

Teacher Leadership: Effects on Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention

by

Christopher W. Basich

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

in the

Educational Leadership Program

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

May, 2018

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Teacher Leadership: Effects on Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention

Christopher W. Basich

I hereby release this dissertation to the public. I understand that this dissertation will be made available from the OhioLINK ETD Center and the Maag Library Circulation Desk for public access. I also authorize the University or other individuals to make copies of this dissertation as needed for scholarly research.

Signature: _____
Christopher W. Basich, Student Date

Approvals

Dr. Jane Beese, Dissertation Chair Date

Dr. Charles Vergon, Committee Member Date

Dr. Patrick Spearman, Committee Member Date

Dr. Xin Liang, Committee Member Date

Dr. Sal Sanders, Dean of Graduate Studies Date

ABSTRACT

Teacher leadership may affect job satisfaction in positive ways, helping to retain teachers in the field of public education. Providing and facilitating these positions may enable school districts to improve upon the growing teacher retention crisis. Thus, this study explores the ways teacher leadership relates to job satisfaction. Semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document reviews are utilized to understand how teacher leadership roles relate to job satisfaction. This qualitative case study explores how four teacher leaders in one school district perceive their roles, responsibilities, and experiences. Each of the teacher leaders completed a formal Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program (TLEP) through an accredited university and are classroom teachers in addition to their leadership duties.

The gathered data indicate that the teacher leadership role does not stand alone in improving job satisfaction and retention. Instead, it is the interplay between the teacher leader role and the TLEP that improved job satisfaction and retention in the four teacher leaders studied. Additionally, teacher leaders showed increased levels of empowerment, confidence, self-efficacy, decision making, and autonomy by having a teacher leadership role in addition to TLEP training. The results of this study should encourage policymakers and educational leaders to not only support teacher leaders practices but also teacher leadership training through formal TLEP's.

Keywords: Teacher leadership, teacher retention, job satisfaction, distributed leadership

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Completing my Ed.D. program would not have happened if it weren't for the support of my family and committee members. Firstly, I'd like to thank my wife for encouraging my efforts with never ending love and support. Starting my doctoral work only a month after the birth of our daughter was surely a challenging task. Thank you for the countless times when you allowed me to sit and work so I could complete an assignment or paper. Thank you for being there when all I needed was someone to listen to how I was feeling. You were the best of friends through it all. I'd also like to thank my mother-in-law for watching my daughter Arya more times than I can remember so I could devote time to my doctoral studies. I'd also like to expressly thank my mom and dad for their support in helping me complete my Ed.D. program. My family was "all in" on my behalf, their actions filled with both love and support.

I am also extremely grateful for my dissertation chair, Dr. Jane Beese, for guiding and pushing me throughout my entire dissertation process. Thank you for helping me when my research study got delayed and I wasn't sure if I would graduate on time. Also, I appreciate you seeing potential in me and always pushing me to make my work better. Thank you also to my committee members Dr. Liang, Dr. Vergon, and Dr. Spearman for critiquing my work and making the final version a true expression of my academic potential. A special thanks to Dr. Liang for providing such meaningful and timely feedback on my dissertation. Your feedback always took my writing to new places that I didn't think were personally possible.

As you can see, it took a village to complete my Ed.D. degree. Throughout the process I felt like each of the people mentioned above were walking beside me, encouraging me and never accepting mediocre results. Thank you everyone for your

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

never ending support and I hope that I have made you proud because I am surely proud of my work.

Chris Basich

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT _____ iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS _____ iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS _____ vi

LIST OF TABLES _____ xiv

LIST OF FIGURES _____ xv

CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM AND JUSTIFICATION _____ 1

 Overview of the Issues _____ 1

 Statement of the Problem _____ 2

 Purpose of the Study _____ 3

 Research Design _____ 4

Research Questions 4

Research Questions for Teacher Leader Participants..... 5

 Significance of the Study _____ 5

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations 8

Definition of Terms 11

 Teacher retention, attrition, and migration 11

 Job satisfaction and motivation 12

 Teacher leadership..... 13

 Distributed leadership..... 14

 Self-efficacy..... 14

 Expected Outcomes _____ 15

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW _____ 16

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Introduction _____ 16

Theoretical Framework _____ 18

Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs..... 19

 Limitations of Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. 21

Frederick Herzberg’s Motivator-Hygiene Theory..... 21

Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics Model 22

Albert Bandura’s Self-Efficacy Theory 23

Teacher Efficacy Theory 24

 Extensions of teacher efficacy..... 24

 New definition of teacher efficacy. 25

Teacher Collective Efficacy..... 26

Conclusion..... 26

Review of Literature _____ 27

Teacher Retention, Attrition, and Migration 27

 Early-career teachers and retention..... 32

 Experienced teachers retention related to career advancement..... 35

 Teacher retention and administrative support. 37

 Teacher retention and student discipline issues. 39

 Teacher retention and teacher salaries. 40

 Teacher retention and career timing. 41

 Teacher retention and attrition in urban or high-need settings. 42

 Teacher retention and attrition in relation to burnout. 44

 Gender differences in teacher retention and attrition..... 45

 Minority teachers and retention and attrition. 46

 Subgroups and teacher retention and attrition. 47

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Mentoring and induction programs and retention and attrition.....	48
Teacher preparation programs and leadership development.....	49
Differences in teacher preparation programs.....	50
<i>Teacher Leadership.....</i>	52
Administrative support for teacher leadership.....	54
Distributed leadership and teacher leadership.....	55
Formal teacher leadership.....	58
Informal teacher leadership.....	59
Hybrid teacher leadership positions.....	61
Teacher leadership as a career advancement pathway.....	63
<i>Best Practices for Teacher Leadership.....</i>	64
Teacher leader model standards.....	65
Tennessee Teacher Leader Network.....	65
Denver Public Schools Teacher Leadership.....	66
<i>Teacher Leadership Endorsement Programs.....</i>	66
Kent State University Teacher Leader Endorsement.....	68
Cleveland State University Empowered Leaders.....	70
The Ohio State University Teacher Leader Endorsement.....	71
<i>Challenges of Teacher Leadership.....</i>	71
<i>Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction.....</i>	73
<i>Improving Job Satisfaction in Teachers.....</i>	73
Intrinsic motivators.....	75
Teacher self efficacy and teacher collective efficacy.....	77
SWPBIS implementation.....	78
Experienced mentors.....	81
Autonomy.....	82

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Conclusion _____ 84

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY _____ 88

Introduction _____ 88

***Research Purpose*..... 89**

 Research questions 90

***Types of Leadership Roles*..... 91**

 Formal leadership..... 91

 Informal leadership..... 91

Case Study Design _____ 92

***Types of Case Studies* 93**

***Rationale for Single-Case Design*..... 93**

Research Design _____ 95

***Sampling and Selection* 97**

 Sampling..... 98

 Sample size. 99

***Procedures*..... 99**

***Introduction of Data Sources* 106**

 Interviews. 107

 Observations. 107

 Document reviews..... 107

 Data storage. 108

***Validity*..... 108**

***Preparatory Research*..... 111**

***Trustworthiness*..... 111**

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Triangulation 112

Member checking 113

Audit trail 113

Ethics 114

Research stance 115

Data Analysis..... 119

 Narrative approach to data analysis 119

 Biographic approach to data analysis 122

Category and Coding Methods 122

 Interview coding 123

 Direct observation coding 124

 Document review coding 124

Limitations and Delimitations 126

Summary 126

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS _____ 128

Introduction _____ 128

Description of Sample _____ 128

Recruitment Process..... 129

Teacher Leader Endorsement Program (TLEP)..... 130

School District Background..... 131

Teacher Leaders 132

Teacher Leader Profiles _____ 133

Profile 1: Kelly..... 133

Profile 2: Kim 134

Profile 3: Ruby 135

<i>Profile 4: Sara</i>	135
Summary of the Results _____	136
<i>Making Sense of the Data</i>	136
<i>Interviews</i>	137
<i>Direct Observations</i>	138
<i>Document Reviews</i>	139
<i>Coding and Category Creation</i>	139
Audit trail.....	141
Member checking.....	141
Resulting Themes _____	143
<i>Theme 1: Teacher Leaders Feel Empowered</i>	143
<i>Theme 2: Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program Training Improves Self-</i> <i>Efficacy and Confidence</i>	147
<i>Theme 3: Teacher Leaders Experience Role Ambiguity</i>	148
<i>Theme 4: Positive Relationships with Building Administrators Lead to Increased</i> <i>Job Satisfaction</i>	150
<i>Theme 5: Leadership Style Differences Exist Between the Building and Upper</i> <i>Administration</i>	151
<i>Theme 6: Colleagues Can Be Frustrating</i>	154
<i>Theme 7: Teacher Leaders Are Satisfied and Plan to Stay</i>	156
<i>Theme 8: Teacher Leaders Experience the Same Everyday Challenges as Other</i> <i>Teachers</i>	157
Students.....	158
Colleagues.....	158
Administrators.....	159

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

High expectations..... 160

Safety..... 160

Theme 9: Teacher Leaders are Able to Make Decisions..... 161

Putting It All Together _____ 164

Conclusion _____ 169

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION _____ 172

Research Question Results _____ 173

***Research Question 1: How Do Teacher Leaders Describe Their Roles,
Responsibilities, and Experiences as Leaders in Their School Building?..... 173***

Roles..... 173

Responsibilities..... 175

Experiences..... 176

***Research Question 2: How Do Teacher Leaders Describe Their Involvement in the
Decision-Making Process?..... 179***

***Research Question 3: How Do Teacher Leadership Practices Influence Job
Satisfaction and Teacher Retention?..... 184***

Important Findings _____ 191

***Important Finding One: The Interplay Between The Teacher Leadership Role and
the Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program Training Improves Job Satisfaction
..... 191***

***Important Finding Two: Teachers May Need Training to Become Effective Leaders
..... 192***

Important Finding Three: Teacher Leadership Doesn't Have to be Formal..... 192

Important Finding Four: Administrators Can Make or Break the Job Satisfaction of Teachers..... 194

Important Finding Five: Teacher Leaders Aren’t Immune to Workplace Stress... 195

Limitations _____ 197

Implication of the Results for Practice _____ 198

Recommendations _____ 199

Recommendations for Administrators 199

Recommendations for Policy Makers 201

Recommendations for Future Research 203

Conclusion _____ 204

REFERENCES _____ 207

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: _____ 220

APPENDIX B: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE _____ 221

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT _____ 223

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW AND DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES 226

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION PROCEDURES _____ 228

APPENDIX F: LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT _____ 229

APPENDIX G: DIRECT OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENT REVIEW DATA
FORM _____ 230

APPENDIX H: IRB APPROVAL FORM _____ 231

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Themes and Research Questions _____	168
Table 2. Comparison of Important Findings With Existing Research on Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction _____	197

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Concept map connecting TLEP and teacher leadership role to job satisfaction. _____	165
Figure 2. Research question one concept map _____	178
Figure 3. Research question two concept map. _____	184
Figure 4. Research question three concept map. _____	190

CHAPTER I: THE PROBLEM AND JUSTIFICATION

Overview of the Issues

Although several initiatives have attempted to increase teacher job satisfaction in order to improve teacher attrition rates, research conducted by Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2008) and Ingersoll (2001) suggests that these efforts have not been able to halt the high turnover rates experienced in the education sector. Between 2008-09, 69.3% of teachers who left the teaching profession exited voluntarily for reasons other than retirement. It appears that job dissatisfaction, specifically relating to physical environment, administrative, and policy issues, remain the foremost reasons why teachers voluntarily exit the teaching profession (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Early-career teachers appear to be particularly vulnerable (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008; Fisher, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2014). In addition, experienced teachers who have an interest in school leadership may not desire administrative roles but see few options available to them that would allow for career advancement while remaining in the classroom (Danielson, 2006). This being true, many factors may influence teacher retainment including administrative support, classroom management abilities, autonomy, pay, student motivation, paperwork requirements, teacher preparation and pre-service experiences, curriculum, type of school environment, and experience level (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll et al., 2014; Mee & Haverback, 2014).

School districts, struggling to retain both early-career and experienced teachers are looking for answers to the growing retention problem that they face. Interestingly, in the field of education, the rise of distributed leadership models has created a renewed emphasis on formal and informal teacher leadership, which may help empower teachers, especially those with limited experience, so that they will continue to stay in the teaching

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

profession (Angelle, 2010). In addition, several universities in Ohio have introduced teacher leadership endorsement programs that aim to better prepare teachers to lead in their own district. These programs may also aid in retaining teachers by emphasizing important aspects of teaching outside of content knowledge, which is stressed during the teacher preparation process (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Mee & Haverback, 2014; Sass, Seal, & Martin, 2010). As teacher leadership shifts from administrative task completion to more collaborative work that aims to improve instruction, classroom management, and the use of data to drive instruction, teacher leadership is poised to make a real difference in both student and teacher outcomes (Danielson, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

It is likely that anyone in the field of education knows teachers who have left the field of teaching entirely. Although this may be true, certain groups appear to be more vulnerable to exit attrition. It has been shown that early-career teachers leave the classroom at higher levels than those with more experience (Boe et al., 2008). Boe et al. (2008) report that teachers have a 25.5% chance of leaving in their first three years, increasing each year until year six. Although reasons for leaving are varied, research suggests that one possible factor influencing teacher retention centers around teachers' pre-service preparation experiences, which appear to be widely varied and focused on content knowledge over pedagogical knowledge (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Mee & Haverback, 2014; Nolan & Palazzolo, 2011; Sass et al., 2010). Additionally, early-career teachers are not always offered leadership positions in their schools, as positions are absorbed by more experienced teachers instead. Teacher leadership increases teacher empowerment, involvement, and improves self-efficacy (Angelle, 2010; Hargreaves &

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Fink, 2006); therefore, it is worthwhile to explore how retention rates of early-career teachers may be affected by taking on leadership positions in their schools.

Additionally, experienced, middle-career teachers have historically been presented few options in terms of career advancement beyond accepting administrative positions. Some of these experienced teachers, having little interest in stepping into administrative roles, feel stagnant and even bored in the classroom as their desire to lead is stifled (Danielson, 2006). Presently there is a gap in the research showing how teacher leadership positions may improve job satisfaction leading to improved teacher retention (Margolis, 2008). This study aims to address this gap in the research. The research problem is to determine how teacher leadership positions influence teacher retention.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders and determine how their leadership experiences influence job satisfaction. The researcher focuses on emerging constructs in the literature surrounding teacher job satisfaction including autonomy, decision making, and administrative support. Although a true cause and effect relationship between teacher leadership and job satisfaction cannot be made with the case study research design used here, the results of the research study show that the teacher leaders who were studied did experience increased autonomy, decision making, and administrative support. Interviews, direct observation, and document review data help to uncover participants' differences in job satisfaction as it relates to their teacher leadership role. These results may encourage school districts to develop, support, and sustain teacher leadership practices.

Research Design

A descriptive, single-case, case study design was implemented for this study as the researcher studied a phenomenon and how it presented itself in a real-life, professional setting within one school district. A role-based data unit approach was employed as the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders were explored. Multiple sources of data were gathered from semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document reviews. These multiple sources of data improved the internal validity of the study by using a data triangulation process. Data was coded into emerging categories as it related to the responses given during the interview process, data gathered during the direct observation process, and evidence shown in the documents reviewed.

Research Questions

Three research questions were explored in this case study on how teacher leadership affects job satisfaction and teacher retention. The research questions were selected to determine if teacher leaders' roles, responsibilities, and experiences reflect changes in autonomy, decision making, and administrative support, as all are evidenced in the literature as key determinants of teacher job satisfaction (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert, Brown, Choi, & Thomas, 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Selecting research questions in this way assisted in adding internal validity to the study, considering the researcher was attempting to ask questions to explore the concepts evidenced in the literature. By analyzing data from semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document reviews, the researcher attempted to show that teacher leadership influences the job satisfaction of those accepting teacher leadership roles. Below are the research questions that were used in the study.

Research Questions for Teacher Leader Participants

1. How do teacher leaders describe their roles, responsibilities, and experiences as leaders in their school building?
2. How do teacher leaders describe their involvement in the decision making process?
3. How do teacher leadership practices influence job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Significance of the Study

Teacher retention is a problem that is well known even to those not directly involved in education. Attrition rates have changed significantly in the last 30 years, with levels increasing over 50% between the years of 1989 and 2005. Additionally, between 2008-09, 69.3% of teachers who left the teaching profession exited voluntarily for reasons other than retirement (Sutcher et al., 2016). Teacher job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, including student behavior, pay, administrative support, and school setting (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ng & Peter, 2010). Although teachers are often intrinsically motivated to improve student outcomes, financial incentives such as pay and benefits also heavily influence the job satisfaction of teachers (Hughes, 2012). Early research completed by Ingersoll (2001) corroborates the above research, showing that administrative support, student behavior, decision-making power, and pay have been shown to influence teacher retention in teachers. Age also appears to have an impact attrition in teachers, as a U-shaped curve is evident in the teaching population with both younger and older teachers showing a greater risk to exit attrition (Ingersoll, 2001). Many state and national efforts have been made to improve teacher retention; however, issues still remain. District leaders may be able to improve job satisfaction and teacher retention

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

rates by increasing levels of autonomy, decision making, and administrative support by creating, supporting, and sustaining teacher leadership practices.

Although teacher leadership and school improvement have been correlated by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), teacher leadership has also been shown to increase teacher empowerment, which leads to improved self-efficacy (Angelle, 2010). The topic of teacher leadership is of particular interest to me because I am presently operating in a hybrid teaching role, split between classroom teaching and instructional coaching. Prior to fulfilling this role, I was a content area department chair and, at present, still serve on the Building and District Leadership teams. Anecdotally, my experiences as a teacher leader have provided me with increased autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support, which have all increased my feelings of job satisfaction. Although it is hypothesized that teacher leadership positions will increase employee job autonomy, job satisfaction, and even self-efficacy, this area of research is limited because the construct of teacher leadership is difficult to operationalize.

This was expressly evidenced at a 2017 Ohio Department of Education Teacher Leader Workgroup meeting in which I was a participant. The workgroup was selected to help draft a model framework to be used by local school districts in the state of Ohio and was released to the public in November of 2017. Those selected for the group encompassed a wide breadth of educational roles, including classroom teachers, teacher leaders, principals, central office administrators, Ohio Education Association representatives, higher education representatives, and also those holding various administrative positions within the Ohio Department of Education. Stakeholders involved in this meeting were asked to operationalize the construct of teacher leadership, and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

based on the variety of examples from both practical and theoretical standpoints, it was concluded that the construct of teacher leadership was defined and practiced in a multitude of ways.

Researchers York-Barr and Duke (2004) corroborate this evidence, citing that the breadth of teacher leadership practices are wide, and that the studies completed offer only partial pictures due to the small sample sizes and reliance on convenient sampling. This being true, the Ohio Department of Education decided to use existing teacher leader model standards as a guide for the teacher leadership framework. Grounded in theory and empirical evidence, these model standards anchored the work completed by the workgroup (Teacher Leader Exploratory Consortium, 2011). As several universities in Ohio have implemented teacher leader endorsements, it is likely that in tandem with the Ohio Department of Education's model framework, teacher leader practices in the public school setting will increase in the state of Ohio.

