning the teacher climate. The lower sum scores

revealed that there was an extreme number of teachers who stated that high-stakes testing affected their climate.

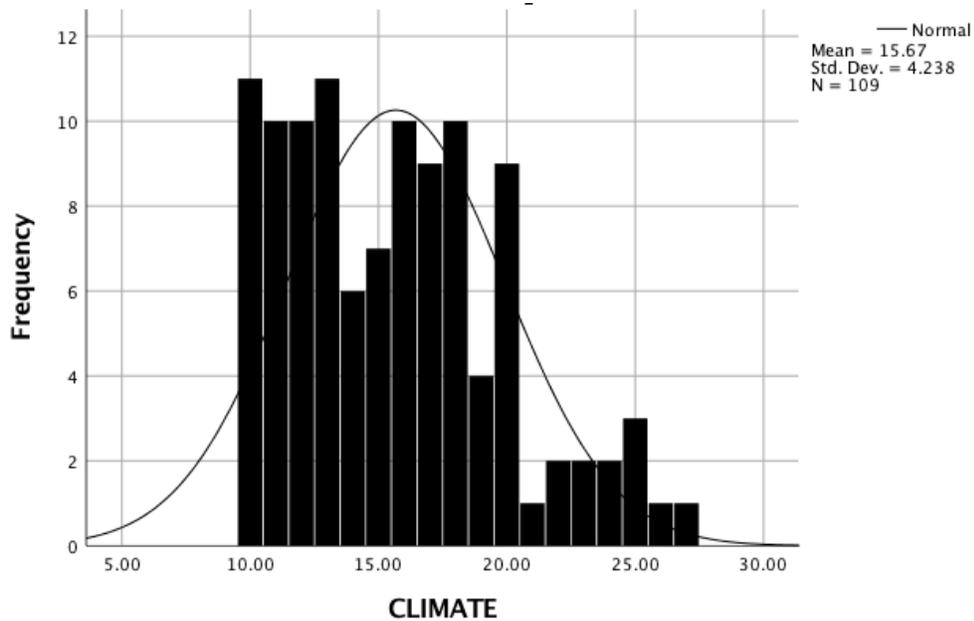


Figure 4. Histogram of the Sum of the Survey Questions about Teachers' Perceptions on Climate

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS**

### **Overview**

The purpose of this correlational study was to examine the relationship of teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. This chapter contains a discussion of the data analysis, implications, limitations, and the recommendations for future research. A correlational analysis was conducted based on data collected from online surveys of middle school teachers in a Northeast Tennessee school district.

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this correlational study was to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of student assessment, teacher evaluation, and teacher climate. These relationships were examined by analyzing data collected from a survey that focused on teachers' perceptions of TVAAS school composite scores, the TEAM evaluation model, and teacher climate. The data provided information and understanding of the teachers' perceptions concerning how TVAAS school composite scores affect teachers' TEAM evaluation and then in turn impact their teacher climates. This study examined the following research questions:

#### **Research Question 1**

What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and the effect on TEAM evaluations?

The purpose of this question was to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and the effect on TEAM evaluations. After the analysis of the data, the researcher found that teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores directly correlate with teachers' perceptions on the TEAM evaluations.

As indicated in the literature review, testing is an important component of the education system. Since the implementation of CCSS during RTTT, Breiner (2015) pointed out that billions of dollars have been spent on testing. Nichols et al. (2012) stated that improving students' test scores is the primary purpose of state and federal student assessment. Watson et al. (2014) questioned the fairness and functionality of the assessments. K. Anderson (2012) reported that many teachers were concerned about accountability being measured by test scores. However, Mueller and Colley (2015) found that new teachers accepted the methods of accountability because it provided them with direction.

According to Rutkowski and Wild (2015), students performed significantly higher on tests when they were notified that their test scores could affect their teacher's jobs or their grades; their findings suggest the importance of notifying students about possible consequences of their test performance. However, Forman and Markson (2015) reported findings from a study conducted in a New York school district that discovered that when teacher effectiveness scores rose, student assessment scores declined.

## **Research Question 2**

What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate?

The researcher found no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite scores and teachers' perceptions on teacher climate. According to Jones and Shindler (2016), student achievement is a product of good climates. In Bulgar's (2012) study, he added that the key to success was good teaching, not test preparations. Breiner (2015) noted that additional research should examine the impact on student motivation and growth. Elish-Piper et al. (2013) reported that student achievement and motivation ameliorate

when teachers create respectful and caring relationships with their students. Shindler et al. (2016) found the best predictor to encourage student achievement was the quality of the climate; the higher caliber climate leads to an increase in achievement. Ali and Siddiqui (2016) also reported that higher achievement scores are a product of a positive learning environment.

Allen et al. (2015) examined the relationship among transformational leadership, school climate, and student achievement. Transformational leadership focused on motivating and empowering teachers to a common goal. No correlation was found between student achievement and school climate nor student achievement and transformational leadership.

### **Research Question 3**

What is the relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation and teacher climate?

After analysis of the data, the study revealed that there is no significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation and teachers' perceptions on teacher climate. Allen et al. (2015) reported that there is a strong relationship between school climate and transformational leadership. Finster and Milanowski (2018) suggested that in order to create a good evaluation climate, administrators should discuss teachers' anxieties and concerns about the evaluation process. A survey conducted by Lacireno-Paquet, Bocala, Bailey, in conjunction with the Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast and Islands, the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, and Education Development Center (2016) revealed that teachers with higher scores on their evaluation conveyed greater satisfaction with the process than teachers with lower scores. The results of this survey also revealed that teachers whose evaluations did not include test scores were 2.5 times more pleased with the evaluation procedures.