A growing body of research (Aspen Institute, 2014; Danielson, 2006) supports the practice of informal leadership over formal leadership. Opting for a dispositional role that does not require a teacher to be elected or nominated to a position opens the door for many teachers to become leaders beyond their own classrooms. This may be specifically meaningful for early-career teachers, as it has been shown that they are not as likely to influence school decisions as they would like to (Nolan & Palazzolo, 2011). Given that early-career teachers are some of the most vulnerable in terms of teacher burnout and stress, which may affect teacher retention (Craig, 2014; Fisher, 2011), the widespread support for informal leadership positions may have the potential to help increase teacher retention in early year teachers.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In addition to retaining early-year teachers, teacher leadership may also help retain teachers who have been teaching for some time but are feeling a desire to lead beyond their own classrooms (Danielson, 2006). More-advanced teachers have historically been given only few options for career advancement beyond that of administrator (Danielson, 2006). Perhaps teacher leadership positions, either formal or informal, could keep advanced teachers in the classroom while also leading in other ways in their school building. Additionally, the teacher leadership endorsement programs that are beginning to emerge in the state of Ohio may also help teachers fill in any pedagogical gaps that may still be present from teacher preparation experiences (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Several benefits also exist for teacher leaders and school districts; this study explores how teachers may become better leaders through self-reflection of their professional efforts and by understanding their leadership strengths, weaknesses, and style. In addition, schools may benefit from this study as teacher leaders can better understand their role, which could in turn affect student outcomes in a positive way. Lastly, this study will increase the knowledge base in the field of teacher leadership primarily in relation to job satisfaction and teacher retention. Considering the low risk to participants and the importance of improving teacher job satisfaction and retention nationwide, this study is not only timely but an important entry point into a deeper exploration of the benefits of teacher leadership.

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assuming an epistemological perspective, the researcher holds the belief that through the semi-structured interview, direct observation, and a document review process, it is likely that the researcher and the participant mutually influence one another.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

As the researcher is presently serving in a teacher leadership role, a sense of comradery between researcher and participant had the potential to emerge, leading to a more robust two-way discussion about teacher leadership in actual practice. This was likely most evident during the semi-structured interview process, as the researcher followed a scripted set of interview questions but had the freedom to encourage the participant to elaborate or extend their response to gain a better understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders.

In addition to approaching the study from an epistemological perspective, a causal perspective may also have been evident as teacher leadership may improve job satisfaction, while those with high levels of job satisfaction may seek out teacher leadership opportunities. It is entirely possible that the participants being studied were drawn to teacher leadership due to higher levels of job satisfaction. This may be most evident in informal leaders, those who lead without formal title, as they are not bound by contract or the duties of an elected or appointed position, instead opting to lead by choice. By understanding both the epistemological and causal assumptions, the researcher attempted to have a better understanding of the phenomena being studied.

Based on the reviewed literature suggesting that autonomy, decision making, and administrative support all influence teacher job satisfaction, the researcher believes that the implementation of a teacher leadership model that allows teachers to have greater autonomy, increased decision making potential, and frequent interaction with administrators has the potential improve job satisfaction in teachers. These improvements in job satisfaction may have the potential to influence teacher attrition rates in favorable ways not only for teachers but also for districts who struggle to retain teachers. As

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

connections exist between the intrinsic factors reported by those taking on teacher leadership roles and job satisfaction (Jacobs, Gordon, & Solis, 2016), it is logical to conclude that teacher leaders will report higher levels of job satisfaction, which has the potential to help districts retain teachers.

As with any research study, limitations exist. Employing a qualitative, case-study approach for gathering data, participants in my study may not be indicative of teacher leaders in all districts, which could affect further extrapolation of the data collected. In addition, choosing to research teacher leaders operating in a suburban, socio-economically advantaged school district may differ from other districts. Fully acknowledging this as a delimitation, the researcher was personally interested in exploring teachers leaders who share similar workplace experiences to his own. Lastly, the small sample size used in the study may influence the generalizability of the data collected and analyzed. It is entirely possible that the four teacher leaders' roles, responsibilities, and experiences differ from others in similar formal or informal teacher leadership positions.

Teacher leadership has many definitions. Because the construct of teacher leadership within some school districts is lacking operationalization, using the term "teacher leader" may have different contexts depending on the person being researched. Coaching, bargaining, and union representative leadership positions will be excluded from the research study as the researcher determined that these leadership positions are non-academic in nature and do not clearly impact a school building in the same ways as formal and informal teacher leaders in areas such as curriculum and instruction, professional development, scheduling, course creation, departmental organization, etc.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Additionally, it is unclear how districts select teacher leaders; that is, if any formalized selection process is in place. Aligning with research conducted by Nolan and Palazzolo (2011), inexperienced teachers are not always offered leadership opportunities. If this is true, it will be challenging to connect teacher attrition and teacher leadership in terms of that population.

Although these limitations have potentially confounding effects on the outcome and further application of the study, teacher leadership research as related to job satisfaction and teacher retention appears to be limited in availability. Given the increase in teacher leadership preparation programs in states like Ohio and the development of new state models for teacher leadership, this research study will begin the conversation pertaining to the additional benefits of teacher leadership beyond that of student learning and achievement. Given the current teacher attrition issues affecting school districts nationwide, the implementation of teacher leadership programs may improve the autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support in teachers, which may improve the job satisfaction and retention rates of teachers.

Definition of Terms

Several key constructs were explored during this research study. The constructs of teacher leadership, distributed leadership, job satisfaction, and teacher retention were used throughout the research study and are clearly defined below. Although definitions of teacher leadership vary, every attempt was made to use a definition that included all of the salient qualities of both formal and informal teacher leadership roles.

Teacher retention, attrition, and migration. Teacher retention and teacher attrition are two constructs that are used throughout the study. The important delineation is that teacher retention is largely discussed in terms of keeping teachers on the job, while

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teacher attrition reflects the numbers of teachers leaving the profession. In addition, teacher migration is sometimes lumped into teacher retention statistical analyses but was used in this study to describe teachers who left their current teaching position to take on a new teaching position elsewhere. Early retention research conducted by Kirby and Grissmer (1993) shows that teacher retention has been a confounding issue for some time. Kirby and Grissmer (1993) report that the adequacy of teacher pay and overall working conditions are predictors of teacher retention. It also appears that when compared to Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory, both extrinsic and intrinsic factors influence job satisfaction, which ultimately affects teacher retention (Herzberg, 1968). This evidence has been supported by later research showing that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors influence teacher retention (Battle & Looney, 2012).

Job satisfaction and motivation. Job satisfaction is a construct that is fairly simple to define but difficult to analyze, given the complex nature of the workplace. Job satisfaction definitions vary, but Kalleberg (1977) offers that job satisfaction is "a result of a personal value system which assumes that work which enables satisfaction of one's needs furthers the dignity of the human individual, whereas work without these characteristics limits the development of personal potential and is, therefore, to be negatively valued" (p. 124). As evidenced by Herzberg's (1968) motivator-hygiene theory, job satisfaction can be affected by extrinsic motivators such as pay and recognition but also affected by factors such as job security, work conditions, and even colleague interactions. Theorists Hackman and Oldham (1975) add that job satisfaction is most positively affected by a work environment that intrinsically motivates workers. For the purpose of this study, job satisfaction will be defined simply as one's enjoyment of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

the workplace environment, relationships with colleagues and administrators, and belief that their work is meaningful.

Interestingly, modern day author and thinker Dan Pink asserts that the “carrots and sticks” that once seemed to motivate the workforce no longer work effectively in the conceptual age (Pink, 2009). Pink encourages a shift away from the hierarchical model of leadership and advocates for employee engagement and autonomy while on the job. One can easily apply Pink’s ideas to the educational setting as teachers may find it challenging to motivate students. Some of this disconnect may lead teachers to feel helpless in the face of increased behavior issues and difficulties with classroom management (Mee & Haverback, 2014).

Teacher leadership. York-Barr and Duke (2004) offer a widely accepted definition of teacher leadership, “the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of the school community to improve teaching and learning practices with the aim of increased student learning and achievement” (p. 287). Additionally, Vernon-Dotson and Floyd (2012) define teacher leadership as “the ability of professionals to forge a sense of community and share a commitment for increasing student achievement, engaging the faculty and staff, and enhancing the school climate with an overarching goal of building a capacity for change” (p. 40). Using these two definitions as a guide, one can see the connection between the tasks and skills teacher leaders must possess in order to influence student learning and achievement. For this study, the researcher used the definition provided by York-Barr and Duke (2004) because it encompasses the spirit of both formal and informal leadership types.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In addition, it is important to highlight the importance York-Barr and Duke (2004) place on the collaborative and collegial manner in which teachers and principals must work together to improve student learning. These practices can only be present in an environment where school leaders distribute leadership among their staff members. Principals must invest in their teachers (Hoppey & McLeskey, 2013; Maxfield & Flumerfelt, 2009), supporting efforts to lead both formally and informally. As teacher leadership has shifted away from merely administrative work (Aspen Institute, 2014), principals must also be able to support teachers in the areas of teaching and learning as their choices indirectly affect classroom practices (Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Supovitz, Sirinides, & May, 2010).

Distributed leadership. A natural outcropping of the rising support for distributed leadership practices, teacher leadership positions provide teachers with more opportunities to lead, which has been tied with school improvement (DeAngelis, 2013; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Louis, Dretzke, and Wahlstrom (2010) suggest that an emphasis on shared leadership supports the efforts to increase instructional capacity and has the ability to positively influence student learning. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001), began the work of creating a framework for distributed leadership, with the intent of showing how changes in leadership practices can transform teaching and learning. The researchers' theory was primarily focused on the ways that informal and formal teacher leaders are influenced by a distribution of tasks that were historically the territory of building and central office leaders.

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy research can be dated back to the work done by Albert Bandura particularly in relation to social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977). Bandura

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

(1994) reports that “perceived self-efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave” (p. 2). Bandura’s definition of self-efficacy would entertain later derivations, including teacher efficacy and more recently, teacher collective efficacy. All three variations of self-efficacy are further reviewed in the theoretical framework section of this paper.

Expected Outcomes

As school districts attempt to recruit and retain excellent teachers, the implementation of teacher leadership programs may be able to help keep teachers in the classroom where they are most valuable. Teacher leadership roles may help improve job satisfaction by increasing autonomy, building leadership skills, and influencing building policy decisions. Teacher leadership practices are also a viable way to help improve student learning and engagement (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). As such, it appears that teacher leadership practices may help to increase both student and teacher outcomes.

Through the best practices modeled in the Teacher Leader Model Standards and presence of several teacher leader licensure options, teacher leadership is being supported not only by research but by actual practice (Denver Public Schools, 2017; Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011; Tennessee Teacher Leader Network, 2015). Through the in-depth interview, observation, and document review analysis carried forth in this study, the researcher hopes that the results gathered will help individuals, districts, and educational policy makers to understand teacher leadership roles may help improve teachers’ job satisfaction and retention levels.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Foundational research conducted by Kirby and Grissmer (1993) shows that teacher retention has been a challenging issue for both teachers and school districts alike. Although many believe that the majority of teachers leave the profession due to retirement, the evidence suggests that a significant number of teachers leave prior to retirement, many of them dissatisfied with their jobs (Sutcher et al., 2016). Teacher turnover has been found to create challenging financial situations for school districts, due to the sometimes labor-intensive process of recruiting and hiring new teachers, in addition to the training necessary to bring new hires up to speed in their new districts (Sass et al., 2010). School districts, struggling with recruiting and hiring effective teachers, need to better understand why teachers leave.

Kirby and Grissmer (1993) report that the adequacy of teacher pay and overall working conditions are predictors of teacher retention. As both intrinsic and extrinsic factors have been shown to influence job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1968), the assumption was made that teacher attrition is influenced by job satisfaction. It is reasonable to conclude that a teacher who leaves the teaching field is likely to be dissatisfied enough with their job that they leave the profession entirely. Luckily, teachers and school districts are not without answers. Several factors have been shown to increase job satisfaction in teachers, including increased autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Hargreaves & Fink 2006). Considering that many of these factors are experienced by those operating in formal or informal teacher leadership roles, perhaps school districts can better retain teachers by supporting teacher leadership practices.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Although operationalized in many different ways, teacher leadership practices, whether they are formal or informal, may provide teachers with the autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support to stay engaged in their professions long term while also providing school districts with ways to retain teachers, lessening the financial and training costs associated with teacher turnover. Although some teacher leaders have formal titles, others are leading informally, in ways that Danielson (2006) suggests are integral to school and student improvement. Danielson (2006) argues that teacher leaders don't always need to be formally selected, given that they may have an interest in making improvements or meeting a specific need of the school. This type of teacher leadership can allow teachers to influence those in their school buildings without requiring directives from administrators (Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore, & Geist, 2011). Clearly a deviation from the top-down, hierarchical leadership model can shift teachers' roles from being passive receivers of information to more active participants in the day-to-day operations of their school building (Taylor et al., 2011).

As can be expected, teacher leaders must possess a wide variety of skills and perhaps most important, experience. Nolan and Palazzolo (2011) report that teacher leadership has three defining elements: expertise, mentoring skills, and experience. Each of these elements require teachers to hone and refine their skills, drawing from the everyday experience of teaching. As expected, these attributes of teacher leadership can be more difficult to gain in the early year of teaching. This expectation supports the belief that teacher leadership must be taught as a part of teacher preparation programs so that young teachers are prepared not only to understand their area of content, but also know how to lead beyond that classroom as well (Nolan & Palazzolo, 2011).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Interestingly, many teacher education programs, especially in math and science, fail to prepare their teachers to be leaders, instead focusing more on building content knowledge capacity (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Due to these possible deficiencies in their training, teachers may fail to take on leadership roles because they don't possess the skills to effectively lead. Considering teacher leadership has been shown to increase autonomy, improve decision-making power, and increase the support from administrators, teacher preparation programs may be failing to prepare the next generation of teachers in the area of leadership. These deficiencies can cause certain groups of teachers, in particular early-career teachers, to experience higher levels of stress that may contribute to burnout (Fisher, 2011). Interestingly, many of these deficiencies could be addressed by supporting teacher leadership practices in school districts nationwide.

Theoretical Framework

Employee job satisfaction is a construct that both employees and supervisors have discussed for some time. Beginning with theories by humanistic thinkers such as Maslow (1943) to more contemporary researchers like Tschannen-Moran (1998), most would agree that employee job satisfaction has the potential to lead to increased worker productivity, and in the world of education, teacher retention. In the following theoretical framework, key theories pertaining to job satisfaction will be explored including Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory, and Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, in addition to more modern theories developed by Bandura and Tschannen-Moran that relate to self efficacy.

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theoretical model that shows a framework for overall life satisfaction. Constructed in a pyramidal shape with five increasing levels, Maslow's model can be conceptualized as rungs on a ladder, with first steps being crucial to reaching any subsequent rungs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs roots itself in physiological needs and is then followed by safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and concludes with self-actualization. Maslow suggests that needs of the lowest levels must be met before any subsequent needs can be met (Maslow, 1943).

According to Maslow (1943), physiological needs such as food, shelter, and water encompass the lowest level on the ladder. Maslow argues that these needs are integral for survival and, although primitive in nature, are the requisite building blocks for further satisfaction levels. Using Maslow's model in the practical sense, one could assume that financial compensation and access to healthcare would both satisfy the physiological needs that an employee would need to progress to Maslow's next level, safety. Safety needs, Maslow reports, are at the core of the human spirit. Arguing that humans are a safety-seeking mechanism, Maslow (1943) suggests that man could be considered to be in a constant state of safety seeking. Maslow's safety needs could easily be related to a workers' feeling of job security, which would then afford the means to satisfy the important physiological necessities that must be met for survival. Also worth acknowledging is the importance of overall safety while engaging in activities at the workplace.

Once these basic safety needs have been met, one may then climb up to the next rung on Maslow's ladder, belongingness and love. Maslow (1943) indicates that a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

human's desire for belongingness and love naturally occur only when safety and physiological needs are sufficiently satisfied. Concluding that a human will hunger for affection and even forget that, perhaps at one point in their life, love needs seemed insignificant compared to the desire to maintain physiological homeostasis (Maslow, 1943). In the workplace setting, one could postulate that building and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors could fulfill one's sense of belonging.

The penultimate rung on Maslow's ladder, esteem needs, places specific emphasis on the value and respect that a person gives themselves, which can then be affirmed by others within their social or workplace network (Maslow, 1943). Commenting that humans have a natural desire for reputation or prestige, Maslow (1943) reports that esteem needs lead to self-confidence and capability, which is supported by the work of Alfred Adler and would later be studied by Albert Bandura in relation to self efficacy, which will be explored later in this paper.

Lastly, Maslow (1943) discusses the last rung in the hierarchy of needs, self-actualization, a widely disputed idea that has been openly criticized by modern researchers for lack of clarity and empirical evidence. Regardless of these modern criticisms, Maslow's concept of self-actualization is a need that many people still arguably experience at some point in their lives. A person searching for self-fulfillment will develop a feeling of restlessness that can only be fulfilled by doing work that they are truly meant to do. Maslow (1943) might suggest for example that an athlete needs to compete, a musician must make music, or that a woodworker must create something with wood. Only then, Maslow suggests, will a person be fulfilled (Maslow, 1943).

Limitations of Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Although Maslow's theory is taught in introductory social science classes around the world, his work has limitations. Firstly, Maslow's empirical evidence of self-actualization was unclear as the term became difficult to operationalize. Another key criticism revolves around the human thought process and the limitations Maslow's theory has in explaining the way a person relates to each stage. Jerome (2013) suggests that, although somewhat flawed, Maslow's hierarchy is still a relevant theory that does have implications for organizational management and human relations. For example, organizations that focus on meeting physiological and safety needs will likely see improvements in performance. In addition, Jerome (2013) argues that if organizations focus on meeting the needs of their employees, the workers will in turn attempt to deliver the best service they can to the organization.

Frederick Herzberg's Motivator-Hygiene Theory

Building on theory established by Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg developed his own theory, motivator-hygiene theory, to attempt to define the relationship between worker job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Initially studying engineers and accountants, later research explored other groups as well. Arguing that separate factors influence satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and that they are not simply opposites of one another, Herzberg (1968) maintains that the opposite of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction is no satisfaction at all. The logic behind the theory, Herzberg (1968) explains, is that motivating factors like pay and benefits usually create satisfaction, while hygiene factors (or the lack of), such as work conditions and job security, can create dissatisfaction. Increased motivating factors improve satisfaction, increased hygiene factors can have a neutral response, and a decrease in hygiene factors usually leads to dissatisfaction.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory provides an in-depth assessment of a worker's experience while completing the daily tasks required of their job. Unlike Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, Herzberg's theory attempts to provide a more detailed assessment of a person's job experience. Ultimately employee satisfaction is leveraged on factors that are intrinsic to the work experience, such as improvements in work competency and recognition of contributing efforts (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). According to Herzberg (1968), a person may be both satisfied and dissatisfied with certain parts of their job, while other parts may be more neutral in terms of satisfaction. Although Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory is criticized by some for the inconsistency of replicated results when using slight variations in assessment instrumentation and methodology, the utility of Herzberg's theory is still apparent (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005).

Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model

Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham continued the research and discussion of job satisfaction by introducing the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), a foray into the intrinsic motivating elements of the work experience. Hackman and Oldham (1975) focus much of their research on defining how to intrinsically motivate people to perform effectively at their job. The researchers define three interlocking variables: core job dimensions, critical psychological states, and personal and work outcomes.

Surveying 658 employees working at 62 different jobs, the researchers conclude that the critical psychological states mediated the core job dimensions and the personal work outcomes. Hackman and Oldham (1975) were able to show that the core job dimensions improve the critical psychological states and ultimately lead to improved personal and work outcomes. Thus, it could be concluded that by improving the core job

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

dimensions, one would be able to increase job satisfaction by providing an improved work environment (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). This is important work because it shows a causal relationship between organizational decisions and personal and work outcomes. In the educational setting, adherents to distributed leadership and systems thinking practices are largely supporting the work done by Hackman and Oldham (1975).

Albert Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory

Stanford University professor and former APA president Albert Bandura began the intense discussion on the topic of self-efficacy, a belief that one can sufficiently accomplish a task (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's research makes the clear delineation between an outcome expectation and an efficacy expectation, the latter being the conviction that one has the skills to execute a necessary behavior (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy is arguably one of the most important traits that a successful educator must possess if they are going to feel like they can meet the demands of their profession. Bandura (1977) continues by reporting that people will avoid tasks that exceed their self-reported abilities and take on tasks that they feel match well with their skill sets.

Bandura (1977) suggests that those with higher self-efficacy will be more likely to persist with difficult tasks, while those with lower self-efficacy may be more likely to either avoid difficult tasks or give up entirely. This has implications for organizational management in that employers must recognize the actual and perceived ability levels of their workers if they want their organization to be most successful. Also, it may be deduced that by increasing the skills of workers, their sense of self-efficacy will likely rise, which may lead to improved job satisfaction.

Teacher Efficacy Theory

Later theorists would apply Bandura's work to the educational field, coining the term "teacher efficacy" as a key research construct. Research conducted by Armor et al. (1976) is the seminal work in this area, showing that reading gains in low-performing students were directly affected by key ideas pertaining to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy. According to Armor et al. (1976), factors include efficaciousness in teachers; the ability to individualize, modify, and adapt materials; and already possessing specific training in areas where students needed help. Out of this study, Bandura's self-efficacy became an important talking point in education, and the construct of teacher efficacy was born. Several contemporary researchers have commented on and adapted Bandura's work and also utilize the research conducted by Armor et al. (1976) to inspire revisions and extensions to the theory of self-efficacy.

Extensions of teacher efficacy. Research done by Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) offers some new directions for teacher efficacy. Arguing that self-efficacy is task-specific and therefore different from self-worth and self-concept, the researchers highlight the importance of the difference between Bandura's outcome-expectation and efficacy-expectation ideas. Perhaps more importantly however, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) discuss some possible limitations of efficacy reporting and the related outcomes. Arguing that efficacy is a self report of ability not a measure of ability, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) suggest that a person may overestimate or even underestimate their ability on a given task or skill. Adding to this problem, much of the data gathered on self-efficacy is self-reported data measured by a variety of quantitative and measurement instruments (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In the 1980's Gibson and Dembo created a survey instrument that aimed to assess the self-efficacy of teachers (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). At the time, this was one of the only instruments that gathered data relating to teaching efficacy. Building on prior work done by Armor et al. (1976), the researchers found that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy persisted with difficult tasks when compared to those with lower levels of self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). These findings corroborate the work completed by Bandura (1977), showing that self-efficacious people are more likely to challenge themselves and persist with difficult tasks despite hardship. Additionally, as reported in the RAND study by Armor et al. (1976), Gibson and Dembo were also able to show that teacher self-efficacy improved student achievement (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Other researchers, including Albert Bandura, would later amend and create their own teacher self-efficacy instruments.

New definition of teacher efficacy. Tschannen-Moran et al.(1998) offer one of the newest models of teacher self-efficacy, suggesting that an integration of multiple theories be implemented to effectively measure the construct. This new model shares some of the language of work completed by Bandura (1977) but adds two distinct elements that aim to address the limitations of previous assessments. Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) complement previous theories by adding two qualifying factors: analysis of teaching task and assessment of personal teaching competency. The researchers argue because the model requires a competency judgment call to be made based on the analysis of the task, a clearer picture of teacher efficacy can emerge. Furthermore, Tschannen-Moran et al.(1998) offer a new definition of teacher efficacy as “the teacher’s belief in his

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 233).

Teacher Collective Efficacy

Building on the work of Tschannen-Moran et al.(1998), Goddard et al. (2000) constructed an extension of teacher self-efficacy called teacher collective efficacy. Goddard et al. (2000) define teacher collective efficacy as “a construct measuring teachers’ beliefs about the collective (not individual) capability of a faculty to influence student achievement” (p. 486). Showing the importance of the efficacy of group members while working toward task completion, teacher collective efficacy deals more with the achievement, stress levels, and shared thoughts of groups (Goddard et al., 2000). The researchers suggest that the assessment of teacher collective efficacy may allow a greater understanding of how different schools attempt to improve student achievement. As evidenced by Armor et al. (1976), efficacious teacher beliefs did in fact improve student learning, but it was unclear how the collective teacher group influenced student achievement. The Goddard et al. (2000) research shows the strength of using teacher collective efficacy as a way to show student improvement through the behavior of others.

Conclusion

In the education profession, job satisfaction is affected by many factors, including student behavior, pay, administrative support, and school setting (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ng & Peter, 2010). Although many teachers are intrinsically motivated, extrinsic factors such as teacher pay and benefits also heavily influence the job satisfaction of teachers (Hughes, 2012). Districts would be wise to understand the synergistic nature of these intrinsic and extrinsic factors as multiple studies show each affecting the job satisfaction and retention in teachers (Jacobs et al., 2016; Margolis & Deuel, 2009). The

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

research indicates that teacher leadership may be able to increase job satisfaction and teacher retention by influencing teachers in both intrinsic and extrinsic ways. Therefore, teacher leadership may have the potential to retain teachers, impacting not only the teachers themselves but also the school districts who struggle to cover the costs of attrition both financially and organizationally.

Review of Literature

Teacher Retention, Attrition, and Migration

Teachers enter the field of education for a variety of reasons, many centering around the intrinsic desire to help students, availability of favorable working conditions and salary, and increased vacation time in comparison to other professions (Hughes, 2012). Although it is true that the above factors may help increase job satisfaction and retention levels in teachers, an alarming number of teachers are still leaving the field of education for a variety of reasons. The natural outcome of these actions is a shortage of teachers. Sutcher et al. (2016) suggest that much of the rhetoric surrounding teacher demand blames an aging teaching workforce for higher levels of exit attrition, although current research suggests otherwise. Even during historical periods of increased layoffs and increased opportunities for early retirement, the majority of teachers exit the teaching profession due to issues unrelated to retirement. For example in 2008-09, 69.3% of teachers who left the teaching profession exited voluntarily for reasons other than retirement (Sutcher et al., 2016). It appears that job dissatisfaction, specifically relating to physical environment, administrative, and policy issues, remains the foremost reason why teachers voluntarily exit the teaching profession. Although personal reasons such as pregnancy or child care have been shown to be strong drivers of attrition, job

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

dissatisfaction is still the primary factor relating to exit attrition in teachers (Sutcher et al., 2016).

To complement the work done by Sutcher et al. (2016), earlier research completed by Ingersoll (2001) shows that administrative support, student behavior issues, limited decision-making power, and low salaries also influence teacher retention. Age also appears to have an impact attrition in teachers, as a U-shaped curve is evident in the teaching population, with both younger and older teachers showing a greater risk to exit attrition (Ingersoll, 2001). As can be expected, those toward the far end of the age spectrum likely leave teaching due to retirement; however, the evidence is overwhelming that early-career teachers are particularly vulnerable to exit attrition (Boe et al., 2008; Fisher, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Through an in-depth analysis of Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) data from 1991-2001, authors Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2008) report a steady rise in teacher exit attrition. Although special education teacher data reports slightly higher than the general education population, between 1991-2001 both groups reported between a 5-8% attrition rate (Boe et al., 2008). In addition, compared to previous literature related to teacher retention, Boe et al. (2008) report that teachers in the first three years of teaching show some of the highest exit attrition rates. Although these exit attrition rates seem high, in comparison, both the non-business and healthcare sectors report higher rates than those of both special and general education (Boe et al., 2008).

It is worth clarifying that teacher attrition is different than teacher migration; the latter describes teachers who leave their school to begin teaching in another school. Teacher migration does not decrease the supply of teachers because those who leave to

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

work in other districts are still filling a spot previously unfilled in that district (Ingersoll, 2001). Although this may be true, it is estimated that teacher turnover costs thousands of dollars per teacher, whether they move to another school district or leave the profession altogether (Sass et al., 2010). Financially, even migration can provide challenges for school districts who are also burdened with a revolving door of those who leave and those who newly arrive, as the district is faced with the intensive training necessary to bring new hires up to speed and be prepared to work in their new school environment (Sass et al., 2010). Therefore, Ingersoll (2001) concludes that although teacher migration may not appear to affect school staffing efforts, it may affect the organizational aspects of a school, which in turn does affect the staffing of schools. Building on this point, it can be concluded that schools with high teacher retention problems also probably have high teacher recruitment problems as well (Ingersoll, 2001).

Teacher retention improvement efforts have focused on many different areas, including concerted efforts toward increasing the supply of teachers. Although efforts like these are worth pursuing, simply attempting to increase the supply of teachers unfortunately has not been shown to be an effective solution to this growing problem (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001). In Ohio, retirement changes have helped to retain teachers due to an increase in the years of service required for maximum retirement benefits (Zagorsky, Olsen, Hawley, & Gnagey, 2013). At the same time, the Ohio Department of Education has identified teachers who have accrued between five and twenty-seven years of teaching experience who are “job locked,” making their job prospects outside of education unfavorable combined with drastically reduced pension benefits if they were to leave early. As evidenced by the work of Ingersoll (2001) on

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teacher retention, efforts in areas such as administrative support, classroom management skill development, improved decision-making power, and salary increases may be better areas to focus improvement efforts rather than attempting to push more teachers into the profession or hold hostage the dissatisfied teachers who are presently working. As Ingersoll (2001) provides, it may be better to decrease demand rather than increase the supply of teachers.

Generally teacher attrition is viewed negatively, although it is normal, inevitable, and beneficial at times (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Some teachers leave to take on other education-related jobs, including those that provide them with a source of upward mobility. Additionally, some leave the teaching profession or move to another school for personal reasons such as pregnancy or to take care of a child. Who is leaving and why they leave often overshadows the strain that school districts undergo to replace those who leave, no matter the reason, in the areas of time and decreased instructional staff (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Some of these effects are direct while others are more indirect.

Although some teacher turnover may be beneficial to employees and school districts alike, it is no question that high teacher turnover is an issue that has substantial and sweeping implications (Sass et al., 2010). High teacher turnover rates rob experienced classroom teachers of professional development time and other teaching responsibilities if they are providing support for new teachers entering their school district (Sass et al., 2010). Given that new teachers are generally lacking in the areas of pedagogical practice and instructional methods, districts may struggle to meet these needs that should be addressed in pre-service and teacher preparation training (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Teacher shortages have also been linked to teacher attrition, with research suggesting that the main reason many districts struggle with teacher shortages is due to teacher attrition. Attrition rates have changed significantly in the last 30 years, with levels increasing over 50% between the years of 1989 and 2005 (Sutcher et al., 2016). Although many studies paint a dire picture of teacher retention, research conducted by Hughes (2012) shows that 83% of teachers in their study plan to finish out their careers in the classroom, while the 42% that plan to leave the classroom intend to pursue advancement within the field of education. Regardless of the statistics that show attrition numbers in teachers, Ingersoll (2001) found that most teachers left the teaching profession for similar reasons, including job dissatisfaction as they desired better jobs, better careers, and other opportunities outside of education. Salary issues, lack of administrative support, and student motivation issues also influence exit attrition. Dissatisfaction in those who migrated were related more to salary issues, administrative support, decision-making power, and student behavior problems (Ingersoll, 2001).

Ng and Peter (2010) indicate that teacher retention cannot be related to any one factor, as a variety of professional and personal forces affect a teacher's decision to leave the educational field. In support of these findings, Greenlee and Brown (2009) indicate that many factors affect recruiting and retaining teachers in challenging schools, including monetary incentives, working conditions, and behavioral qualities of the principal. Participants indicated that they would be more likely to stay teaching in challenging schools if their principal provided a shared vision while employing a school culture that is both positive and committed to educational excellence. What is evident is that the reasons for leaving are varied, and although most center around teachers leaving

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

for personal reasons, even more leave because they are dissatisfied with the job itself, to pursue what they feel will be a better job or career field (Ingersoll, 2001).

Early-career teachers and retention. As mentioned before, early-career teachers are not only vulnerable and arguably unprepared to lead in their schools, they are also facing a retention crisis that is alarming (Boe et al., 2008; Fisher, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2014). Early-career teachers have shown some of the highest rates of exit attrition when compared to those with more experience (Boe et al., 2008). Early-career teachers have been shown to be most vulnerable to exit attrition directly after the first year of teaching (Ingersoll et al., 2014). It is no surprise that teaching can be a stressful profession. Those new to teaching may reduce their stress levels by collaborating with peers, receiving appropriate professional development opportunities, and receiving mentorship services from more experienced teachers (Fisher, 2011). As can be expected, not all school districts may adequately or effectively provide these services to new teachers, which may increase their stress levels (Fisher, 2011). Additionally, early-career teachers may not have developed the skills necessary during their pre-service or teacher preparation experiences to navigate the challenges of the first few years of teaching (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Ingersoll et al. (2014) used extensive survey data to provide a deeper understanding of the experiences that early-career teachers received during their pre-service and teacher preparation programs. Results showed that the type of college attended, degree attained, and pathway to teaching were much less important than the actual experience early-career teachers had prior to teaching. The researchers indicate that increased pedagogical knowledge in addition to extensive practice with teaching and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teaching methods were strong predictors of early-career teachers' retention levels. Teachers who spent more time teaching, observing others' teaching practices, and receiving feedback on their own teaching were far more likely to continue to teach after their first year on the job than those with dissimilar experiences. Other important factors in early-career teacher retention are whether or not participants were trained in child psychology, learning theory, and adaptive instruction (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Worth noting are the wide variety of experiences early-career teachers receive prior to teaching. The researchers found that although some teachers had extensive training in teaching methods and other pedagogical practices, over 15% of teachers in their study received little to no training in these areas. Additionally, less than 10% of teachers in the study reported that they received comprehensive pedagogical training and teaching experience preparation. These results are important considering that teachers who are more prepared in these areas are much more likely to remain teaching (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Based on the pre-service and teacher preparation experiences received by the early-career teachers in this study, the researchers estimated that those with the lowest level of pedagogical and teaching experience prior to teaching had a 24.6% probability of exit attrition versus 9.8% for those with comprehensive training prior to classroom teaching (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

In studying novice teachers in the public school setting, Henry, Bastian, and Fortner (2011) attempted to uncover particular areas that relate to retention. The researchers were interested in finding to what extent early-career teachers improve with additional teaching experience and if the teachers leaving the teaching profession were more or less effective. Through the study of the participants in their research, they arrived

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

upon several key findings. The first finding is that teacher effectiveness for early-career teachers rises substantially between the first and second year of teaching. The researchers went so far as to name this phenomenon “the second year jump” (Henry et al., 2011, p. 275). Secondly, they report a flattening of improvements in effectiveness after the third year of teaching. The study also discovered that teachers who leave upon completion of their first year were shown to be less effective on standardized test scores than those who teach into their later years. Lastly, the study indicates that teachers who left before their fifth year of teaching were less effective and exhibited lower workplace performance than those who stayed into their fifth year. The results strongly support the fact that teachers who decide to leave teaching are less effective than those who remain in the classroom, which not only affects those they work with but the academic performance of students that they teach (Henry et al., 2011).

These results are interesting because they show how the experiences gathered during the first few years of teaching are arguably the most important, while at the same time showing that teachers with more experience see lower gains in effectiveness than those in their early years of teaching (Henry et al., 2011). Henry et al. (2011) conclude that attempts must be made to improve early-career teachers’ effectiveness as quickly as possible so as to promote increased student achievement. One could also conclude that a focus on early-career teachers’ development may also aid in teacher retention. The researchers also suggest that a greater focus must be made on improving the experience levels of early-career teachers instead of attempting to identify ineffective teachers with the intent of removing them from teaching (Henry et al., 2011).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Building on these findings, one can quite easily question if teachers leave because of their experience level of teaching, environment in which they work, or administrative support they have. Interestingly, the workplace environment doesn't have nearly the effect on teacher retention as do teachers' personal and professional characteristics (Dagli, 2012). It has been suggested, however, that teacher preparation programs may not be adequately preparing students in the areas of instructional pedagogy, classroom management, and leadership, which may be contributing to the alarming attrition of early-career teachers (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2014; Mee & Haverbeck, 2014).

Experienced teachers retention related to career advancement. Although teacher leadership positions are not new, career advancement for teachers often gravitate toward the pursuit of administrative positions (Taylor et al., 2011). As one would expect, administrators would likely see increases in decision-making power, the ability to influence other teachers, and the ability to begin and support initiatives. Interestingly, each of these motivators were evidenced by Hancock and Muller (2009), who surveyed 331 educators in a principal preparation program in the United States. In a top-down, hierarchical model of leadership, teachers may not be able to fulfill any of the above motivators; however, one can easily argue that a teacher leadership position operating in a distributed leadership environment would likely be able to influence their school building in these above areas. As Danielson (2006) suggests, some teachers want to continue to teach, while also influencing those with whom they work in greater ways.

Teachers are well equipped to be school leaders because they have a wide variety of school-based experiences from which to draw, depending on the task required, and also have experienced the unique socialization necessary to operate in a school

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

environment (Spillane & Anderson, 2014). Some may also have more extensive leadership experiences, having been a part of various leadership teams or school-based committees. To strengthen this point, Myung, Loeb, and Hornig (2011) show that teachers who had experience being a part of schoolwide leadership team were much more likely to be tapped for administrative roles than those who were not a part of these groups. The data gathered in this study indicate that out of 8,197 teachers with ten years of experience or less, only 9% were actually interested in becoming administrators. This percentage increases to 26%, however, if an existing school principal is actively encouraging a teacher to pursue administration (Myung et al., 2011). This robust survey sample strengthens the argument that not all teachers desire an administrative leadership position and that perhaps a greater focus on teacher leadership will keep more experienced teachers engaged and excited about their professions. Myung et al. (2011) do make a strong argument that the principal has a large influence on teachers entering administration, but the truth is that not all teachers are going to be tapped for an administrative position.

Citing evidence from the research completed by Stone-Johnson (2014) and the extensive teacher leadership work of Danielson (2006), districts would be wise to encourage and support experienced teachers to take on teacher leadership roles in their schools. This is especially important as many teachers see teacher leadership as a unique and powerful way to increase student learning not merely a stepping stone toward administration (Danielson, 2006). Doing so will likely engage a teacher who has the skills to lead beyond their classroom but just needs the support to do so.