Watson et al. (2012) discussed the responsibility of teachers as they prepare students for the test academically and emotionally by promoting positive attitudes for testing. As Levine and Levine (2013) reported, evaluations and student assessments do not incorporate the care and time that teachers invest in their schools or students. Since the implementation of CCSS, high-stakes tests have generated intense pressure and negative attitudes towards testing for teachers and students (Ferguson, 2015).

Johns and Kachel (2017) noted that ESSA encourages teachers to participate in joint planning, collaboration, and professional development. Cardina and Fegley (2016) conducted a study concerning teachers' perceptions and attitudes about job satisfaction and their working climate. They found teachers who were motivated and satisfied with their jobs promoted student learning and thereby increase student achievement.

Matteucci, Guglielmi, and Lauermann (2017) found that factors such as school climate and self-efficacy can create an awareness of personal responsibility in teachers, which can produce positive implications for pedagogical practices and the teachers' welfare. Also, it was perceived that teachers' positive relationships with students can encourage positive educational achievement. Therefore, as stated in the literature, positive climates lead to job satisfaction (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016).

Teachers' job satisfaction can be linked to Herzberg's motivation theory. According to Shirol (2014), productivity and performance could be a result of motivation in the workplace; therefore, an encouraging environment requires adequate motivation. Alfayad and Mohd Arif (2017) validated Herzberg's motivation theory by finding a relationship between employees feeling they have a voice and job satisfaction, which, in turn, created a sense of involvement in the workplace. According to Cardina and Fegley (2016), job satisfaction, on both the part of the

students and teachers, can lead to motivation, thereby, improving students' achievement and teachers' performance. A positive professional climate could be fostered by the collaborative and cooperative relationship with teachers and administration and by allowing time to train and implement new initiatives (Elma, 2013; Riordan, Lacireno-Paquet, Shakman, and Bocala (2016).

### **Implications**

The results of this study add to existing body of knowledge concerning the impact of high-stakes testing on teachers. The researcher found that teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score directly correlate with teachers' perceptions concerning the TEAM evaluation model. No statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TEAM evaluation model and the effect on teacher climate were found. Also, there were no statistically significant correlations between teachers' perceptions of the TVAAS school composite score and teacher climate found.

The study supported the theoretical implications of Herzberg's motivation theory or the two-factor theory in that job satisfaction and motivation are interrelated (Islam & Ali, 2013). Thomas' (2014) study revealed that teachers exhibited negative attitudes concerning the use of EVAAS scores in teacher evaluations, which research supported these findings. According to Bogart (2013), teachers realized they must adapt their planning and instruction to meet the requirements for the TEAM evaluation model. Bogart suggested communication and support are necessary, on the part of both administrators and teachers, in order to implement TEAM. According to Pucella (2014), teachers need to be involved in the decision making process, which will influence their self-respect and job satisfaction.

In this study, teachers revealed negative attitudes toward the TVAAS model and the TEAM evaluation model. Although not specifically measured in the survey, it may be inferred

that these negative attitudes have a detrimental affect on the climate in which students are expected to learn. Survey questions pertaining to teacher climate indicated that many teachers feel pressure and tension before and during testing, but most teachers agree that their administration is supportive. These insignificant results may implement the Herzberg theory in which these negative attitudes allude to possible job dissatisfaction, which also affects the pedagogical climate. The most challenging implication for the study is changing teachers' attitudes as well as changing the state's attitudes.

Teachers' answers to the survey questions should be shared with the area school district and as well as with the Tennessee Department of Education. Educational leaders, policy makers, and stakeholders should read the results of the survey questions to understand the frustrations of the teachers and consider teachers' input in decision making influencing high-stakes testing. More research is needed to develop a broader understanding in order address these frustrations with educational leaders, policy makers, and stakeholders.

### **Limitations**

The use of convenience sampling was considered a limitation in the study. According to Warner (2013), a convenience sample is "not representative of any real-world population" (p. 75). Warner also stated that a correlational study should consist of at least 100 participants. This study included 109 middle school teachers from a school district in upper east Tennessee, which generalized the study to the area. The first limitation of this study was that this reduced the study to a rural area in Northeast Tennessee, therefore disregarding any other school districts in the surrounding area as well as other districts in the state. Metropolitan districts were also not included in the survey. A second limitation is the study included only middle school teachers. A third possible limitation was the timing of when the survey was available. Teachers had just

administered the standardized tests with multiple technological difficulties just two to three weeks prior to completing the survey, which amplified the frustration level concerning testing and increased the likelihood they would demonstrate that frustration as they completed the survey.

Possible threats to internal and external validity were examined. A positive relationship was found between TVAAS school composite scores and the TEAM evaluation model. Warner (2013) noted that nonexperimental studies normally have weak internal validity and not grounds for causation. However, external validity could possibly be established since the study measured teachers' perceptions and attitudes of student assessments, teacher evaluations, and teacher climate in the workplace.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

In this study, an analysis was conducted examining the correlational relationships concerning teachers' perceptions of TVAAS school composite scores, the TEAM evaluation model, and teacher climates. In order to add to the body of knowledge concerning these variables, the following recommendations for future research include:

1. Considering this study was conducted in one school district in upper east Tennessee, the study should be replicated in multiple districts in the area in order to obtain a larger collection of data. Also, since the sample consisted of a rural population, findings from large metropolitan districts in Tennessee could provide additional insight.
2. Additional research should be conducted to investigate the relationship of teachers' perceptions of alternative forms of evaluations instead of traditional high-stakes testing. Olivant (2015) noted that standardized tests were created for students with certain learning styles. Nehring and Szczesiul (2015) noted that students need to be given

alternative assessments such as the compilation of a portfolio. Portfolio tasks would include projects, problem solving assessments, and other skills necessary for the twenty-first century.

3. When conducting a research study, there should only be one independent variable. When the students and curriculum change from year to year, two independent variables are created. Therefore, it becomes difficult to determine which independent variable is the most or least effective. In order to measure a teacher's effectiveness, a teacher should be able to teach the same students for multiple years in order to minimize changes. More studies should be devoted to this form of evaluation of teachers.
4. Longitudinal studies need to be included in the research to better examine the impact of teachers' evaluations on the teacher climate. In addition to a quantitative study, a qualitative study would be beneficial to examine how teacher evaluations impact the climate.
5. Since this study purposefully did not include demographics in order to maintain anonymity, it would be beneficial to conduct a correlational study that would report and compare the strength of the relationship of these variables based on a teacher's years of experience as well as including a teacher's home school.

## REFERENCES

- Ackerman, M. M. (2013). Relationship between student purpose in life and performance on New Mexico standards based assessment. *ProQuest, LLC*.
- Aldridge, J. M., & Fraser, B. J. (2016). Teachers' views of their school climate and its relationship with teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction. *Learning Environments Research, 19*(2), 291-307. Doi:10.1007/s10984-015-9198-x
- Alfayad, Z. & Mohd Arif, L. S. (2017). Employee voice and job satisfaction: An application of Herzberg two-factor theory. *International Review of Management and Marketing, 7*(1).
- Ali, Z., & Siddiqui, M. (2016). School climate: Learning environment as a predictor of student's academic achievement. *Journal of Research & Reflections in Education, 10*(1), 104-115.
- Allen, N., Grigsby, B., & Peters, M. (2015). Does leadership matter? Examining the relationship among transformational leadership, school climate, and student achievement. *International Journal of Educational Leadership Preparation, 10*(2), 1-22.
- Anderson, J. (2012). States try to fix quirks in teacher evaluations. *New York Times, 161*(55687), 1.
- Anderson, K. (2012). Science education and test-based accountability: Reviewing their relationship and exploring implications for future policy. *Science Education, 96*(1), 104-129. Doi:10.1002/sce.20464
- Apple, M. W. (2013). Knowledge, power, and education: The selected works of Michael W. Apple. New York: NY: Routledge.
- Au, W., & Gourd, K. (2013). Asinine assessment: Why high-stakes testing is bad for everyone, including English teachers. *English Journal, 103*(1), 14-19.

- Ayers, J., & Center for American Progress. (2011). *Make Rural Schools a Priority: Considerations for Reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act*.
- Ballou, D., & Springer, M. G. (2015). Using student test scores to measure teacher performance: Some problems in the design and implementation of evaluation systems. *Educational Researcher*, 44(2), 77-86. doi:10.3102/0013189X15574904
- Banks, J., & Smyth, E. (2015). 'Your whole life depends on it': academic stress and high-stakes testing in Ireland. *Journal Of Youth Studies*, 18(5), 598-616.  
doi:10.1080/13676261.2014.992317
- Barlie, J. P., Donohue, D. K., Anthony, E. R., Baker, A. M., Weaver, S. R., & Henrich, C. C. (2012). Teacher-student relationship climate and school outcomes: Implications for educational policy initiatives. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 41(3), 256-267.
- Bassett-Jones, N., & Lloyd, G. (2005). Does Herzberg's motivation theory have staying power?. *Journal Of Management Development*, 24(10), 929-943.  
doi:10.1108/02621710510627064
- Bear, G., Yang, C., Pell, M., & Gaskins, C. (2014). Validation of a brief measure of teachers' perceptions of school climate: relations to student achievement and suspensions. *Learning Environments Research*, 17(3), 339-354. doi:10.1007/s10984-014-9162-1
- Bektaş, F., & Fatih Öçal, M. (2012). School culture as the predictor of job satisfaction with respect to teachers' perceptions: A causal study. *New Educational Review*, 27(1), 295-305.
- Belcastro, L., & Boon, H. (2012). Student motivation for NAPLAN tests. *Australian & International Journal Of Rural Education*, 22(2), 1-19.