Teacher retention and administrative support. It is no surprise that administrators have a tremendous amount of influence on those working in a school building. It is no longer a question that school climate begins with members of the administration. (Sass et al., 2010). Professional school leaders are called to support each teacher's needs, especially in the areas that directly impact them each day. Providing adequate resources, including teachers in the decision-making process, and offering professional development opportunities for teachers should be at the heart of a school leader's approach to leading a school. Even if school leaders are already doing many of these things, school districts should also commit to providing professional development for administrators so that they continue to develop innovative and supportive leadership skills. These approaches to leadership have been shown to increase teacher self efficacy, empowerment, and retention while decreasing stress and burnout (Sass et al., 2010).

Lack of support offered by administrators has been shown to increase job dissatisfaction in teachers (Sass et al., 2010). As teachers are often operating within the confines of their own classrooms, they may receive little instructional support from administrators, which may in turn lead to job dissatisfaction (Sass et al., 2010). Building a case for administrative support, a study by Margolis (2008) indicates that certain groups of teachers who are at a crossroads in their careers are heavily influenced by the support, or lack thereof, coming from their administrators. Perhaps they will be tapped for a future administrative role or, at worst, under-supported and left to fend for themselves.

Gonzalez, Stallone-Brown, and Slate (2008) completed a qualitative study examining eight teachers who decided to leave the teaching profession. Seven of the eight teachers indicated that administrative members were a main reason why they decided to leave.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Most of the participants in this study felt that administrators showed them disrespect, opting to put teachers down instead of pick them up (Gonzalez et al., 2008). This disrespect was often carried out publicly, even in front of students and parents. The research conducted by Greenlee and Brown (2009) echoes a need for a supportive environment to be facilitated by administration, not one that is divisive and demeaning.

Gonzalez et al. (2008) found that some of the participants in their study indicated that administrators “dumped” problem students into their classrooms, creating a less than desirable educational environment for both the teacher and other students. Building on this findings, Gardner (2010) also indicates that large class sizes with higher than typical levels of students with special needs led teachers in their study to report increased levels of job dissatisfaction. Additionally, participants indicated that administrators pressured teachers to act unethically in grading practices by encouraging them to change failing grades for students. Administrator demands were also a central theme in the research conducted by Craig (2014), as teachers decided to leave because they were unwilling to comply with difficult demands placed upon them. As one can imagine, an environment such as this would surely lead teachers to feel less empowered and more burned out.

Conversely, it appears that teachers are more likely to remain teaching in or take on a teaching job in high-need schools if school administrators provide a positive school culture (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Participants in their study rated a series of administrative-related efforts, indicating how strongly each would influence their desire to remain teaching in their present school or teach in a high-need school. As expected, support, developmental facilitation, integrity, delegation of authority, and shared decision making round out the top of the list. Showing the shifting nature of administrative

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

leadership, participants rated the managing of daily school operations as the least important factor influencing their desire to remain teaching in or taking on a high-need teaching position. It appears that teachers value administrative efforts that provide ways for them to thrive rather than simply be managed (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). These results are powerful considering the growing body of evidence supporting distributed leadership (Spillane, 2001; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

Although these results are encouraging, Greenlee and Brown (2009) share that the number of administrative leaders capable of effectively building the capacity of their teachers so as to improve student performance is unfortunately quite low. Summarily, it can be concluded that the type of leadership needed for high-need schools is clearly not adequately understood by school districts and the universities preparing the teachers and administrators. This bold statement is profound considering studies show that teacher attrition may be affected by the same lack of understanding and inadequate training coming from teacher preparation and pre-service programs (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Mee & Haverbeck, 2014).

Teacher retention and student discipline issues. One could easily argue that teachers with lower stress levels are likely to not only be more effective in the classroom but also increase student learning (Sass et al., 2010). Student discipline and misconduct issues adversely affect teachers' enjoyment of teaching and have been shown to negatively influence teacher retention, stress, and burnout (Gonzalez et al., 2008; Ingersoll, 2001; Klassen, 2010). A teacher's classroom management skills may have significant effects on stress levels they experience during the school day (Klassen, 2010). Considering that a satisfied workforce is more stable and motivated, student discipline

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

and misconduct is clearly an important issue (Klassen, 2010). Participants interviewed by Gonzalez et al. (2008) indicated that student discipline issues were central to their decision to leave the teaching profession. Teachers explained that extreme student issues such as suicide, pregnancy, and drug use made teaching difficult as students' chaotic personal lives often trumped the completion of school work. Building on the lack of administrative support evidenced above, Gonzalez et al. (2008) also indicate that participants felt that administrators were not doing enough to assist in disciplining students, a task that ultimately fell onto the shoulders of the teachers.

Teacher retention and teacher salaries. Teachers often choose to spend their careers working with students because they have an intrinsic desire to help students (Hughes, 2012). While this may be true, teachers still indicate that salary is an important factor to keep them satisfied with their jobs, ultimately keeping them working in the teaching profession (Berry, Petrin, Gravelle, & Farmer, 2012; Hahs-Vaughn & Scherff, 2008; Ingersoll, 2001). This fact is especially important for those working in high-need schools, who indicated that substantial increases in salary would either retain them in the school or encourage them to consider working in a high-need school in the first place. As urban school districts are facing teacher retention crises higher than other educational setting, one cannot underscore teacher pay enough as being an important motivator for teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2014).

Although many studies show that extrinsic factors such as teacher salary heavily influence teacher retention, studies also indicate that teachers are highly motivated intrinsically as well, with the two often working synergistically (Jacobs et al., 2016; Margolis & Deuel, 2009). Participants in the study completed by Gonzalez et al. (2008)

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

indicated that they felt their salaries were low compared to the amount of time they spent on teaching-related duties. In addition, teachers did not feel adequately compensated for higher education attainment and job duties during the school day such as lunch duty, bus duty, and recess. One teacher indicated that they were happy with their pay but qualified the statement by sharing that they had previously taught at a vocational school where the pay was generally quite low (Gonzalez et al., 2008).

Participants in a study completed by Margolis (2008) indicated that pay was a significant motivator to pursue an administrative position. One participant commented that he was already completing extra paid duties such as coaching and teaching Saturday school so he would be prepared for the demands of being an administrator. Interestingly, female participants were not as driven to pursue administrative positions for monetary reasons. Female participants also indicated that by accepting an administrative role their ability to be supportive confidantes for other teachers would be reduced (Margolis, 2008).

Teacher retention and career timing. Teachers naturally have different requirements depending on where they are in their careers. Evidence suggests that elements of teacher quality, such as higher years of experience and the completion of advanced degrees and certifications, indicate an increased likelihood of teachers staying in the same school (Dagli, 2012). Although this may be true, other groups are extremely vulnerable to exit attrition. In a study completed by Margolis (2008), participants indicated that those in the 4-6 year of experience range are vulnerable to attrition because of the licensure and certification renewal requirements. The costly and cumbersome requirements of perpetual recertification caused some participants to wonder if they were doing what they were meant to do with their careers. Participants in this study indicated

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

that teachers with 4-6 years of experience are neither early-career teachers nor veterans and therefore can be under-appreciated in their profession. Comparing teaching to the blacksmith trade, one male participant indicated that he was more of a journeyman than an apprentice or master blacksmith. Participants also indicated that their professional futures hinged on support from their administrative teams (Margolis, 2008). In addition, participants also indicated that burnout was extremely apparent among teachers in this experience range. It was suggested that teacher burnout may be attributed to a variety of factors including low pay, increased workplace requirements, and the failure to be recognized (Margolis, 2008).

Teacher retention and attrition in urban or high-need settings. Although the current research study attempts to uncover how teacher leaders in a suburban school are influenced by their roles, it is important to provide a thorough understanding of the job satisfaction and retention issues of both urban and rural settings as well. Arguably facing retention crises much greater than those in suburban districts, urban school districts face unique challenges that suburban school districts are often shielded from. Urban schools, high-poverty schools, and schools with high numbers of minority students experience teacher retention and migration rates much higher than low-poverty, low minority, and suburban schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

Building on the findings of Greenlee and Brown (2009), Craig (2014) summarizes that the modern educational crisis in the public school setting is difficult for young teachers, especially those working in urban settings. Indicating that most teachers in these schools are white and female, myriad challenges exist for these teachers, some of whom have been placed in schools with turnover rates as high as 85%. Craig (2014) completed a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

multi-year, longitudinal research study on one female teacher in an urban school district. Although only one teacher was intensively studied, a number of others are described throughout the research process. The most profound result of the study indicates that the least accomplished teachers in the school tend to remain teaching in the school while the most accomplished, including the primary research participant, eventually leave for a variety of similar reasons shared by early-career teachers around the country. Although state reforms and mandates may be well placed and honest attempts to improve school district performance, Craig (2014) indicates that when accomplished teachers leave urban school districts, neighboring school districts gain a competitive advantage, leaving behind teachers who are less effective, which relates to a host of student outcomes.

The study exposes the vulnerability of young teachers, who leave due to budgetary cuts sometimes, but also due to a refusal to give in to the demands of others (Craig, 2014). In addition to these struggles, Nolan and Palazzolo (2011) report that inexperienced teachers desire participation in school decision-making, but they are not provided with the opportunities as readily as they would like. It is possible that an inability to lead could lead to declines in job satisfaction and ultimately teacher retention. Other areas affecting the exit attrition of those in urban, high-poverty settings are salary, administrative support, student misbehavior, and an inability to be a main player in the decision-making process (Ingersoll, 2001).

Greenlee and Brown (2009) found that participants in their study had a variety of factors that impacted whether or not they remained in or chose to teach in a high-need school. Autonomy, adequate resources, professional development, and increased decision-making power all were listed as top priorities. As explained earlier, each of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

these priorities are generally cornerstone principles of effective teacher leadership. Extrinsicly, salary bonuses were also indicated as being important to participants, in particular performance pay, improved retirement benefits, and tuition reimbursement opportunities. It is worth noting that the highest-rated incentive to remain in or teach in a high-need school was improvements in salary. The researchers note that a yearly bonus worth 5-10% of their base salary appeared to be the strongest incentive to remain or teach in a high-need school (Greenlee & Brown, 2009).

Petty, Fitchett, and O'Connor (2012) found that the teachers in their study were motivated to continue teaching in a high-need school because they cared about their students, had strong administrative support, and a positive school environment. Interestingly, money was not one of the key factors that retained teachers in high-need schools. Participants cited that lack of administrative support, psychological burnout, and retirement or relocation were all important reasons for teachers to leave their high-need schools (Petty et al, 2012).

Teacher retention and attrition in relation to burnout. The relationship between workplace stressors and teacher burnout is affected by a variety of factors, many of which lead teachers to be disengaged during their work day, which in turn affects student achievement (Steinhardt, Smith Jagers, Faulk, & Gloria, 2011). This disengagement from work is due to the prolonged exposure to stressors that are both emotional and interpersonal in nature (Steinhardt et al., 2011). The stressors affecting teachers are well documented in the literature; however, Sass, et al.(2010) indicate that few theoretical models exist that attempt to predict teacher burnout and retention. As explored earlier, certain groups of teachers are more vulnerable to stress, burnout, and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

retention than others, with early-career teachers being most affected (Boe et al., 2008; Fisher, 2011, Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2014). As expected, experienced teachers were shown to have lower burnout scores than less experienced teachers; however, they showed higher levels of stress (Fisher, 2011).

Elevated stress levels aside, Hughes (2012) adds to this evidence by reporting that teachers with less than ten years of experience were less likely to plan to teach until retirement than those that had ten or more years of teaching experience. Research completed by Steinhardt et al. (2011) corroborates these findings and suggests that it may be related to the coping strategies of more experienced teachers, as they seem to be able to handle similar stress levels better than those with less experience in the sample population. Although interpersonal stressors may increase burnout levels in teachers, the participants in the study completed by Steinhardt, et al. (2011) appeared to be most affected by emotional exhaustion in terms of burnout levels. Worth noting is that emotional exhaustion was almost always precluded by chronic work stress and depression and seemed to be the factor that made teachers feel truly burned out. High school teachers in this study indicated higher levels of depressive symptoms than those teaching at middle and elementary school levels. These results aside, the researchers suggest some coping strategies for teachers such as stress prevention, stress growth, and other secondary interventions as ways to mitigate chronic work stress, depression, and burnout relating to the workplace (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

Gender differences in teacher retention and attrition. Many teacher retention, attrition, and migration studies have used women as the primary sample population (Craig, 2014; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Hughes, 2012; Steinhardt, 2011). Also using data

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

from the SASS to support the research, Dagle (2012) shows that teachers' personal and professional characteristics (including gender) are more related to teacher turnover than are student characteristics or perceived school and workplace climate. To support these findings, Klassen (2010) shows that females are more likely to experience job stress from student misbehavior and workload stress than males, which is consistent with the body of research that exists today. This study also shows that one of the strongest factors influencing teacher stress and burnout is student misconduct (Klassen, 2010).

Interestingly, female participants rated measured stress items higher than their male counterparts. These findings aside, female participants did not show lower levels of job satisfaction than male participants. Most surprising was the suggestion that teacher collective efficacy acted as a mediating factor that helped dampen the effect of job stress originating from student misbehavior. The researchers conclude the study by encouraging schools to support teacher collective efficacy efforts to build partnerships that will help manage the stress associated with student misbehavior (Klassen, 2010).

The importance of job stress cannot be understated as Klassen (2010) indicates that by increasing job satisfaction, the workforce will likely be more motivated and stable. Research completed by Steinhardt et al. (2011) also supports the notion that chronic work stress is directly related to depressive symptoms. Emotional exhaustion, however, seemed to be the main component that made teachers truly feel burned out from their teaching jobs (Steinhardt et al., 2011).

Minority teachers and retention and attrition. Although minority teachers may be more equipped than non-minority teachers to meet the important demands of urban or high-poverty school districts, minority teachers may choose to leave high-poverty school

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

districts to search out low-poverty settings instead (Ingersoll & May, 2011). White teachers are more likely to migrate to other districts due to increases in minority student enrollment, a factor that does not seem to affect minority teachers in the same way (Ingersoll & May, 2011). These types of moves stress school districts who spend efforts attempting to recruit minority teachers to teach in their urban, high-poverty schools (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Ingersoll and May (2011) show that minority teachers have a high degree of job transition as many move in, out, and between school districts on a regular basis. Minority teachers often leave their teaching positions because they are dissatisfied with a particular aspect of their present job or they seek a better job or career (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Ingersoll and May (2011) report that improving organizational conditions within a school are more likely to both recruit and retain minority teachers in urban schools.

Subgroups and teacher retention and attrition. Several specific groups within the educational system have been studied in relation to teacher retention and job stress. Pucella (2011) reports that National Board Certified teachers demonstrate significantly lower levels of burnout relating to emotional exhaustion. This may be due to a multitude of factors that a National Board Certified teacher may enjoy, such as increased leadership opportunities, elevated pay, and increased recognition. Pucella (2011) argues that because National Board Certified teachers experience less burnout compared to their non-certified peers, perhaps certification can assist in improving teacher retention rates.

Berry, Petrin, Gravelle, and Farmer (2012) indicate that although over 50% of the rural special education teachers in their study left the field of education due to retirement and personal reasons, 8% of teachers indicated that paperwork associated with special

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

education was a key factor affecting their retention. Additionally, 13% of teachers cited low teacher pay compared to other comparable districts as a key factor affecting teacher retention (Berry et al., 2012).

A study completed by Gardner (2010) with music teachers shows that teacher job satisfaction may be affected by large class sizes and inadequate support for students with special needs. In addition, secondary music teachers showed lower levels of job satisfaction, perhaps due to the planning activities required such as concert planning, transportation acquisition, and budgeting. It was concluded that music teachers' retention, turnover, and attrition rates are no different than teachers in other subject areas (Gardner, 2010). It is worth noting however that certain teacher aspects such as opinions and the perception of the workplace environment affect teacher retention, turnover, and attrition (Gardner, 2010).

Mentoring and induction programs and retention and attrition. Research completed by Margolis (2008) found that teachers in the 4-6 years range believe that taking on a mentoring position may reduce some of the negative stressors that may lead to attrition issues in teachers. Participants in this study communicated that teacher leadership roles that revolved around mentoring reignited some of the initial passion that was present at the start of their careers. Participants also found increased satisfaction levels from the work completed while mentoring. During their work as mentors they found that the building of professional relationships, in addition to the sharing of the materials, increased their enjoyment of teaching (Margolis, 2008).

Although these findings are encouraging, Hahs-Vaughn and Scherff (2008) maintain that mentoring and induction programs did not increase or decrease English

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teachers leaving the teaching profession. Interestingly, the only factor that did influence teachers in their study to leave the teaching profession was salary. These results differ from establish research that showed mentoring programs can be designed to help first-year teachers feel more prepared to teach students, improve teacher retention, and help to support quality teaching instruction (Kent, Feldman, & Hayes, 2009). Specifically, data collected after the implementation of the MTP mentoring program indicate that 89% of the teacher candidates planned to stay teaching in the school where they received mentorship (Kent et al., 2009). Additional research on mentoring by Shillingstad, McGlamery, Davis, and Gilles (2015) indicates that teacher leaders who act as mentors must focus on relationship building in order to build the trust necessary to help mentor other teachers effectively. The researchers suggest that mentors may not feel like leaders at the start, and that they may have to grow into the role and experiment as time goes on (Shillingstad et al., 2015).

Teacher preparation programs and leadership development. Although there is a widespread belief among modern educational researchers as to the importance of teacher preparation, there is a strong disagreement as to what appropriate teacher preparation looks like (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Several research studies stand in support of specific preparation practices, some revolving around extensive teaching practice and leadership development (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Sass, et al., 2010). Additionally, there is debate in education as to the importance of content knowledge in comparison to acquisition of teaching skills. This debate centers around the question of whether it is more important to be knowledgeable in the content that will be taught or the actual art of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teaching (Ingersoll et al., 2014). At present, these two opposing perspectives still exist and are supported at various teacher preparation institutions around the country.

It appears that the modern research evidence supports pedagogical practices over content knowledge acquisition (Ingersoll et al., 2014; Sass et al., 2010). The support of teacher leadership must begin in teacher preparation programs at the university level and continue forward as school districts provide the professional development necessary to foster leadership skills in teachers (Sass, et al., 2010). Research conducted by Ingersoll et al. (2014) shows that the education and teacher preparation experiences of new teachers is quite varied. Some subject areas such as math and science report that a greater emphasis is placed on content knowledge and less on pedagogical teacher preparation (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Interestingly, new math and science teachers show high attrition rates over other beginning subject area teachers (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2014). First-year teachers are less likely to exit teaching if they have taken more teaching methods and strategies courses than their counterparts (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Adding to these findings, Tamir (2009) shows that context-specific teacher education programs could be effective in helping with teacher retention issues.

Differences in teacher preparation programs. As it seems that teacher preparation experiences are quite varied between teachers, strategies to improve leadership and classroom management skills should arguably be at the heart of all teacher education programs. Although this seems rational, Ingersoll et al. (2014) conclude that both pre-service and teacher preparation experiences vary widely among early-career teachers. Results indicate that many teacher preparation programs focus more attention on building content knowledge instead of focusing on instructional practices, including

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

the actual practice of teaching itself. According to the data analyzed, early-career teachers are much more likely to experience retention issues when their pre-service and teacher preparation programs focus more heavily on building content knowledge (Ingersoll et al., 2014). This lack of pedagogical knowledge, in addition to a lack of teaching experience, can easily leave districts scrambling to properly develop early-career teachers in an effective manner (Sass et al., 2010).