- Berliner, D. (2011). Rational responses to high stakes testing: The case of curriculum narrowing and the harm that follows. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 41(3), 287-302.
- Bhattacharyya, S., Junot, M., & Clark, H. (2013). Can you hear us? Voices raised against standardized testing by novice teachers. *Creative Education*, 4, 633-639. doi: 10.4236/ce.2013.410091
- Bogart, C.D. (2013). Teacher evaluation and classroom: Teacher perceptions in Northeast Tennessee. *ProQuest LLC*.
- Bourque, R. J. (2015). Test-taking isn't proficiency: students miss out on the love of learning. *New Hampshire Business Review*, 37(12) 10.
- Breiner, J. (2015). Is high-stakes testing the answer? School science and mathematics is high-stakes testing the answer? . *School Science and Mathematics*, 115(3), 103-104. doi:10.1111/ssm.12112
- Bridwell, S. D. (2012). School leadership: Lessons from the lived experiences of urban teachers. *Journal Of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*, 7(2), 52-63.
- Bulgar, S. (2012). The effects of high stakes testing on teachers in NJ. *Journal On Educational Psychology*, 6(1), 34-44.
- Buzick, H. M., & Jones, N. D. (2015). Using test scores from students with disabilities in teacher evaluation. *Educational Measurement: Issues & Practice*, 34(3), 28-38. doi:10.1111/emip.12076
- Camera, L. (2015). "Opt-out" push sparks queries for guidance. *Education Week*, 34(26), 15-17.
- Cardina, C. E., & Fegley, J. M. (2016). Attitudes towards teaching and perceptions of school climate among health education teachers in the United States, 2011-2012. *Journal Of Health Education Teaching*, 7(1), 1-14.

- Cawthon, S., & Leppo, R. (2013). Assessment accommodation on test of academic achievement for students who are deaf or hard of hearing: A qualitative meta-analysis of the research literature. *American Annals Of The Deaf*, *158*(3), 363-376.
- Clements, R. (2013). Teacher accountability or credibility? *JOPERD: The Journal of Physical Education, Recreation & Dance*, *84*(6), 3-4.
- Clinkenbeard, P. R. (2012). Motivation and gifted students: Implications of theory and research. *Psychology In The Schools*, *49*(7), 622-630.
- Colombo, M., McMakin, D., Jacobs, C., & Shestok, C. (2013). Hopefulness for Teachers of ELLs in the Era of NCLB. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *15*(2), 81-87.
- Cormack, P., & Comber, B. (2013). High-stakes literacy tests and local effects in a rural school. *Australian Journal of Language & Literacy*, *36*(2), 78-89.
- Croft, S. J., Roberts, M. A., & Stenhouse, V. L. (2016). The perfect storm of education reform: High-stakes testing and teacher evaluation. *Social Justice*, *42*(1), 70-92.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Amrein-Beardsley, A., Haertel, E., & Rothstein, J. (2012). Evaluating teacher evaluation. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *93*(6), 8-15.
- Darrow, A. (2016). The every student succeeds act (ESSA). *General Music Today*, *30*(1), 41.  
doi:10.1177/1048371316658327
- Davis, J. M. (2015). Higher education to k-12: Preparing for Reality. *National Teacher Education Journal*, *8*(3), 103-108.
- Davis, J., Lampley, J. H., & Foley, V. (2016). The relationship between growth scores and the overall observation ratings for teachers in a public school system in Tennessee. *Journal of Learning Higher Education*, *12*(1), 45-51.

Dawson, H. S. (2012). Teachers' motivation and beliefs in a high-stakes testing context.

Retrieved from [https://etd.ohiolink.edu/rws\\_etd/document/get/osu1338399669/inline](https://etd.ohiolink.edu/rws_etd/document/get/osu1338399669/inline)

Dee, T. S., & Wyckoff, J. (2015). Incentives, selection, and teacher performance: Evidence from IMPACT. *Journal Of Policy Analysis & Management*, 34(2), 267-297.

doi:10.1002/pam.21818

Dennis, D. V. (2016). Learning from the past: What ESSA has the chance to get right. *The Reading Teacher* (70)4, 395-400.

Dever, B. V. (2016). Using the expectancy-value theory of motivation to predict behavioral and emotional risk among high school students. *School Psychology Review*, 45(4), 417-433.

Donder, D. J. (2011). Induction at the secondary level: A focus on content, pedagogy, and a school's best teachers. *Journal Of Special Education Leadership*, 24(1), 62-64.

Donaldson, M. L., & Donaldson, G. J. (2012). Strengthening teacher evaluation: What district leaders can do. *Educational Leadership*, 69(8), 78-82.

Duncan, B. A., & Stevens, A. (2011). High-stakes standardized testing: Help or hindrance to public education. *National Social Science Journal*, 36(2), 35-41.

Egalite, A. J., Fusarelli, L. D., & Fusarelli, B. C. (2017). Will decentralization affect educational inequity? The every student succeeds act. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, (53)5, 757-781.

Elish-Piper, L., Matthews, M. W., & Risko, V. J. (2013). Invisibility: An unintended consequence of standards, tests, and mandates. *Journal Of Language And Literacy Education*, 9(2), 4-23.

Elma, C. (2013). The predictive value of teachers' perception of organizational justice on job satisfaction. *Eurasian Journal Of Educational Research*, (51), 157-175.

- Erlich, R. J., & Russ-Eft, D. (2011). Applying social cognitive theory to academic advising to assess student learning outcomes. *NACADA Journal*, 31(2), 5-15.
- Erskine, J. L. (2014). It changes how teachers teach: How testing is corrupting our classrooms and student learning. *Multicultural Education*, 21(2), 38-40.
- Ermold, C. M. (2011). *A correlational study of student achievement and school climate* (Order No. 3466611). Available from ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; ProQuest Social Sciences Premium Collection. (885178164).
- Ethier, B. (2017). *Teachers' perceptions of school climate in high performing schools and low performing schools*
- Evans, M. D. (2014). *A correlational analysis of teacher observation scores and student achievement* (Order No. 3668109). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1647762834).
- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). (n.d.). Retrieved February 08, 2017, from <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=ft>
- Ferguson, M. (2015). In the battle over testing, only the children should win. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 96(7), 74-75. doi:10.1177/0031721715579047
- Finster, M., & Milanowski, A. (2018). Teacher perceptions of a new performance evaluation system and their influence on practice: A within- and between-school level analysis. *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 26(41).
- Frey, R., Bayon, T., & Totzek, D. (2013). How customer satisfaction affects employee satisfaction and retention in a professional services context. *Journal of Service Research*, 16(4), 503-517. doi:10.1177/1094670513490236
- Gall, M. D., Gall, J. P., & Borg, W. R. (2007). *Educational research: An introduction*. (8<sup>th</sup> ed.).