The research is replete with suggestions for improving the experiences of teachers. One such strategy is the implementation of service learning opportunities for undergraduate students. Stewart (2012) reports that undergraduate students taking part in community-based, service-learning activities enjoy higher teacher self-efficacy scores in the areas of student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. It has been found that service learners were perhaps more prepared to teach, which in turn increases their efficacy. Additionally, service learners' physiological and emotional states were likely affected positively, which allowed them to approach teaching tasks with more confidence (Stewart, 2012).

Other positive results have been shared by Ronfeldt (2012), who found that teachers who completed their field placement in higher stay-ratio schools showed increased effectiveness and a greater likelihood to stay teaching in the New York City school system for the first five years of their career. Results of the study indicate that learning to teach in a high stay-ratio school helped insulate new teachers in terms of teacher retention even when they began their teaching career in low stay-ratio schools (Ronfeldt, 2012).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

To add to the research on the nature of teachers' pre-service experiences, Mee and Haverbeck (2014) gathered data via reflection assignments provided to participants in their study, finding that although most first-year middle-school teachers felt positively about their teacher preparation programs, many indicated thoughts of leaving the field of education mainly due to classroom management, curriculum, or student-related paperwork issues. There may be a disconnect between teacher preparation programs and leadership training. To this point, Nolan and Palazzolo (2011) suggest that teacher preparation programs should encourage teacher candidates to value teacher leadership in both formal and informal ways.

Teacher Leadership

York-Barr and Duke (2004) are credited as pioneers in the study of teacher leadership. Although previous literature existed on the topic, the researchers were the first to provide a holistic understanding of teacher leadership, using the evidence that previously existed on the topic, as well as reasons for the educational community to support teacher leadership practices. As indicated by York-Barr and Duke (2004), many studies exist in praise of teacher leadership practices, showing that teacher leadership can improve teacher participation in school related activities; improve skills relating to both teaching and learning; offer acknowledgement, rewards, and new opportunities for teachers; and improve the experiences of the students they work with.

Teacher leadership is a dynamic enterprise containing both interpersonal and intrapersonal elements revolving around four themes: fostering relationships, monitoring self, managing perceptions, and engaging purpose (Raffanti, 2008). To fulfill the role of teacher leader, teachers need to be able to have the authority to make choices, especially in the areas of classroom and school decision-making (Nolan & Palazzolo, 2011).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Lacking formal authority, teacher leaders can rely instead on peer-based relationship building to help establish and carry out informal authority measures (Raffanti, 2008). Raffanti (2008) indicates that if teacher leaders report that a high level of trust has been established, they can be more direct with their followers, especially if they are directed to act in an administrative manner or make an administrative-type decision.

As human relations skills are surely important for teacher leaders, a study completed by Roby (2012) found that teachers and teachers leaders' perceptions of each others' human relation skills were similar. Yet, other studies have shown that non-teacher leaders fail to understand the nature of a teacher leader's role (Kelley, 2011). This potential misunderstanding can have myriad implications. Although it is true that teachers can lead informally within their school buildings, administrative leaders must ultimately make the commitment to distribute leadership among their staff (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). It has been shown, however, that administrators may not be the only ones that can support the growth and practice of teacher leadership (Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore, & Geist, 2011). Perhaps the traditional, top-down hierarchical models can be replaced by with more cooperative models that will help teacher leaders to learn and develop (Taylor et al., 2011).

The desire to become a teacher leader may begin early in a teacher's career. Margolis (2008) spent time researching the intended career trajectories of teachers who had 4-6 years of teaching experience and found that many of these teachers were actively searching for ways to regenerate their careers as well as widen their spheres of influence. Arguing that the career trajectories of teachers are changing, Margolis (2008) suggests that districts may struggle to retain teachers in the early years of their career due to a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

desire for challenging experiences, opportunities to stay fresh in the classroom, and the ability to be recognized in a field where hard work may not always be visible. All but one of the participants in the above research study were actively seeking skills that would translate to new positions within the field of education. Interestingly, Margolis (2008) suggests that many school districts simply do not offer teachers challenging opportunities that will allow them to grow in a variety of educationally relevant ways.

Administrative support for teacher leadership. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) make many strong arguments supporting the important role that administrators play in the areas of school improvement, and argue that in order for schools to be successful they must operate effectively. Much research has been done on the role of administrative leadership in school improvement. Historically, many schools have adopted a top-down, hierarchical model of administrative leadership; however, research is now supporting the use of distributed leadership as an effective way for schools to improve while also providing staff members with more decision-making power (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). School principals, rallying around the instructional and shared leadership design, must allow teachers to be involved in making good instructional decisions (Seashore-Louis, 2010).

Interestingly, Vernon-Dotson and Floyd (2012) indicate that the assumption that teachers know how to lead and be an effective part of a leadership team may in fact be false. To address this possible deficiency, Angelle (2010) cites distributed leadership as a way that principals can support those that may not see themselves as leaders, helping them build their leadership skills over time. Teacher leaders may need to develop the skills necessary to successfully encourage administrators to support initiatives or changes

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

that they deem necessary (Taylor et al., 2011). Through this process, teachers need to learn how to plan and prepare collaboratively with other colleagues to help those initiatives become actualized (Taylor et al., 2011).

One key theme that has received much attention from researchers is the importance of the building principal in terms of leadership, support, and a commitment to instruction (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Maxfield & Flumerfelt, 2009; Marzano et al., 2005). Murphy and Smylie (2009) indicate that leadership work and administration are not only the responsibility of the administration; they are aspects of everyday teaching that all teachers need to understand. It has been shown by Maxfield and Flumerfelt (2009) that both principals and teacher leaders agree that administrative support is necessary for teacher leadership to be effective.

Administrative support also plays a key role in a teacher's decision to stay teaching at their specific school, as evidenced by a study completed by Ng and Peter (2010). Researchers Shaw and Newton (2014) also found a significant positive correlation between the level that teachers perceived their principal's servant leadership to be and their personal job satisfaction. Additionally, teachers' general intended retention and retention at their specific school was also significantly positively correlated to the teachers' perceived level of servant leadership of their principal. It can be concluded by these results that administrative leadership style, support, and commitment to instruction affects teachers and students in important ways that are related to teacher leadership, retention, and student achievement.

Distributed leadership and teacher leadership. Distributed leadership may be implemented in several ways, including collaborative distribution, collective distribution,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

and coordinated distribution (Marzano et al., 2005). Collaborative distribution can be used when a leader takes on the actions of another leader. For example, a principal may ask a department chair to lead a staff meeting. Collective distribution can be utilized when leaders are all working toward the same goal but are going about that process on their own. This type of leadership may happen when building leadership team members are asked to help develop a small professional development session for an in-service with the goal of sharing best practices happening throughout the school district. Lastly, coordinated distribution may be best used when leaders are all asked to accomplish a task that will lead toward a larger goal. This type of leadership may be present when district leaders are all tasked with creating a certain section of new policy for a school district, such as a new strategic plan, grading policy, or district-wide program (Marzano et al., 2005). As one can imagine, each type of distributed leadership has different applications, ultimately helping to achieve the goals of the group.

Gravitating away from a top-down hierarchical structure and toward more distributed leadership practices, participants in Maxfield and Flumerfelt's study also indicated that principals must empower others not simply protect their leadership status (Maxfield & Flumerfelt, 2009). Administrators, hard pressed for time to complete daily tasks, can be assisted by other leaders in the school building. These results have been strengthened by Louis, Mayrowetz, Murphy, and Smylie (2013) who found that a school district could be successful in employing distributed leadership practices by using already embedded time such as professional learning community time to develop teacher leaders. Through these efforts teacher leaders could be developed, increasing leadership in the building especially during difficult times.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Some school districts are creating teacher leadership programs to develop leadership skills among their existing teachers so that they engage in school and district leadership activities (Elfers & Plecki, 2016). Teachers in Elfers and Plecki's study describe new roles they were able to engage in such as instructional specialist, department chair, PLC facilitator, and professional development facilitators (Elfers & Plecki, 2016). The researchers found that teachers were able to improve their understanding of adult learning while also work more effectively with one another. Additionally, through the purposeful support of the administrative team, the teachers improved their ability to make decisions by incorporating a systems-level thinking model (Elfers & Plecki, 2016). Findings indicate that teachers appreciated the emphasis on distributive leadership, feeling that their input was valued among the organization. Interestingly, 85% of the 47 teachers surveyed indicated that they believed the teacher leadership program encouraged them to engage in new leadership opportunities, and most reported that they planned to continue as a classroom teacher instead of taking on more formal leadership roles (Elfers & Plecki, 2016).

One problem area that those participating in the program found was the amount of time that they were removed from their classrooms to accomplish leadership-related tasks. Principals who work in high-poverty schools indicated that they felt that removal from the classroom especially affected struggling students who rely heavily on their regular classroom teachers (Elfers & Plecki, 2016). Clearly, school districts must provide teachers with the right balance of teaching duties and leadership responsibilities so those who are relying on their work in the classroom and around the school district do not experience hardship.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Robinson, Lloyd, and Rowe (2008) report that the most positive impact principals can make in terms of student academic and nonacademic performance is to focus on teaching and learning, not just managerial roles. The meta-analysis shows that transformational leadership pales in comparison to instructional leadership in terms of student academic and nonacademic performance. Research completed by Supovitz, Sirinides, and May (2010) corroborates many previous studies on the effect of principals' influence on student learning. Results of their study indicate that principals affect student learning indirectly by influencing how teachers use instructional practices in the classroom. Interestingly, teachers also influenced other classroom teachers in similar ways by helping other teachers improve their classroom practices, which ultimately affected student outcomes (Supovitz et al., 2010). Interestingly, Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) found that although school improvement and student achievement are affected by trust between the principal and teaching staff, it wasn't as important as previously believed. To highlight this point, participants in this research study required less trust of their principals as the strength of their professional learning communities increased (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

Formal teacher leadership. Historically, formal teacher leadership has been present in many school districts, in the form of department chairs. Interestingly, little research exists related to the job responsibilities, attitudes, and teacher-to-teacher perceptions of both teacher leaders and department chairs (DeAngelis, 2013). Interview data collected by Feeney (2009) shows that department leaders took responsibility in their role and defined their position in a variety of terms, including but not limited to manager, mediator, and advocate. The department leaders' interviews illustrated some struggles,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

such as the leadership role creating more work for them, struggling to increase their own leadership capacity, collaborating with others, and finding time to focus on student learning (Feeney, 2009). Departmental leaders in this study saw their roles as largely managerial in nature. DeAngelis (2013) reports that department chairs differ in years of experience, age, and academic training compared to their peers. Department chairs are more likely to have over ten years of teaching experience, be over the age of 40, and have training specific to educational administration than their non-chair peers.

Teacher leadership has started to shift from administrative work to more collaborative, instructional-based work (Aspen Institute, 2014; Danielson, 2006). Formal teacher leadership roles may still fulfill the important work completed by department chairs, mentors, and master teachers, but informal leadership is beginning to emerge as a way that teachers can lead in areas that are of interest to them and address a need that they see as important (Danielson, 2006). As evidence, Remijan (2014) reports that hybrid teacher leader positions can be created to complement the unique talents and strengths of teachers. In this way, teachers will feel increased levels of motivation to complete school-related tasks because they are working in areas that play to their strengths.

Informal teacher leadership. Although teacher leadership is not a new concept, formal leadership positions have arguably been the most visible form of teacher leadership in schools. Positions such as department chair or mentor teacher help school districts run more smoothly and help teachers become partners in school improvement efforts (Danielson, 2006). Formal positions such as these are likely still needed in schools, but the truth is, teacher leadership doesn't always need to be formalized (Danielson, 2006). Informal teacher leaders do not gain any authority through the

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

assignment of a specific role or position but rather earn their authority as they work hand in hand with their colleagues and students (Danielson, 2006).

The Aspen Institute (2014) suggests that for meaningful and effective teacher leadership to take place, it may be necessary to revise how teacher leadership looks in the school setting. These differences are highlighted by several changes that aim to show a shift away from the formalization of teacher leadership (Aspen Institute, 2014; York-Barr & Duke, 2004). Differences in role, authority, time and compensation, selection and training, and form and function exist to show the transition of teacher leadership from a more administrative position to that of a collaborative one. Interestingly, much of the research on teacher leadership has focused on formal leadership, although informal leadership has become an increasingly popular way to provide leadership for schools, especially in the area of professional development (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

According to the Aspen Institute (2014), “old” teacher leadership has a greater emphasis on administrative task completion, with teacher leaders being instructed to complete certain tasks. Although leadership may be distributed by the administrative team, teacher leaders operating in these types of environments have little choice as to which school improvement tasks or initiatives will be completed. These formal positions are often appointed based on a seniority system and rarely include any formal training in the area of leadership. The focus of this type of teacher leadership rarely provides time for colleague improvement or instructional coaching.

“New” teacher leadership is more collaborative and regularly includes instructional coaching during release time provided during the school day. Teacher leaders in this system set meeting agendas and are provided with a significant amount of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

professional development in the area of leadership. In addition, teacher leaders are compensated for their increased efforts and decide on specific duties that will help drive school improvement. Teacher leaders are selected based on their areas of competency not seniority or the personal relationships they may have built (Aspen Institute, 2014). As one can clearly see, the two types of teacher leadership are quite varied, with the second fitting nicely into the work completed by Danielson (2006).

Hybrid teacher leadership positions. Although there are many types of teacher leadership positions, hybrid positions are starting to emerge as a blend between teacher leader and classroom instructor. According to Remijan (2014), a hybrid teacher would generally have a reduced teaching workload compared to a traditional classroom teacher and would complete non-teaching tasks or responsibilities during the remainder of their work day. Hybrid teachers may take on more traditional teacher leadership roles such as department chair or even athletic director. Depending on the arrangement of the hybrid teacher's schedule, they would likely teach some of the day while also fulfilling additional obligations that pertain to either their departments or other groups. Hybrid teachers may also complete teacher evaluations, maintain budgets, and help with the hiring process for new departmental members. Many of these responsibilities are more administrative in nature; however, hybrid teachers may also aid in the observation of classroom instruction and be contributing members of leadership groups such as building or district leadership teams (Remijan, 2014).

Remijan (2014) suggests that hybrid teaching positions are ideal for secondary school environments where they can be implemented by reducing the classroom workload of teachers without harming the organizational schedule or funding structures.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Organizational structures such as these will allow hybrid teachers the time to take on greater responsibilities, which can help to improve student learning and improve the educational organization (Remijan, 2014). Hybrid teaching positions increase teacher motivation because teachers are provided the autonomy to make decisions, while also improving their task identity and significance (Remijan, 2014).

Remijan (2014) and The Aspen Institute (2014) suggest that due to the wide variety of talents held by teacher leaders, roles should be unique to the individual, which provides hybrid teacher leaders the ability to utilize their specific strengths on a daily basis. They argue that by allowing hybrid teachers flexibility within their role, motivation levels will increase, which will likely increase student outcomes as well. By allowing hybrid teachers the ability to help craft their position, playing to their areas of strength and interest, Remijan (2014) believes that districts will be able to create a large contingent of teacher leaders who are highly motivated and excited to help inspire others to improve their teaching practices. Interestingly, the participants in the study who had the most unique positions showed the largest increases in motivation. In fact, the researcher noted that allowing teachers to create their own unique hybrid position was an extremely motivating task. In addition, participants in the study indicated that hybrid teaching positions inspired them to take on more challenging tasks than they would have if they had been just a classroom teacher (Remijan, 2014). One can assume that hybrid teacher leaders who have been able to create and fulfill the responsibilities of a personally created position will likely make a positive contribution to both their students and their school districts in which they work.

Teacher leadership as a career advancement pathway. Danielson (2006) describes teaching as a “flat” profession, one that places the middle-career or veteran teacher and early-career teacher in very similar job-related situations on a daily basis. Middle-career and veteran teachers likely teach the same number of classes, go to the same meetings, and share similar schedules as their early-career teacher counterparts. For early-career teachers, each day feels like a new adventure while mid-career and veteran teachers may often become bored and develop feelings of professional restlessness (Danielson, 2006). Historically, middle-career and veteran teachers had few options to remedy these feelings, oftentimes leaving for administration. As Danielson (2006) indicates however, some teachers have a desire to exercise their leadership potential as teachers not administrators.

Stone-Johnson (2014) studied 12 middle-career educators who started teaching in the early to mid 1990’s and found that not one of them had any interest in leaving the classroom to become an administrator, citing several reasons including a reluctance to remove themselves from the classroom and increased accountability. Interestingly, most participants in the study indicated a desire for non-administrative leadership work beyond their own classrooms. Participants showed an interest in leadership roles such taking on a department head positions and teacher leadership roles, some of them already operating in what would be described as a hybrid teaching role (Remijan, 2014; Stone-Johnson, 2014). These findings corroborate the work completed by Danielson (2006) who shared that many teachers want to exercise greater influence in their schools while also staying in the classroom.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Interestingly, there are gender differences that exist when discussing teacher retention and career advancement opportunities. Male participants in a study completed by Margolis (2008) indicated they were interested in pursuing an administrative role in the future, while female participants indicated that teacher leadership roles such as mentoring were more desirable for them (Margolis, 2008). Male participants did see teacher leadership roles such as mentor teacher or teacher educator as stepping stones to administration and believed that these positions did help build the skills necessary to become administrators in the future. Male participants also indicated that the mentoring of student teachers was also integral to building the critique and support skills necessary to become an administrator (Margolis, 2008).

Best Practices for Teacher Leadership

Many models exist for teacher leadership. Some states have decided to formalize the practice of teacher leadership by adopting state and district standards for educators to follow. Other groups have helped engage key stakeholders toward the creation of model standards that can be used by districts and states (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011). States like Tennessee have even allowed local control of teacher leadership practices by encouraging counties to apply teacher leadership practices in ways that will best serve their communities (Tennessee Teacher Leader Network, 2015). Large local districts have also applied their own models to teacher leadership that are embedded in sound research evidence (Denver Public Schools, 2017). Regardless of the model standards used or the frameworks implemented, each teacher leadership program is grounded in current teacher leadership research that shows that teacher leadership has the potential to improve both student and school outcomes (Teacher Leader Model

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Standards, 2011). The Ohio Department of Education and Insight Education Group used these models to help guide the creation of Ohio's Teacher Leadership Framework.

Teacher leader model standards. In 2008 a group of educators assembled to analyze emerging research on Teacher Leadership. This group focused specifically on how these leadership roles affected student and school success (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011). Many educational stakeholders helped create the model standards, including Linda Darling-Hammond and Jennifer York-Barr, both widely respected leaders in the field of teacher leadership and education respectively. Building on the current body of research, a set of standards was created with the purpose of encouraging educational stakeholders to have a dialogue about what key competencies are required for teachers to take on leadership roles in their profession (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011). These standards are presently used by school districts, professional organizations, and higher education institutions (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011) and are similar in format to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) State Standards for School Leaders, outlining specific domains that objectify the essential elements of teacher leadership (Teacher Leader Model Standards, 2011).