- New York, NY: Allyn and Bacon.
- Glazerman, S., & Seifullah, A. (2012). An Evaluation of the Chicago Teacher Advancement Program (Chicago TAP) after Four Years. Final Report.
- Goddard, Y., Goddard, R., & Minjing, K. (2015). School instructional climate and student achievement: An examination of group norms for differentiated instruction. *American Journal Of Education*, 122(1), 111-131.
- Hanford, J. (2016). *A correlational study: The relationship between school climate, connectedness, and reading achievement of elementary school students* (Order No. 10140495). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1805945312).
- Harris, D. M. (2012). Leveraging change via competition: The promise and limitations of race to the. *JEP: Ejournal Of Education Policy*, 1-7.
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (2008). *The motivation to work*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Huddleston, A. P., & Rockwell, E. C. (2015). Assessment for the masses: A historical critique of high-stakes testing in reading. *Texas Journal Of Literacy Education*, 3(1), 38-49.
- Hursh, D., & Martina, C. A. (2016). The end of public schools? or a new beginning? *Educational Forum*, 80(2), 189-207. doi:10.1080/00131725.2016.1135380
- Indicator Selection | KIDS COUNT Data Center*. (n.d.). Retrieved November 25, 2016, from <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/>
- Islam, S. u., & Ali, N. (2013). Motivation-hygiene theory: Applicability on teachers. *Journal Of Managerial Sciences*, 7(1), 87-104.
- Jackson, J. K., & Ash, G. (2011). Science Achievement for All: Improving Science Performance and Closing Achievement Gaps. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 23(7), 723-744. doi:10.1007/s10972-011-9238-z

- Johns, S. K., & Kachel, D.E. (2017). ESSA. *Teacher Librarian*, 44(4), 8-11.
- Jones, A., & Shindler, J. (2016). Exploring the school climate--student achievement connection: Making sense of why the first precedes the second. *Educational Leadership And Administration: Teaching And Program Development*, 2735-51.
- Kahoe, R. D. (1966). Motivation-hygiene aspects of vocational indecision and college achievement. *Personnel & Guidance Journal*, 44(10), 1030-1036.
- Katsuno, M. (2012). Teachers' professional identities in an era of testing accountability in Japan: The case of teachers in low-performing schools. *Education Research International*.
- Kennedy, B. M. (2014). *Teaching self-efficacy, job satisfaction and burnout in a public school setting* (Order No. 3680122). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1654410119).
- Krzemienski, J. (2012). The impact of stress on elementary school principals and their effective coping mechanisms. *ProQuest LLC*.
- Kirtley, K. (2012, January 1). High Stakes Testing in Lower-Performing High Schools: Mathematics Teachers' Perceptions of Burnout and Retention. *ProQuest LLC*.
- Klein, A. (2016a). Final ESSA rules flesh out accountability, testing details. *Education Week*, 36(15), 15.
- Klein, A. (2016b). States, districts will share more power under ESSA. *The Education Digest*, 81(8), 4-10.
- Koedel, C., Li, J., Tan, L., & Springer, M. G. (2017). The impact of performance ratings on job satisfaction for public school teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 54(2), 241-278. doi:10.3102/0002831216687531

- Kupermintz, H. (2003). Teacher effects and teacher effectiveness: A validity investigation of the tennessee value added assessment system. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 25(3), 287-298.
- Lake, R. (Ed.). (2012). *Dear Nel: Letters to Nel Noddings from circles of care*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Langley, G. C., Martin, M., & Kitchel, T. (2014). Novice agriculture teachers' general self efficacy and sense of community connectedness. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 55(4), 1-11. doi:10.5032/jae.2014.04001
- Larkin, I. M., Brantley-Dias, L., & Lokey-Vega, A. (2016). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of online teachers in the k-12 setting. *Online Learning*, 20(3), 26-51.
- Lazarev, V., Newman, D., & Sharp, A. (2014). Properties of the multiple measures in Arizona's teacher evaluation model. *Regional Educational Laboratory West*. REL 2015-050.
- Lee, C. M. (2014). Principals' understanding of teacher evaluations connected to the Colorado student assessment program. *ProQuest LLC*.
- Lewis, S., & Hardy, I. (2015). Funding, reputation and targets: the discursive logics of high-stakes testing. *Cambridge Journal Of Education*, 45(2), 245-264.  
doi:10.1080/0305764X.2014.936826
- Levine, M., & Levine, A. (2013). Holding accountability accountable: A cost-benefit analysis of achievement test scores. *American Journal Of Orthopsychiatry*, 83(1), 17-26.  
doi:10.1111/ajop.12014