Tennessee Teacher Leader Network. The Tennessee State Board of Education adopted teacher leadership standards in 2011 that outline the specific skills and competencies required for teacher leadership (Tennessee Teacher Leader Network, 2015). The State Board believes that local control of teacher leadership is necessary to meet the diverse demands present in their state. At present, 28 districts have created teacher leadership models that are being implemented with fidelity. In the spirit of collaboration, these districts were also involved with the creation of the standards. Each

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

district's program is specifically outlined in the Tennessee Teacher Leaders Network guidebook, complete with research studies that support each of the teacher leader models. District models are quite varied in practice, as some districts focus more on the instructional and coaching elements of teacher leadership while others gear their model to reflect an emphasis on data analysis and technology coaching (Tennessee Teacher Leader Network, 2015). It is clear that each district took time to assess their needs, create a model that fit their specific situation, and supported all decisions and practices with up-to-date empirical research.

Denver Public Schools Teacher Leadership. One of the most comprehensive teacher leader models presently available is the Denver Public Schools Teacher Leadership model. The program was piloted in the 2013-14 school year and implements a mentoring approach to teacher leadership. Utilizing a senior/team lead system, teacher leaders lead others by working collaboratively in a multitude of instructional areas. Using a four-phase comprehensive model, Denver Public Schools decided that a systematic approach to teacher leadership was necessary for proper implementation. Defining specific implementation, rollout, instructional, and reflective phases, the Denver Public School's model provides a turnkey approach to teacher leadership. The school district plans to have the system in place in all of their schools by the 2019-20 school year (Denver Public Schools, 2017).

Teacher Leadership Endorsement Programs

Building on the rising tide of distributed leadership practices in the public school setting, several Ohio universities have introduced teacher leader endorsement programs. Being one of the only states to formally support teacher leadership, Ohio's House Bill I opened the door for teacher leadership by creating a "lead teacher" position (Cleveland

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

State University, 2017). Three programs are described below demonstrating the differences and similarities in the Ohio programs. The three programs discussed are the Kent State University Teacher Leader Endorsement, The Cleveland State University Empowered Leaders Teacher Leader Endorsement, and The Ohio State University Teacher Leader Endorsement. The four participants who were interviewed in this study have all completed the graduation requirements for a formal teacher leadership endorsement program.

Although leadership endorsement programs are just now emerging in Ohio, leadership programs have existed for some time. Taylor et al. (2011) describe one of these early programs created in 2006 with the intent of helping teachers grow as individuals in addition to aiding in school improvement. The researchers conducted a three-year longitudinal study on teachers enrolled in a Masters of Teacher Leadership program. As most teacher leadership endorsement programs in Ohio only require four courses for completion, the researchers believed that a master's program was necessary to fully provide the rich theoretical and practical knowledge to be an effective teacher leader (Taylor et al., 2011). Three themes emerged from the research suggesting that teacher leadership training can be a catalyst for real change. Teachers indicated that they found and amplified their professional voice as they gained more confidence in their ability to lead. In addition, the teachers' newly refined professional voices extended their reach as they spanned boundaries that they had not previously attempted. Lastly, teachers were able to widen their sphere of influence, which also reframed the nature of their work (Taylor et al., 2011).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Kent State University Teacher Leader Endorsement. The Kent State Teacher Leader Endorsement program (TLEP) was funded by a grant and created through a partnership between The Ohio Department of Education and Kent State University (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). The teacher leadership program has two aims:

1. To build the awareness and capabilities to become a lead professional for democratic ways of living
2. To develop a democratic culture of shared responsibility, lead professionalism for students' holistic understanding

The teacher leadership program requires that applicants hold a master's degree from an accredited institution and have four years of teaching experience to be considered for the program. Four courses are required for graduation: curriculum leadership, instructional leadership for teacher leaders, coaching and mentoring for teacher leaders, and an advanced practicum and internship. The program is based on the Ohio's Teacher Leader Standards, which align with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. The coursework requirements culminate in a comprehensive leadership plan that is designed to be implemented at the building or district level (Kent State University, 2013).

The program is only three years old and has adopted a school-based cohort model, where teachers from the same district take classes together while implementing what they've learned in their respective school buildings. As of now, three cohorts have completed the graduation requirements for endorsement. Two districts were considered pilot districts, both having fairly different demographic features, state test score results, and school leadership structures (Ohio Department of Education, 2017).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In June of 2017, representatives from The Ohio Department of Education and Kent State University met to discuss how they can continue to facilitate building capabilities for teacher leadership at the local level. While teachers were completing teacher leader coursework, other work was completed by the Ohio Department of Education and Kent State University. This work includes the administration of culture surveys, workshop-type events, and continued professional training for teacher leaders. It was reported that the first cohort of teacher leadership endorsement candidates created and enacted 16 leadership plans, some of which the teacher leaders completed together. During this time, Kent State representatives completed several workshop series where they met with administrators to discuss leadership plan progress. Two leadership team meetings were held to discuss progress as well (Ohio Department of Education, 2017).

Additional time was allocated for analyzing culture surveys and exploring mission statement and teacher leader definition ideas. These workshops were designed to help create a vision statement for teacher leadership, define teacher leadership, list strategies to support teacher leaders, identify barriers, and dedicate resources to support teacher leadership (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). Several guiding research questions that relate to teacher leadership are also being explored by the partnership including:

1. What does it mean to be an administrator who supports teacher leadership?
2. What does it mean for a teacher to take on a leadership role from their classroom?
3. What impact do these teacher leader initiatives have on student achievement?

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

4. What roles and implementation strategies have the greatest potential?
What common missteps might be avoided.
5. How can educators navigate the obstacles that appear to stand in the way of effective teacher leadership.
6. How does a program focused on teacher leadership affect school culture?

Presently, those involved with the TLEP at Kent State University have aimed to use the existing research to help build teacher leadership capacity in Ohio schools, provide research that helps to support the democratic goals of the program, and partner with the Ohio Department of Education on developing and implementing policy that will share teacher leadership research with Ohio schools (Ohio Department of Education 2017). The information above was kindly shared by members of the Ohio Department of Education after a request was made for more information surrounding the teacher leader endorsement program. Additional information was requested from program leaders at Kent State University without reply.

Cleveland State University Empowered Leaders. The Cleveland State Empowered Leaders Teacher Leader Endorsement is grounded in the teacher leader standards created by the state of Ohio (B. Yusko, personal communication, July 25, 2017). The program is two semesters and requires the completion of four courses focused on the areas of professional development; transformational teacher leadership; coaching, consultation, and collaboration; data-driven decision making and differentiated instruction; and a capstone demonstrating teacher leadership in the field (Cleveland State University, 2017). Students create a Master Teacher Portfolio based on standards for

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Ohio Educators which can be furnished to their local professional development committee (B. Yusko, personal communication, July 25, 2017). Students must have already completed a master's degree from an accredited school, have eight years of teaching experience, and possess a professional license (Cleveland State University, 2017).

The Ohio State University Teacher Leader Endorsement. Ohio State's Teacher Leader Endorsement is recognized by the Ohio Department of Education as a method to obtain the Lead Professional Educator Licensure (The Ohio State University, 2017). The program can, in some cases, be completed in as little as one year. Courses are delivered in a blended learning format and are able to be transferred easily to administration licensure and doctoral degree requirements (The Ohio State University, 2017). The program is nine semester hours with courses in educational administration, teacher education, educational leadership, and learning and teaching. To begin the program candidates must hold a master's degree and have at least 4 years of teaching experience (The Ohio State University, 2017).

Challenges of Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership practices may feel quite foreign to teachers who operate in school buildings where they feel isolated from their colleagues. Teacher leaders often face unclear professional norms in addition to small amounts of time to plan their efforts (Margolis & Deuel, 2008). In addition, only a small number of teacher leadership programs exist and career ladders for teachers still only point toward administration; structurally, teacher leadership has a long way to go (Taylor et al., 2011). In addition, Taylor, et al.(2011) suggest that teachers are used to working in isolation, which impedes their ability to work collaboratively and learn from others. Therefore in order to become

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

leaders in their school buildings, teachers must break down the barriers of isolation, inviting colleagues and administrators into their classrooms to learn from the work they are doing with their students.

Because of these challenges, in addition to the lack of time to focus on student learning, minimal time to collaborate with other teachers, and role ambiguity that often exists with teacher leadership positions, Jacobs, Gordon, and Solis (2016) indicate that districts that define teacher leader roles and responsibilities will provide teacher leaders with less conflict and resentment. Conflicts may arise as teachers and teacher leaders do not always have the same perception of the nature of formal teacher leadership (Kelley, 2011). Scribner and Bradley-Levine (2010) indicate that teachers construct their own meaning of teacher leadership that relates primarily to content-area knowledge, positional power, and even historical trends in leadership relating to gender.

These disconnects and inconsistencies suggest that at times teachers may not feel equal to their teacher leader peers, considering their position allows them to enjoy a relationship with administration that provides them with more information than the general teacher population (Kelley, 2011). Teachers in a study conducted by Murphy and Smylie (2009) communicated that they felt isolated from their colleagues during the school day, so much that they rarely had the opportunity to see examples of teacher leadership outside of activities completed by their department chairs. This environment of isolation is also shared by Taylor et al.(2011) and Sass et al.(2010), indicating that many teachers operate in an individualistic, isolated school environment. Teachers spend little time with other adults during the school day, instead spending the majority of their time

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

with students that arguably increase the levels of stress experienced during the school day (Sass, et al., 2010).

Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Although teacher leadership and school improvement have been correlated by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), teacher leadership has also been shown to increase teacher empowerment, which leads to improved self-efficacy (Angelle, 2010). Additionally, teacher leaders' actions have also been shown to directly benefit student learning because of the proximity they have with students every day (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

Considering that the body of research related to teacher leadership and job satisfaction is limited, this study attempts to see if teacher leaders are in fact more satisfied with their jobs in comparison to non-teacher leaders. It is true that distributed leadership practices have been linked with school improvement (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006), however the relationship to teacher leadership is unclear. This finding notwithstanding, it will be important to report and analyze why teachers are not satisfied with their jobs, some ultimately leaving the field of education entirely.

Improving Job Satisfaction in Teachers

If a multitude of internal and external factors affect stress levels, job satisfaction, and teacher retention, which factors may act to improve teachers' job satisfaction? In the following paragraphs several aids to improving job satisfaction in teachers will be explored, including focusing on intrinsic motivators, self and teacher collective efficacy, school-wide positive behavior intervention supports (SWPBIS) programs, the use of experienced mentors in the classroom, and increasing autonomy for teachers.

Focusing on the intrinsic qualities of teaching appears to positively affect teachers in terms of job satisfaction (Battle & Looney, 2014). Using the expectancy-value theory

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

as a theoretical basis, Battle and Looney (2014) report that intrinsic attainment had the strongest correlational value with those teachers who decided to remain teaching. Of the teachers studied, 62% responded that intrinsic values such as teaching enjoyment and the ability to positively affect their students' lives held primary or secondary importance. In addition, 24% of teachers indicated that utility-values issues, such as stability of income or career advancement held either primary or secondary importance in relation to teacher retention (Battle & Looney, 2014).

Improvements in self efficacy and teacher collective efficacy also appear to improve job satisfaction in teachers (Sass et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). As teachers feel better about their behavioral management and instructional abilities, rises in job satisfaction usually follow. In addition, improvements in teacher collective efficacy affect job satisfaction as teachers feel more empowered to help students succeed because they have other teachers who are also attempting to do the same thing. Results therefore indicate that improvements to self efficacy and teacher collective efficacy have a two-fold effect, helping both the teacher and the student (Sass et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2004).

Building on the work on teacher collective efficacy, school-wide positive behavior intervention supports (SWPBIS) programs have also been shown to improve teacher well-being. Teachers are rewarded for their hard work with students by seeing improvements in multiple student outcomes, including improved behavior and increase academic achievement. School or district wide SWPBIS programs also help support teachers as they learn to better collaborate with their peers to help improve student outcomes. Additionally, SWPBIS programs have been able to improve the perceptions of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teacher self efficacy and even reduce the perceived level of burnout teacher experience.

This may be related to the collaborative, “whole team” approach to SWPBIS implementation programs (Ross & Romer, 2011).

Teaching is a complex task, one that may be assisted by utilizing former educators in capacities that aid in classroom instruction, organization, behavioral management, and overall support. Since retired educators likely have experience beyond that of current classroom teachers, placing retired teachers in classrooms in support roles has been shown to directly influence job satisfaction in teachers. Sometimes acting as classroom teachers, at other times a nurse, mother, or even shoulder to lean on, retired teachers who assist current classroom teachers during the school day have been shown to improve the workplace environment for teachers (Martinez, Frick, Kim, & Fried, 2010).

Lastly, autonomy in the workplace has been shown to improve job satisfaction of teachers, especially when that autonomy allows teachers to select which professional development needs they believe will help them improve student outcomes. As one-size-fits-all models do not always meet the needs of all teachers, those who were given a choice as to what professional development needs would help them achieve their goals showed increased empowerment and improvements in job satisfaction (Colbert et al., 2010).

Intrinsic motivators. Teaching is a profession full of people who care about the wellbeing of their students. Although all people are motivated extrinsically to some extent, caring for one’s students appears to be an incredible bulwark against teacher attrition (Petty, Fitchett, & O’Connor, 2012). In a study conducted by Jacobs and Gordon (2016), most teacher leaders chose to discuss intrinsic rewards such as teacher and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

student growth, making a difference, and colleague interactions as being aspects of the position they were grateful for. While financial bonuses do exist for those teaching in challenging schools, unfortunately as a motivator, they lose their effectiveness after only a few years. Which leads to the idea that a greater focus must be made on intrinsic motivators such as caring for one's students or increasing student growth (Jacobs & Jordan, 2016; Petty et al., 2012).

Petty et al. (2012) report that their research subjects felt that financial bonuses would likely attract others to work in challenging schools, they themselves were much more motivated by the bonds they had forged with their students while enjoying the support of their administrative teams. It may appear that educators operate under a set of morals that drive them to do what is "right" on behalf of those they interact with each day (Margolis & Deuel, 2008).

Building on the value of intrinsic motivators, an in-depth case study of five teacher leaders completed by Margolis and Deuel (2009) shows that teacher leaders are both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Intrinsically, educational moral beliefs were important to teacher leadership while money was a key extrinsic factor (Margolis & Deuel, 2009). Therefore, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators may work together to increase the motivation of teachers (Margolis & Deuel, 2009). It is worth noting that when monetarily compensated for the additional work pertaining to their teacher leadership roles, participants showed no decrease in intrinsic feelings towards their job.

Additionally, Margolis and Deuel (2009) indicate that monetary rewards for additional work may actually provide teacher leaders with increased feelings of accomplishment that represent recognition and respect. Therefore, monetary rewards may become both an

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

intrinsic and extrinsic motivator, which aligns with the early work by Herzberg (1968) showing that both are important factors for worker job satisfaction.

Aligning with the research already explored, Battle and Looney (2014) suggest that teachers who not only enjoy teaching but view themselves as useful are more likely to remain in the teaching profession. Teachers in this study who both enjoyed their jobs and felt that their work was important were much more likely to continue teaching. It would appear that the results of this study simplify the variables associated with teaching retention, arguing that teachers' enjoyment level of teaching heavily influences their likelihood of staying in the teaching profession. These results are strengthened by the findings that indicate teachers who view the teaching profession as having a low psychological and financial cost are also more likely to remain teaching as well. The researchers in this study conclude their study by suggesting that perhaps less research needs to be done on why teachers leave, and instead should focus on the reasons why teachers stay (Battle & Looney, 2014).

Teacher self efficacy and teacher collective efficacy. Sass et al. (2010) make a strong argument supporting self efficacy as a key determinant of job satisfaction in teachers. The researchers go so far as to say that teacher self-efficacy may improve classroom interactions with students so significantly that stress levels, burnout related to the workplace, and intentions of leaving are greatly diminished. The researchers conclude that when teachers' self efficacy in relation to student engagement increased job satisfaction increased. Additionally, it was shown that a supportive, stress-free work environment, in tandem with high levels of self-efficacy, are hallmarks of job satisfaction. Also found was the strong relationship between a teacher's sense of efficacy

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

towards student engagement and stress levels. This study shows that support from administrators and other superiors and student-related stressors had the most impact on job dissatisfaction (Sass, et al., 2010). Considering that multiple studies have shown student behavior and discipline issues affect stress, burnout, and teacher retention, these results add strength to the body of research in existence (Gonzalez et al., 2008; Ingersoll, 2001; Klassen, 2010; Sass, et al., 2010).

Teacher collective efficacy has been shown to not only improve the job satisfaction of teachers but also be significantly correlated with student achievement (Klassen, Usher, & Bong, 2010; Tschannen-Moran et al., 2004). Tschannen-Moran & Barr (2004) conclude that because teachers are sharing resources, methods, and activities that improve collaboration, this subsequently influences student achievement in positive ways. As earlier studies (Murphy & Smylie, 2009; Taylor et al., 2011; Sass et al., 2010) indicate that teaching can be an isolative profession, these practices will help increase teacher-to-teacher interaction which may affect job satisfaction in positive ways. In addition, improvements in teacher collective efficacy have been shown to improve the coping strategies and behaviors of teachers by improving their ability to handle setbacks or failures (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2004). Interestingly, teacher collective efficacy may be influenced by the leadership behaviors of the principal, school climate, and student behavior (Tschannen-Moran et al., 2004), all factors that also impact job satisfaction as well.

SWPBIS implementation. Teachers face a wide variety of stressors including increased accountability, changing student populations, increased initiatives, and difficult school climates (Ross & Romer, 2011). As most would agree, teachers decide to enter the

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

profession because they have an interest in improving the lives of the students they interact with on a daily basis. This being said, it has been shown that when teachers are rewarded by seeing their students improving academically or behaviorally, they are more likely to increase those efforts in future situations (Ross & Romer, 2010). As expected, a failure to see these rewards will diminish further efforts and potentially lead some teachers to experience higher levels of burnout and decreased well-being (Ross & Romer, 2010). Furthermore, school-wide positive behavior interventions and supports (SWPBIS) implementation has been shown to create positive interactions with adults and students and increase positive reinforcement practices, which would likely affect teacher well-being in positive ways (Ross & Romer, 2011).

Although some programs may decide to also focus on improving teacher behaviors, SWPBIS programs generally aim at improving student outcomes. SWPBIS programs are generally designed to be a three-tiered intervention model, aimed at improving student behavior by matching the intensity of the intervention to the intensity of the behavioral problem (Lewis & Sugai, 1999). The aim of this system is to improve the student behavior by creating a positive, supportive environment for students (Ross & Romer, 2011). SWPBIS programs are also designed to increase the collaboration of staff members, thereby reducing the emotional energy needed to reinforce appropriate student behaviors. Because staff members are collectively working toward improving students' behavior, support systems help to improve the efficacy of all teachers in improving student outcomes (Ross & Romer, 2011). It has been found that a strong relationship exists between the implementation of SWPBIS programs and teacher perceptions of efficacy and levels of individual burnout related to the workplace. It was also discovered

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

that SWPBIS programs were able to improve the delivery of positive reinforcement while also increasing student expectations (Ross & Romer, 2011). The researchers therefore conclude that programs such as SWPBIS likely affect teacher well-being positively.