- Lunenberg, F. C. (2013). America's obsession with student testing: costs in money and lost instructional time. *International Journal of Scholarly Academic Intellectual Diversity* 15, 1-4. Retrieved May 25, 2017.
- Marcos, M. F. (2015). *Benchmark exam utilization in california public middle schools and standardized test scores: A non-experimental correlational study*(Order No. 3732626). Available from Dissertations & Theses @ Liberty University; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1757808191).
- Martin, P. C. (2012). Misuse of high-stakes test scores for evaluative purposes: Neglecting the reality of schools and students. *Current Issues in Education*, 15(3), 1-10.
- Matteucci, M., Guglielmi, D., & Lauermann, F. (2017). Teachers' sens of responsibility for educational outcomes and its associations with teachers' instructional approaches and professtional wellbeing. *Social Psychology of Education*, 20(2), 275-298.
- Mathus, M. A. (2017). *The relationship between teacher evaluation ratings and student achievement in a rural, midwest school district* (Order No. 10270472). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1889561321).
- May, J. J., & Sanders, E. T. W. (2013). Beyond standardized test scores: An examination of leadership and climate as leading indicators of future success in the transformation of turnaround schools. *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, 9, 42-54.
- Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project (2013). Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project's three-year study. Seattle, WA: The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

- McConnell, A. E., Little, K. S., & Martin, J. E. (2015). Transition planning and writing instruction: the effects of a brief intervention. *British Journal Of Special Education, 42*(1), 87-111. doi:10.1111/1467-8578.12071
- McGuinn, P. (2016). From No Child Left behind to the Every Student Succeeds Act: Federalism and the Education Legacy of the Obama Administration. *Publius: The Journal Of Federalism, 46*(3), 392-415. doi:10.1093/publius/pjw014
- McGuinn, P. (2012). *The State of Teacher Evaluation Reform State Education Agency Capacity and the Implementation of New Teacher-Evaluation Systems* (Rep.). Retrieved June 2, 2017, from Center for American Progress website:  
[http://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/researchreport/1495\\_mcguinnthestateofevaluation-final.pdf](http://www.cpre.org/sites/default/files/researchreport/1495_mcguinnthestateofevaluation-final.pdf)
- MetLife. (2012). The MetLife survey of the American teacher: Teachers, parents, and the economy. New York: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.
- Minarechová, M. (2012). Negative impacts of high-stakes testing. *Journal of Pedagogy/ Pedagogický Casopis, 3*(1), 82-100. doi:10.2478/v10159-012-0004-x
- Morgan, H. (2016). Relying on high-stakes standardized tests to evaluate schools and teachers: A bad idea. *Clearing House: A Journal Of Educational Strategies, Issues And Ideas, 89*(2), 67-72.
- Mueller, R. W., & Colley, L. M. (2015). An evaluation of the impact of end-of-course exams and ACT-QualityCore on U.S. history instruction in a Kentucky high school. *Journal Of Social Studies Research, 39*(2), 95-106. doi:10.1016/j.jssr.2014.07.002

- National Education Association. (2013). NEA president says MetLife Survey of the American Teacher results should be a wake-up call. Retrieved from <http://www.nea.org/home/54576.htm>
- Nehring, J. & Szczesiul, S. (2015). Redefining high performance in Northern Ireland: Deeper learning and twenty-first century skills meet high stakes accountability. *Journal of Educational Change*, 16(3), 327-348.
- Nelson, H. (2012). *Teaching more, teaching less: What America's obsession with testing costs in money and lost instructional time*. Washington, DC: American Federation of Teachers.
- Nelson, L. P., McMahan, S. K., & Torres, T. (2012). The impact of a junior high school community intervention project: Moving beyond the testing juggernaut and into a community of creative learners. *School Community Journal*, 22(1), 125-144.
- Nichols, S., Glass, G., & Berliner, D. (2012). High-stakes testing and student achievement: Updated analyses with NAEP data. *Education policy analysis archives*, 20, 20. doi:10.14507/epaa.v20n20.2012
- Ohmstede Beckman, T., Messersmith, K., Shepard, J., & Cates, B. (2012). Ethnicity, language and poverty predicting scores on the Nebraska state accountability reading test. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach/Tarptautinis Psichologijos Zurnalas: Biopsichosocialinis Poziuris*, (11), 31-47.
- Olivant, K. F. (2015). "I am not a format": Teachers' experiences with fostering creativity in the era of accountability. *Journal Of Research In Childhood Education*, 29(1), 115-129.
- Onosko, J. (2011). Race to the top leaves children and future citizens behind: The devastating effects of centralization, standardization, and high stakes accountability. *Democracy & Education*, 19(2).

- Pease-Alvarez, L., & Thompson, A. (2014). Teachers working together to resist and remake educational policy in contexts of standardization. *Language Policy, 13*(2), 165-181.  
doi:10.1007/s10993-013-9313-8
- Peterson, P. E. (2016). The end of the Bush-Obama regulatory approach to school reform. *Education Next, 16*(3), 23-32.
- Phelps, R. P. (2015). Teach to the test? most of the problems with testing have one surprising source: Cheating by school administrators and teachers. *The Wilson Quarterly, 35*(4), 38+.
- Pinder, P. J. (2013). Exploring and understanding Maryland's math and science teachers' perspectives on NCLB and increase testing: Employing a phenomenological inquiry approach. *Education, 133*(3), 298.
- Popham, W. J., & DeSander, M. (2014). Will the courts save teachers?. *Educational Leadership, 71*(5), 55.
- Pucella, T. J. (2014). Not too young to lead. *Clearing House, 87*(1), 15.  
doi:10.1080/00098655.2013.818524
- Rainwater, K. A. (2016, April 27, 2016). Tennessee cancels TNReady testing for grades 3-8, ends contract with test vendor, online newspaper article. *Times Free Press*, p. 1.
- Ravitch, D. (2010). *The death and life of the great american school system: How testing and choice are undermining education*. New York: Basic Books.
- Ravitch, D., Marchant, G. J., & David, K. A. (2014). The leader of the resistance: An interview with Diane Ravitch (Vol. 49, pp. 166-174): Routledge.

- Riordan, J., Lacireno-Paquet, N., Shakman, K., & Bocala, C. (2016). Redesigning teacher evaluation: Lessons learned from a pilot implementation in New Hampshire. *Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness*
- Rutkowski, D., & Wild, J. (2015). Stakes matter: Student motivation and the validity of student assessments for teacher evaluation. *Educational Assessment, 20*(3), 165-179.
- Santoro, D. A. (2011). Good teaching in difficult times: Demoralization in the pursuit of good work. *American Journal of Education, 118*(1), 1-23.
- Sass, D. A., Flores, B. B., Claeys, L., & Pérez, B. (2012). Identifying personal and contextual factors that contribute to attrition rates for Texas public school teachers. *Education Policy Analysis Archives, 20*(15), 1-25.
- Segool, N. K., Carlson, J. S., Goforth, A. N., von der Embse, N. & Barterian, J. A. (2013). Heightened test anxiety among young children: Elementary school students' anxious responses to high-stakes testing. *Psychology in Schools, 50*(5), 489-499. doi: 10.1002/pits.21689.
- Schleicher, A. (2015). *PISA: Results in focus*. Retrieved from <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf>
- Shindler, J., Jones, A., Williams, A. D., Taylor, C., & Cardenas, H. (2016). The school climate-student achievement connection: If we want achievement gains, we need to begin by improving the climate. *Journal of School Administration Research and Development, 1*(1), 9-16.
- Shirol, S. (2014). Motivational factors and teachers' job attitude with respect to Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory. *Techno Learn, 4*(1), 1-5.

- Sirotnik, K. A. (2004). Accountability for promoting democracy. *School Administrator*, 61(5), 22-25.
- Smith E. & Douglas G. (2017). Special educational needs, disability and school accountability: An international perspective. In J. Allen & A. J. Artiles (Ed.), *World yearbook of education 2017: Assessment inequalities* (pp. 32-46). Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Steinbrecher, T. D., Fix, R., Mahal, S. A., Serna, L., & McKeown, D. (2015). All you need is patience and flexibility: Administrators' perspectives on special educator knowledge and skills. *Journal Of Special Education Leadership*, 28(2), 89-102.
- Sullivan County Schools. (n.d.a). *About SCDE*. Retrieved November 27, 2016, from <http://www.sullivank12.net/about-scde/>
- Sullivan County Schools. (n.d.b). *Ballotpedia*. Retrieved November 27, 2016, from [https://ballotpedia.org/Sullivan\\_County\\_Schools,\\_Tennessee](https://ballotpedia.org/Sullivan_County_Schools,_Tennessee)
- Sulzer, M. (2014). The common core state standards and the "basalisation" of youth. *English Teaching*, 13(1), 134-n/a.
- Stefanski, A. J. (2016). Here to stay: A teacher's 46-year journey with accountability in one school context. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 28(2), 128-147.
- Stewart, C., & Varner, L. (2012). Common core and the rural student. *National Teacher Education Journal*, 5(4), 67-73.
- Stumbo, C., & McWalters, P. (2011). Measuring effectiveness: What will it take? *Educational Leadership*, 68(4), 10-15.
- Taylor, E. S. & Tyler, J. H. (2012). The effect of evaluation on teacher performance. *American Economic Review*, 102, 3628–3651.
- Tennessee Department of Education. (2012). *Teacher evaluation in Tennessee: A report on year 1 implementation*.

- Tennessee Department of Education. (2014). *Annual joint report on pre-kindergarten through higher education in Tennessee*. Retrieved from [https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/LM2014\\_Joint%20Report%20Pre-K-Higher%20Ed%202014.pdf](https://www.tn.gov/assets/entities/thec/attachments/LM2014_Joint%20Report%20Pre-K-Higher%20Ed%202014.pdf)
- Tennessee Department of Education. (2015a). *District accountability*. Retrieved from <https://www.tn.gov/education/article/2015-district-accountability>
- Tennessee Department of Education, (2015a). *Tennessee task force on student testing and assessment*. Retrieved from [http://www.tennessee.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/tst\\_assessment\\_task\\_force\\_report.pdf](http://www.tennessee.gov/assets/entities/education/attachments/tst_assessment_task_force_report.pdf)
- Tennessee Department of Education. (2017). *TVAAS Reports*. Retrieved from <https://tvaas.sas.com/welcome.html?as=b&aj=b>
- Tennessee Department of Education. (n.d.). *Evaluation*. Retrieved from <http://team-tn.org/evaluation/>
- Thibodeaux, A. K., Labat, M. B., Lee, D. E., & Labat, C. A. (2015). The effects of leadership and high-stakes testing on teacher retention. *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal, 19*(1), 227-249.
- Thomas, T. R. (2014). *The use of EVAAS teacher reports in teacher evaluation: Teacher attitudes in ohio's public schools* (Order No. 3671627). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1647258477).
- Thompson, G. L., & Allen, T. G. (2012). Four effects of the high-stakes testing movement on African American k-12 Students. *The Journal of Negro Education, 81*(3), 218.  
doi:10.7709/jnegroeducation.81.3.0218