At some point in every teacher's career they likely have felt emotionally exhausted. Attempting to improve student outcomes can be challenging work and may at times lead to feelings of stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion can be exacerbated by teacher efforts that aren't met with the student improvement that they desire (Ross & Romer, 2011). Over time, these repeated failed attempts at improving student outcomes can leave teachers feeling fatigued and less motivated to complete the steps necessary to improve student outcomes. As a teacher continues to feel that their efforts aren't making a difference in their students, they may develop a sense of depersonalization, where they begin to distance themselves from their students and develop indifferent or even negative attitudes toward the students that they teach (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). One could argue that high-need, urban, or high-poverty schools may feel this sense of depersonalization more strongly than those teaching in suburban or rural schools due to the well-known academic, behavioral, and social problems that can accompany these school environments. To provide a potential remedy to some of these issues, researchers Ross and Romer (2011) indicate that teachers who teach in lower socioeconomic schools may benefit the most from the implementation of SWPBIS. Citing improved effectiveness and increased emotional resources, SWPBIS programs may be a huge help to cash-strapped school districts who feel the day-to-day challenges of working in a high-poverty environment (Ross & Romer, 2011). These

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

findings are significant as other research has shown that stress-related retention levels and migration levels are higher in schools with high poverty rates (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

Although SWPBIS offers a multi-tiered approach for students, one could argue that teachers may only experience first-tier support from a program like this. To this point, Ross and Romer (2011) argue that further supports may be needed for teachers, as it is suggested that districts may employ the use of teacher burnout inventories to assess if, when, and to what extent teachers need support. Even without these further supports in place, SWPBIS has been shown to be an effective way to improve student outcomes, which can also improve the workplace environment of teachers, as they feel more supported by their peers in areas of behavioral management, allowing them to experience greater levels of personal well-being (Ross & Romer, 2011).

Experienced mentors. Retired educators have a wealth of experience and knowledge that their younger counterparts can benefit from. What if this knowledge and experience could be tapped in ways that could aid current teachers in a variety of ways? Martinez, Frick, Kim, and Fried (2010) show that although placing retired educators in urban school environments may not directly aid in improving teacher retention, teachers reported improvements in their classroom environment while also feeling better about meeting the needs of the students in the classroom.

A retired teacher in the classroom can provide an additional help with basic classroom tasks, including behavior management, while also allowing classroom teachers to spend more time with students one-on-one. Additionally, classroom teachers feel they benefit from having retired teachers in their rooms during group work, as two teachers can clearly assist students better than only one in the classroom. Teachers also enjoyed

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

being able to have general and emotional support in some of the difficult roles they play as teachers in challenging environments including mother, nurse, and counselor.

Although participants didn't express that having retired educators in their classrooms encouraged them to remain in the teaching profession, the notable assistance provided may impact teacher retention over time as teachers are provided with extra resources that were not present before. Principals were also interviewed in this study, many indicating that placing retired teachers in classrooms improved student outcomes. (Martinez et al., 2010).

As reported in earlier studies (Sass et al., 2010; Taylor et al., 2011), both teachers and principals indicate that placing retired educators in classrooms helped teachers feel less isolated, a natural byproduct of teaching children during the entire school day. Support also extended to classroom grading requirements and other tasks which helped them take less work home at night. One could easily argue that providing more personal free time could increase job satisfaction in a population that is known for taking work home at night. Retired educators also felt support coming from their classroom teachers as they were included in lessons and given roles and responsibilities rather than merely being a presence in the classroom. It is likely that the retired educators also held the required skills necessary to fill these roles and responsibilities, therefore making the process easier for the classroom teacher (Martinez et al., 2010).

Autonomy. Upon gathering interview data, Colbert et al. (2008) show that teachers who had the autonomy to choose their professional development needs had improved attitudes while also feeling open to trying new instructional strategies in their classrooms. Because teachers were able to focus on areas they wanted to improve, they

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

were more willing to take charge of their own learning and teaching. Teachers who were allowed to control their own professional development were more likely to seek out resources to improve their own learning and the learning experiences of the students they work with on a daily basis. A one-size-fits-all approach to professional development clearly doesn't meet the specific needs of all classroom teachers. To this point, some participants indicated that they felt dispirited because the large scale professional development offered to them didn't meet the needs they required. In the study conducted by Colbert et al. (2008), participants chose a writing workshop as a professional development need and were financially supported by their principal to receive the training that they desired. This approach clearly allowed them to be more invested in the training as they were allowed to select what professional development would meet their needs best. As supported by previous research, the principal in the study was extremely influential in this process, allowing them the time and financial support to receive training and gather resources they needed. Citing that principals helped them remove any major obstacles in their way, teachers felt supported by the principal's determination to help meet their specific needs (Colbert et al., 2008).

These important results indicate that teachers appear to be more motivated to improve their own teaching and learning if they are able to select the professional development they receive. Therefore, one can infer based on these results that pre-selected professional development in a one-size-fits-all model may reduce teacher engagement and subsequently student learning. The researchers also found that allowing teachers to select their professional development needs also improved the development process of teacher leaders because teachers were required to be heavily involved in the

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

planning, selection, and implementation of new professional development initiatives, all hallmarks of teacher leadership. In summary, the researchers conclude that by empowering teachers in these ways described above, their contributions to students and passion for teaching increases in meaningful ways (Colbert et al., 2008). Considering that preselected, professional development programs had the opposite effects among teachers in this study, these results may help districts to improve the work lives of teachers while also improving student achievement.

Conclusion

A commitment to teacher leadership may assist school districts in motivating and retaining teachers regardless of their experience level. By doing so, teachers may be able to improve their own leadership potential which will not only help early-career teachers who may be lacking in those skills, but also more experienced teachers who may be looking for ways to lead beyond their own classrooms. It has been widely documented that early-career teachers are extremely vulnerable to exit attrition (Boe et al., 2008; Fisher, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll et al., 2014). Additionally, more experienced teachers often desire upward mobility in their careers but may not be interested in becoming administrators (Elfers & Plecki, 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2014). A commitment to teacher leadership may help remedy both of these groups by offering leadership development for early-career teachers and leadership potential for more experienced teachers. Although teachers may informally take on these leadership roles, the reviewed research clearly supports the strong guidance from a school's administrative team, namely the principal. Teachers are often ready to be leaders beyond their own classrooms; however, they may need the support and guidance of an administrator to help

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

assist in these efforts (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Marzano et al., 2005; Maxfield & Flumerfelt, 2009).

Teacher leadership presents itself in a variety of ways. Teachers may lead informally, electing to improve on an area of need in their school building or district. They may also be selected to fulfill the responsibilities of more formal roles such as department head, mentor, or instructional coach. Regardless, teachers enjoy increased levels of autonomy and the satisfaction of doing work that not only help student outcomes but allows them to grow professionally by assisting other colleagues on their own growth. (Danielson, 2006) Formal teacher leaders may teach in addition to their leadership responsibilities, which can provide a level of credibility to their role. Hybrid teacher leadership positions are a blending of classroom teacher and teacher leader, allowing teachers to influence their students and their colleagues in positive ways (Remijan, 2014).

Several initiatives exist that aim to provide supports to school districts who are interested in beginning teacher leadership programs. In addition, several universities are also providing teacher leadership endorsement programs to help prepare teachers to become better leaders in their classrooms and school districts (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). Ohio for example, recently constructed a Teacher Leadership Workgroup with the goal of creating, distributing, and supporting a teacher leadership framework for districts to use to create or support existing teacher leadership programs. These initiatives and programs are important considering many teachers report they received inadequate training in the areas of pedagogy, behavioral management, and areas relating to educational leadership (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Through initiatives and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

programs such as these, it is the hope that teacher leadership practices can be implemented with fidelity so as to improve student outcomes in addition to teacher satisfaction.

Teacher job satisfaction appears to be influenced by a wide variety of factors including student behavior, pay, administrative support, and school setting (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ng & Peter, 2010). Although teachers are often intrinsically motivated by factors such as improving the lives of their students, financial incentives such as teacher pay and benefits also heavily influence the job satisfaction of teachers (Hughes, 2012). Districts would be wise to understand the synergistic nature of these intrinsic and extrinsic factors as multiple studies show each affecting the job satisfaction and retention in teachers (Jacobs et al., 2016; Margolis & Deuel, 2009). In addition to these factors, school setting also appears to influence teacher satisfaction, as urban, high-poverty, and high-need schools can be challenging places to work. Although minority teachers may hold certain qualities that may help meet the specific needs of students in these schools, minority teachers have been shown to leave these urban, high-poverty, and high-need schools, instead teaching in lower poverty, less urban types settings (Ingersoll & May, 2011). In addition to minority teachers, female teachers also appear to be vulnerable to exit attrition, especially when teaching in urban, high-poverty, and high-need school districts (Dagli, 2012; Klassen, 2010).

These problems can be devastating to school districts, as they scramble to hire and train new teachers (Sass et al., 2010). At the same time, school districts may be able to remedy exit attrition problems by implementing School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support programs, focusing on improving teacher collective efficacy, and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

allowing teachers a greater sense of autonomy. SWPBIS programs generally focus on students, however, teachers benefit from these types of programs because entire school buildings are supporting the growth of the student body. Behavioral management, reward systems, and a clear focus on student growth allow teachers to improve their collective efficacy by supporting one another and feeling their own growth improve over time (Ross & Romer, 2011). Increasing teacher autonomy has also been shown to improve job satisfaction, especially in the area of professional development. Allowing teachers to select their own areas of professional need has been shown to increase engagement and leadership outcomes (Colbert et al., 2008).

Teacher leadership practices may be able to provide school districts with a way to not only retain early-career teachers, but also retain more experienced teachers by providing leadership opportunities beyond their own classrooms (Danielson, 2006). Teachers appear to enjoy the autonomy of self-directed behavior in addition to the creation of their own teacher leadership roles that allow them to utilize their unique strengths to advance school improvement (Aspen Institute, 2014; Remijan, 2014). As distributed leadership practices are being implemented with fidelity, teacher leadership may offer a real solution to improving the lives of both the teachers and the students that they serve each day (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The experiences of four teacher leaders was explored using a single-case, case study design to determine how teacher leadership experiences affect job satisfaction and teacher retention. The researcher believes that the use of a case study design was the best research method to accurately gather the true feelings of those participating in the study considering that the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leadership positions may differ between school districts. Research questions were derived from the emerging themes in the literature relating to improved job satisfaction in the teaching population including increased autonomy, improved decision-making power, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four teacher leaders to determine how their roles, responsibilities, and experiences influence job satisfaction and teacher retention. In addition, direct observations were employed to witness teacher leaders engage in leadership-related tasks in order to add depth to the interview process. Lastly, document reviews were conducted to analyze various artifacts that showed how the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders were manifested. Data was triangulated by analyzing the participant interview responses, direct observations, and documents pertaining to the teacher leaders' leadership roles, responsibilities, and experiences as well as completing a member-checking process to see if the data collected matched other teacher leaders. In addition, an audit trail was created to document and display the timeline of the research tasks to arrive at the analyzed data and implications.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Purposive, random sampling was used to select the four teacher leaders involved in the study who have all completed a formal teacher leader endorsement program through an accredited university. Upon delivering invitations to ten teacher leaders available for study, four were selected, each ultimately participating in the final study. Open and axial coding was implemented when analyzing interview, direct observation, and document review data and categories were created using this process. A master list of notes, terms, and comments were created to assist in determining recurring themes from the data gathered. Initially the researcher hypothesized that the data would show that the teacher leaders in the study would experience improved job satisfaction. It was then suggested that these hypothesized results could encourage other school districts to develop, employ, and sustain both formal and informal teacher leadership positions as a way to improve the job satisfaction and teacher retention of the teachers they employ.

Research Purpose

The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences of teacher leaders and show how those experiences affect job satisfaction and teacher retention. Although much literature exists pertaining to teacher leadership and teacher job satisfaction as separate research topics, little research exists exploring how teacher leadership roles may affect the job satisfaction and teacher retention rates in teachers. Considering that teacher retention affects school districts across the country, it is important to investigate whether the teacher leaders in the proposed study experienced improved job satisfaction as a result of taking on a formal or informal teacher leadership role. Although this study can only reveal how the teacher leaders feel about their teacher leader positions, it may encourage school leaders to develop, employ, and sustain teacher leadership practices in

their own school districts if those positions lead to increased autonomy, decision making, and administrative support.

Research questions. As Yin (2014) suggests, arguably the most important step in a research study is the definition of the research question(s). Focusing on both substance and form will ensure that the research questions selected ask the right questions of those involved in the study. Three research questions were explored in the case study on how teacher leadership influences job satisfaction and teacher retention. The research questions were selected to investigate if teacher leaders' roles, responsibilities, and experiences reflect increased autonomy, improved relationships with administrators and other colleagues, and increases in decision-making power, which all were evidenced in the literature as factors influencing teacher job satisfaction (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Selecting the research questions in this format assists in adding internal validity to the study, since the researcher was attempting to ask questions that aim to explore the concepts evidenced in the literature.

The following questions were used in the study as the three research questions for teacher leaders.

1. How do teacher leaders describe their roles, responsibilities, and experiences as leaders in their school building?
2. How do teacher leaders describe their involvement in the decision-making process?
3. How do teacher leadership practices influence job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Types of Leadership Roles

The roles, responsibilities, and experiences of those in teacher leadership positions were explored in this study. Teacher leadership positions have historically focused more on administrative tasks but lately have been shifting toward informal leadership (Aspen Institute, 2014; Danielson, 2006). Current research argues that for a collaborative and democratic environment to ensue in a school building, teacher leadership must shift away from administrative task completion and more toward the collaboration among school members (Danielson, 2006). Below, each type of leadership is expounded upon, including relevant research pertaining to each.

Formal leadership. Danielson (2006) describes the roles of formal leaders, which include mentors, department chairs, master teachers, team leaders, and helping teachers. As such, these roles are created to help distribute the work of keeping a school running smoothly. Unfortunately, some teacher leaders are appointed to leadership positions by administrators, which can be seen as a show of favoritism and may lead to reduced levels of trust (Danielson, 2006).

The definition of a formal teacher leader, for the purpose of this study, is one that has been either appointed to or elected to a non-coaching, non-bargaining or union representative position in their school district. Examples of formal leadership positions could be, but are not limited to: formal building mentors, department heads, building leadership team members, instructional coaches, and district leadership team members.

Informal leadership. Standing in contrast to formal teacher leadership, informal, or teacher leadership, arises organically often attempting to meet a demand or need that emerges (Danielson, 2006). Formal leaders are often elected or appointed, while informal leaders may be defined as teachers fulfilling a leadership role without accepting a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

nomination for position or otherwise being elected for that position (Danielson, 2006). Although administrators can support informal leadership, the driving force behind this type of leadership comes from the teacher. As one can expect, this type of leadership has the potential to be a powerful tool for districts to facilitate.

For this study, informal leaders were, but were not limited to, helping in minor administrative ways, aiding in the implementation and creation of departmental curriculum, organizing school-based events, or providing leadership in areas of teaching, learning, and technology, etc.

Case Study Design

Case study research is utilized in many professional fields, including education, where much of the phenomena researched can appear complex and worthy of in-depth investigation. Once thought to only be used as a preliminary research method, case study research need not only be implemented during the exploratory phase of research; it also may be used to test propositions in explanatory ways (Yin, 2014). For the purpose of this study, a case study will be defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.” (Yin, 2014, p. 16). Case study research may not be appropriate for every research investigation, as it answers “how” and “why” research questions better than the “who” and “what” type of research questions. Although quantitative research may show great research strength in attempting to explain the “who” or “what” research questions, it may be limited in exploring “how” and “why” questions due to the limited inferences that may be made from survey or experimental research (Yin, 2014). An advantage of the case study

method is that it does not rely on control over behavioral events, but also enables the researcher to focus on contemporary research investigations.

Types of Case Studies

Several types of case studies exist in a field of research, each having its own purpose and methodology. Explanatory or causal case studies attempt to explain specific phenomena by gathering data using interviews, observations, or other documents. Descriptive case studies attempt to describe the prevalence of a particular phenomenon, often attempting to even predict certain outcomes. Lastly, exploratory case studies attempt to develop specific hypotheses that will help drive further investigation on a particular topic (Yin, 2014). As the field of educational research can be quite broad, each type of case study has appropriate applications considering certain topics may be more or less researched than others. The current research study encompassed each of these types of case studies, as a plethora of research evidence exists surrounding teacher leadership and job satisfaction as independent topics, yet little research explores if and how the two variables affect one another.

Rationale for Single-Case Design

As single-case, case study designs may raise methodological questions for peer reviewers and applied professionals alike, several rationales exist to support the use of a single-case, case study design. Yin (2014) defines a single-case design as “a case study organized around a single case; the case might have been chosen because it was a critical, common, unusual, revelatory, or longitudinal case” (p. 240). The critical case rationale suggests that a single-case, case study design is needed because it might represent a critical test of a significant theory. As such, the research study may be able to help refocus further investigations within the same field because it can challenge or even

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

extend a previously believed theory. The next rationale for a single-case, case study is that an unusual phenomenon that deviates from everyday occurrences may be so extreme that other sample populations simply may not exist. Interestingly, the results of case studies that attempt to analyze something unusual may help applied professionals better understand normal processes (Yin, 2014).

Thirdly, the common case may be used to support the use of a single-case, case study because researchers are attempting to capture some key aspect of everyday life. The information gathered may be able to help provided additional information to support pre-established theoretical models. Another strong rationale for the use of a single-case, case study design is the revelatory case. A single-case, case study design may be used in this way to explore phenomenon previously unavailable to investigation. Lastly, the longitudinal rationale may be used to support the use of a single-case, case study design because investigation may take place over long intervals of time, possibly following “before” and “after” results and assumptions. In this way, it would be challenging to compare multiple groups using the same time interval procedures (Yin, 2014).

After reviewing each of the rationales for the single-case design and considering the evidence in the literature pertaining to teacher leadership, the researcher concluded that the common case rationale supported the use of a single-case design. Although teacher leadership and job satisfaction have been thoroughly reviewed in the literature as separate topics, teacher leadership as it relates to job satisfaction has not been thoroughly explored in the literature. Therefore, the researcher attempted to determine if the everyday experiences of teacher leaders did in fact align with the factors that have been shown to increase the job satisfaction in teachers.

Research Design

A descriptive, single-case, case study design was implemented for this study as the researcher is choosing to study a phenomenon and how it presents itself in a real-life, professional setting within one school district. A role-based data unit approach was used to explore the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders. Although a pre-established survey instrument could have gathered adequate data relating leadership level and job satisfaction, the researcher aimed to explore if any deeper themes emerged. In this way, participants were provided the freedom to clearly articulate their thoughts and emotions about their roles.

Interview questions were constructed by selecting emerging constructs in the literature reviewed, including key elements that have been shown to improve job satisfaction in teachers such as autonomy, decision making, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Interview questions were reviewed by the Youngstown State University Institutional Review Board prior to data gathering to ensure the well-being of each participant (Appendix H). The interview process posed no additional risks to the participants beyond what they would experience during a typical day in the workplace. Although this was true, the researcher did specifically outline in the informed consent form that participants should only share information they were comfortable sharing due to the small sample size. Although every precaution was taken to protect the confidentiality of each participant, participants were openly alerted to the fact that their answers to interview questions may cause readers to guess their identity. As such, interviews were conducted after school hours and off school grounds.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The selected interview questions show strong reliability and internal validity due to their repeatability across groups. The internal validity of the interview questions was enhanced by implementing a preparatory research process, having non-participating teachers review planned interview questions for clarity and understanding. Any interview questions that appeared unclear were reworked prior to final research implementation.