- Torres, A. (2012). 'Hello, goodbye': Exploring the phenomenon of leaving teaching early. *Journal Of Educational Change*, 13(1), 117-154. doi:10.1007/s10833-011-9172-z
- Treadwell, L. (2016). *Title I elementary teachers' perceptions of climate in low/high performing schools*
- United States Department of Education (n.d.). Every student succeeds act (ESSA). Retrieved July, 22, 2017, from <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>
- Using and Interpreting Tennessee's Value-Added Assessment System*. (n.d.). Retrieved December 01, 2016, from <http://www.shearonforschools.com/documents/TVAAS.HTML>
- Vesely, R. S. (2013). Ohio's at-risk student population: A decade of rising risk. *Educational Considerations*, 40(2), 21-26.
- von der Embse, N. P., Pendergast, L. L., Segool, N., Saeki, E., & Ryan, S. (2016). The influence of test-based accountability policies on school climate and teacher stress across four states. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 59, 492-502. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2016.07.013
- von der Embse, N. P., & Witmer, S. E. (2014). High-stakes accountability: Student anxiety and large-scale testing. *Journal Of Applied School Psychology*, 30(2), 132-156.
- Wang, M., & Degol, J. L. (2016). School climate: a review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review*, 28(2), 315-352.
- Warner, R. (2013). *Applied statistics: From bivariate through multivariate techniques*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oak, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Watson, C. E., Johanson, M., & Dankiw, J. (2014). Effects of High-Stakes Testing on Third through Fifth Grade Students: Student Voices and Concerns for Educational Leaders. *E Journal Of Organizational Learning & Leadership*, 12(1), 1-11.

- Welsh, M. E., Eastwood, M., & D'Agostino, J. V. (2014). Conceptualizing teaching to the test under standards-based reform. *Applied Measurement In Education, 27*(2), 98-114. doi: 10.1080/08957347.2014.880439
- Wexler, A. (2014). Reaching Higher? The impact of the common core state standards on the visual arts, poverty, and disabilities. *Arts Education Policy Review, 115*(2), 52-61.
- White, E. (1886). *The elements of pedagogy*. New York City, NY: American Book.
- Williams, J. H., & Engel, L. C. (2012). How do other countries evaluate teachers?. *Phi Delta Kappan, 94*(4), 53-57.
- Willis, C. (2011). High-stakes testing and the moral decisions of leaders. *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership, 14*(4), 47-53. doi: 10.1177/1555458911432967
- Wisneski, D. (2012). Issues in education: U.S. campaign to save our schools. *Childhood Education, 88*(2), 116-117.
- Xie, Q., & Andrews, S. (2013). Do test design and uses influence test preparation? Testing a model of washback with structural equation modeling. *Language Testing, 30*(1), 49-70.
- Xu, X., Grant, L. W., & Ward, T. J. (2016). Validation of a statewide teacher evaluation system. *NASSAP Bulletin, 100*(4), 203. doi:10.1177/0192636516683247
- Ydesen, C. (2014). High-stakes educational testing and democracy--Antagonistic or symbiotic relationship? *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, 9*(2), 97-113.

**APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

**Thomas, Trevor (Heath City Schools) <TTHOMAS@heath.k12.oh.us>****9/22/17**

to me

Hi Cheryl,

I had begun to worry! I am happy to give permission for Cheryl Buchanan to use and/or modify the survey from my dissertation for the purpose of conducting her dissertation study.

Secondly, I'm pasting the pilot narrative and table from my dissertation to see if that is helpful. Look at pages 99 – 103, that covers the pilot study with tables and you have the alpha score correct there. I would think you could also cite my final results as basis for using the survey since its already done.

I'm also attaching a word format of the dissertation. I didn't know if you would need to pull anything and this may make it easier. Please don't hesitate to ask me if I can be of any further help, I can't wait to see your final results!

Trevor

Trevor Thomas, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Heath City Schools  
[tthomas@heath.k12.oh.us](mailto:tthomas@heath.k12.oh.us)  
[\(740\) 788-3118](tel:(740)788-3118)

## APPENDIX B

**Solomon, Hadley** <[Hadley.Solomon@unh.edu](mailto:Hadley.Solomon@unh.edu)>  
to me

10/25/17

Cheryl,

I used to be Heather Dawson. Yes, you have permission to use the scale. Any scale that is published is free to use with proper citation—there's no need to ask for permission. If a scale is proprietary (i.e., requires a fee or permission) it will be very difficult to access without providing a credit card or something. :-)

Best of luck!

Hadley

---

Hadley J. Solomon, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor | Educational Psychology  
University of New Hampshire  
Morrill Hall [206C](#)  
62 College Road  
Durham, NH 03824  
[hadley.solomon@unh.edu](mailto:hadley.solomon@unh.edu)  
[www.drhadleysolomon.com](http://www.drhadleysolomon.com)

## APPENDIX C

**LIBERTY UNIVERSITY**  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

May 10, 2018

Cheryl Buchanan IRB Exemption 3257.051018: The Relationship Between Student Assessment, Teacher Evaluation, and Teacher Climate

Dear Cheryl Buchanan,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,

**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**

*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*

**The Graduate School**

*Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971*