Direct observations of teacher leaders were also employed to enhance the internal validity of the proposed study. Yin (2014) shares that the evidence gathered from observations are useful in providing additional information about the intended individual, group, or phenomena being investigated. Additionally, observations serve as a form of triangulation that allows researchers to more broadly explore research interests (Yin, 2014). Data triangulation also strengthened the construct validity of the research study by providing multiple measures of the phenomena being studied. It was the intent of the researcher to reach beyond the data collected in the interview process by observing teacher leaders in their natural workplace environment. Observation data were compared to interview data to check interview answers against actual observations of the teacher leaders engaging in leadership tasks.

Lastly, document reviews were used to gather leadership-related artifacts that showed the daily leadership tasks in which teacher leaders engage. Documents such as minutes for data meetings, department meetings, and instructional coaching meetings were used in addition to materials that had been used in the professional development of other staff members. Document reviews enhanced the internal validity of the study by showing actual physical evidence of tasks that relate to teacher leadership practices. By

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

employing the use of interviews, observations, and document reviews, the researcher effectively triangulated data, which improved the internal validity of the study.

After actual participant data was gathered and analyzed, the researcher employed a member-checking process to ensure the answers match the true beliefs of those being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This process took place through email communication and by phone to ensure that participants had an opportunity to present their true feelings. Allowing for the convergence of multiple sources of evidence, key themes were bolstered by higher levels of construct validity (Yin, 2014).

Sampling and Selection

This study aims to explore the perceptions of four teacher leaders who had completed a twelve-credit-hour Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program through an accredited university. The researcher delivered invitations to participate to ten teacher leaders who were available for study. Invitations were delivered in a sealed envelope that contained an invitation to participate, a contact sheet, and a stamped envelope with the mailing address of the researcher. No administrators or other school personnel handled the forms after they were delivered to the potential research participants. The research gave each participant ten days to return their acceptance to participate. This process was completed twice in order to secure more participants. Upon receiving all acceptance forms, the research then began the process of selecting the teacher leader participants.

Random selection was not used because after several attempts, only four teacher leaders agreed to participate in the study. Each of the four participants who agreed to participate completed all portions of the research study including interviews, direct observations, and document reviews. Each of the participants were members of the same school district and teach in grades K-12. Although a few participants are formal teacher

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

leaders, most of the sample population leads informally. The superintendent who employs the participants of the study has decided to support the informal leaders in ways that allow them to lead from within the classroom instead of nominating teachers to formal leaders roles. As such, many of the participants in this study operate as full-time classroom teachers.

Sampling. Purposive, criterion-based, non-random sampling was employed to select teacher leaders. Invitations to participate were sent to ten teacher leaders which included all details pertaining to the interview, direct observation, and document review process in addition to the potential benefits of participating in the research study. This process ensured that each participant had full knowledge of all aspects of the study had an equal opportunity to participate in the research. Neither the researcher or any participating school official coerced participants into participating in the study. In addition, no administrator or other school personnel handled any of the completed forms after they were initially delivered.

The four participants in the study were all members of a teacher leadership endorsement pilot project that was facilitated by an accredited university. Each participant received the same teacher leadership training and attended classes together as a ten-person cohort. Thus, the researcher attempted to control against the possible variation in roles, training, and experience levels among larger teacher leadership populations, opting instead to select a group that all received the same training and work in the same school district. The sample population was secured via personal communication with the school superintendent and in a later formal letter confirming the permission to interview the group of teachers which can be found in Appendix F.

Sample size. As research indicates, the true effective sample size can be difficult to determine as data saturation may only be effectively determined after the research is concluded (Bonde, 2013). To this point, Bonde (2013) concludes that adequate sample sizes can be affected by the research study scope, characteristics of the target audience, expertise of the researcher, research audience, and available resources. As definitive sample size can be unclear, the researcher interviewed, observed, and reviewed documents from four participants who agreed to participate and who completed a teacher leadership endorsement program at an accredited university. A sample population of this size aided the researcher in reaching a point of saturation from the experiences gathered from the participants, although as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest, in qualitative research, there is no way to know truly know how many participants will be needed to reach a point of saturation. Although this may be true, the researcher used semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document reviews to help provide a thick, rich description of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the teacher leaders being studied.

Procedures

The researcher collected semi-structured interview, direct observation, and document review data over the span of several days. Because interviews were conducted off school grounds and either before or after school hours, the researcher made every effort to accommodate the schedules of each participant. Attempts were made to complete several direct observations during each on-site visit. Because only direct observations were held during school hours, impact on the educational environment was minimized.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Prior to the commencement of the research process, each participating teacher leader was contacted through either email or phone and arrangements were made to conduct the interview off school grounds, before or after school hours. Interviews were held in a private location that was free of disruptions, and interviews were staggered by at least 15 minutes to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the each participant. By doing so, it was intended that participants did not have any interaction with other participants between interviews, to improve the credibility of the research. Although no deception was used in the research study, it is possible that participants could influence each other's interview answers based on how previous participants answered their own interview questions. Every effort was made to complete the interview portion of the study prior to the direct observation.

Direct observations were also set up individually with each participant through email or phone communication. Although the building principal was alerted to the researcher's presence in each school building, all remaining details were kept confidential so as not to identify those being studied. The direct observation process did not disrupt the workplace environment as teacher leaders were engaging in regular workday tasks and were not disrupted by the research process in any way. Observation data was collected using a data collection sheet, which can be found in Appendix G. Every attempt was made in the research study to work around the participants' schedules and observe during a time that worked well for them. As with any case study involving interviews and direct observations, the interviewer must work around the participants' schedules, not their own (Yin, 2014).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Upon arrival to the private interview location, the researcher greeted each participant and guided them to their seat at the table used for interviewing and collecting document details. At this time the researcher introduced themselves and furnished a detailed informed consent form. The informed consent form provided to each participant complied with all guidelines set forth by the Youngstown State University Institutional Review Board. The researcher provided ample time for each participant to read the form and complete all sections to the best of their ability. Additionally, the researcher offered to answer any questions the participant had pertaining to the research study. The researcher only began the interview process and document review process after the participant agreed to sign and date the informed consent form.

Once the participant signed and dated the informed consent form, the researcher spent a few minutes building rapport with the participant by explaining his role as a teacher and teacher leader and also why he was interested in the topic of teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Additionally, the researcher asked each participant what subject they teach, how long they have been teaching, and the type of leadership role they engage in as a teacher leader, although this information was not used in any final report. The purpose of this rapport-building process is to develop trust between the participant and the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). By doing so, the researcher hoped to receive more meaningful interview responses. During this time, field notes and digital recording devices were not used to gather participant data. In addition, the conversations taking place during the rapport-building process were not used in any way as evidence of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

After the brief rapport-building process, the researcher also asked teacher leaders to share any documents that evidence their leadership roles and responsibilities, which was used as a later form of data triangulation. Each participant was alerted to this task on the invitation to participate sent prior to commencement of the research study, and examples of possible documents were listed. The gathered documents served as an additional form of data triangulation to improve the internal validity of the research study. In tandem with the interview and direct observation data, the documents provided a thick, rich description of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the teacher leaders being studied.

Upon completing the rapport-building and document-gathering processes, the researcher informed each participant that the interview would begin, field notes would be taken, and a digital recording would also be made to ensure the researcher captured the exact responses of each participant. The researcher protected the anonymity of each participant by not using any names or other identifiers during the interview process. In addition, if the participant used their name, any identifiers, or any names of colleagues or administrators during the interview, the researcher changed those names in all transcriptions or narratives shared in final reports. Responses were also reported anonymously, and any names shared during the interview process were changed in final transcripts and reports so as not to single any particular participant out when the data were reported. It is important that these precautions were in place for participants to be ensured that their anonymity is protected at all times.

To ensure repeatability across groups, the same series of interview questions were asked to each teacher leader. Interview questions were created by using emerging themes

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

in the literature reviewed pertaining to teacher job satisfaction including autonomy, decision making, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Controlling for the implementer effect, identical processes were used for each interview to ensure reliability in the study. This being true, there were situations where the researcher needed to ask clarifying questions so as to better understand the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the teacher leaders being studied. By following a detailed procedure for gathering, reporting, and analyzing data, every attempt was made to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

At the conclusion of each interview, participants were thanked for their contribution to the study, and also reminded that a summary of the interview and applicable themes could be sent to them upon the conclusion of the dissertation if they so desire (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). At this time, the researcher ceased taking any additional field notes and also stopped the digital recording device. Additionally, participants were made aware of the member-checking process which took place after all interviews, observations, and document reviews had been collected. This process took place either by phone conversation or email depending on the availability of each participant. A debriefing form was not necessary as participants were fully informed of all details of the proposed study in addition to the benefits and the risks. To conclude each interview, participants were thanked for their time and ushered from the private interview location. After the interview process was completed for each participant, the researcher then gathered all materials including field notes, digital recordings, and any

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

other document review materials and secured them in a safe location until they were transcribed and analyzed.

Every attempt was made to conduct the interview portion of the research study prior to engaging in the observation process within the school building. During the observation process, each building principal was alerted as to my presence in the building but every attempt was made to arrange all observation details with the participant to protect their anonymity. The researcher followed all school safety protocols while completing the direct observation process, including checking in with office personnel and wearing a name badge. The risks to each participant were low during the direct observation process because teacher leaders were observed completing daily leadership tasks and the researcher did not interfere with any part of the observation process. Prior to the direct observation process, each teacher leader was contacted and an agreed-upon time was arranged for the observation portion of the study.

Every attempt was made to directly observe teacher leaders leading in ways that influence their colleagues, administrators, and larger communities in settings that fall outside of their traditional classroom duties. Examples of possible direct observations were PLC meetings, department head meetings, professional development sessions, instructional coaching displays, and meetings with principals or other colleagues. Although teachers are all leaders in their own classrooms, the researcher attempted to witness evidence of teacher leadership beyond the classroom.

Each direct observation followed the same procedures. The researcher did not engage, participate, or interfere at any point during the direct observation and was merely viewing teacher leaders accomplishing leadership tasks and taking field notes (Yin,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

2014). During direct observations, field notes were utilized in addition to a data collection sheet (see Appendix G) listing key constructs from the literature, such as autonomy, improved decision-making power, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). During each direct observation, the researcher attempted to categorize observed behavior into the constructs as well as provide narrative notes about behaviors observed. No digital recordings were made of the observations. Each direct observation was no longer than 30 minutes, and those being observed agree to be observed on the informed consent form furnished at the start of the interview process. After the researcher observed each participant engaging in leadership-related tasks, the data collection process was complete. The researcher then left the research site and prepared to complete the data analysis process. Upon completion of the data collection process, an email was sent to the district superintendent thanking him for allowing the researcher to study the teacher leaders in the district.

Upon leaving the research site, the researcher organized and categorized all field notes, making them easily available for later data and thematic analysis (Yin, 2014). Additionally, all interviews were transcribed, and observation and document review data were coded and categorized. After all three data points were collected, recurring and key themes were identified. Data was coded in both an open and axial method, using multiple colors to denote each theme. This process ensured that themes were identified and organized properly. Once key themes were identified, qualitative data was analyzed to examine how teacher leader roles influence the job satisfaction of the teachers being studied.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

It is important to note that the purpose of the research study was not only to study the relationships between teacher leadership and job satisfaction, but to more clearly establish how and why teacher leaders may experience different levels of job satisfaction. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document reviews, the researcher was able to provide a thick, rich description of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the participating teacher leaders.

Introduction of Data Sources

Three sources of data were used to explore the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the teacher leaders being studied. All data sources aligned with the three research questions presented earlier. The first source of data came from semi-structured interviews, which aimed to explore how teacher leaders describe their roles, responsibilities, and experiences. Interview questions were selected based on the emerging themes from the literature pertaining to teacher job satisfaction including autonomy, decision making, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). The second source of data was gathered from the direct observations of teacher leaders. The researcher was better able to support and substantiate the interview question data gathered by observing teacher leaders during leadership tasks. Lastly, documents were reviewed pertaining to teacher leaders' responsibilities including meeting minutes, educational data, and artifacts related to leadership tasks they are responsible for. The use of these three types of data are strengthened by Tisdell and Merriam (2016), who report that case study data has historically been gathered from these three forms of data. These three sources of data strengthened the internal and construct validity of the study through the process of data triangulation (Yin, 2014).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Interviews. To gather data for the proposed study in person, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teacher leaders. Interviews lasted no longer than 60 minutes, and field notes and digital recordings were taken to ensure accuracy during later transcription and analysis. All interviews were conducted off school grounds and either before or after school to protect participant confidentiality and anonymity. Each interview question aligned with the three intended research questions, which were selected based on the literature reviewed prior to the research process. It was the intent of the researcher to gather a truthful understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders specifically relating to emerging elements of teacher job satisfaction such as autonomy, decision making, and administrative support.

Observations. Direct observations were implemented following the interview process for each teacher leader participant. The researcher observed teacher leaders during leadership-related tasks that were unrelated to classroom teaching. A standardized observation form was used (see Appendix G) that organizes collected data by categories related to the key findings from the literature pertaining to autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support. The researcher did not interfere in any way during the direct observation process. Direct observation data was later coded and cross-referenced with interview data to determine similarities, differences, and emerging themes. Examples of observation task data included but was not limited to mentoring, department chair meetings, professional development sessions, data meetings, principal meetings, instructional coaching sessions, and meetings with administrators and colleagues.

Document reviews. On the invitation to participate form sent to each of the initial ten teacher leaders available for study, the researcher asked that participants bring to the

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

interview any documents they may have that relate to teacher leadership practices used in the school building. Documents review examples were meeting notes, professional development presentations, professional conferences, and any other artifact that relates to teacher leadership. A list of possible examples was provided on the invitation to participate form distributed prior to the interview and direct observation process. These documents helped to triangulate data by providing physical evidence of teacher leadership unrelated to interviews or observations. Document sources were categorized using the same constructs used during the interviews and direct observations which include autonomy, improved decision-making power, and administrative support.

Data storage. Digital and written interview, observation, and document review data were stored in a storage room in a locked file cabinet at Youngstown State University Beeghly College of Education for at least three years. Written documents were kept on file in a personal location under lock and key for three years and then properly shredded and discarded per YSU policy, in accordance with 45 CRF 46.155[b]. Digital files were stored in a password-protected Dropbox account that is only accessible by the principal and sub-investigator at Youngstown State University. Any personal recorded digital files were destroyed promptly after data was analyzed. This includes all interview data stored on digital recorders, phones, or other electronic devices. These procedures are all aligned with the guidelines set forth by both the APA and Youngstown State University.

Validity

As Yin (2014) suggests, four tests can be used assess the quality of an empirical, social research study. As such, several tactics can be employed to attempt to improve the validity and reliability of a research study. To improve construct validity, multiple

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

sources of evidence, establishment of chain of evidence sequence, and having other researchers review case study reports can be utilized. These tactics occur during the data collection and composition stages of the research process (Yin, 2014). To assist in improving internal validity, pattern matching, explanation building, presentation of opposing explanations, and the employment of logic models are all tactics that can be implemented. Each of these tactics may be used within the data analysis phase of the research process. External validity may be improved during the data collection phase of research by using theory, especially in single-case studies, in addition to using replication logic in multiple-case studies. Lastly, reliability can be strengthened by using case study protocol as well as developing a case study database during the data collection process (Yin, 2014).

The researcher made every attempt to control for threats to construct validity especially since it has been shown that the roles of formal leaders are sometimes ambiguous and may vary widely among school districts (DeAngelis, 2013). While some school districts may assign or elect teachers to fill formal teacher leadership roles, some districts are likely to support this practice with less emphasis.

In 2017, I was asked to be a part of the Teacher Leader Workgroup sponsored by the Ohio Department of Education and Insight Education Group. Our task was to help design a teacher leader framework for the state of Ohio. This group was made up of Ohio teachers, administrators, professors, Ohio Education Association representatives, and members of the Ohio Department of Education. A key theme that emerged was the difficulty in operationalizing exactly what a teacher leader was.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Considering that the research study aimed to study one school districts' teacher leaders, role ambiguity and variation were not a threat to construct validity at least in terms of teacher leadership. This is true because each teacher leader is operating as a leader in the same district with the same supports and administrative team. It is worth noting that the superintendent of the school district that employs the participants in the study believes strongly in informal leadership, opting to support teacher leaders who rise up in organic ways, a belief strongly supported by Danielson (2006). In addition to the previously mentioned attempts made by the researcher to protect against threats to internal validity, other attempts to protect external validity were made by the researcher as well.

Upon conclusion of the data collection process, the researcher employed a member-checking process where results were taken back to the four participants that were studied to determine if the data gathered mirrored their actual roles, responsibilities, and experiences of being a teacher leader in their district. This process ensured that the research study was accurately representing the participants being studied, a tenet integral to the success of any effective case study.

As Trochim & Donnelly (2008) indicate, case study research aims to intensively analyze specific individuals or contexts which given the context of this study, can help show how teacher leaders' roles, responsibilities, and experiences influence job satisfaction. Using interviews, direct observations, and document reviews as well as controls for both internal and external validity, the researcher developed a rich set of data that likely showed the true feelings of the participants being studied.

Preparatory Research

In order to gain a better understanding of teacher leader experiences, interview questions were developed by analyzing key constructs from the research that have been shown to both increase and decrease job satisfaction. Constructs such as autonomy, administrative support, compensation, burnout, and job satisfaction were all reflected in the interview questions being used in this study as they appeared regularly in the research (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). In selected constructs such as these, the researcher attempted to gain a relevant understanding of the actual factors influencing job satisfaction in teacher leaders.

Prior to data collection, all interview questions were reviewed for clarity and understanding by teachers who are not participating in the research study. This helped ensure that final interview questions were administered reliably across all focus groups as well as controlling for internal validity. During this initial process, interview questions were given to non-participant teachers and later refined in order to provide participants with the clearest and most coherent version of the interview questions being asked. During this process, any interview questions that were unclear or misguided per the answers given by non-participating teachers were then restructured to improve the clarity and understanding. Upon completion of this process, the researcher then had content experts review the questions to determine if they aligned properly with the research questions being used in the study. Refer to Appendix A to view the research questions and interview questions that were administered to teacher leaders.

Trustworthiness

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest that research designs are based on assumptions that seek to answer questions through in-depth analyses of gathered data.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Although quantitative research has many tools to test hypotheses, standards to apply, or the ability to show evidence of a new theory or discovery, qualitative research is first and foremost concerned with providing the reader with a sense of understanding. Naturally, many would argue that quantitative research can better show correlations and even cause and effect relationships, however qualitative research operates in a much different way, exploring certain phenomenon and how those involved are affected and influenced in different ways.

A key assumption of qualitative research is the belief that reality is not fixed, but ever-changing. In terms of this research study, teacher leadership may present itself in many different ways, often times difficult to operationalize. Although this may be true, Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argue that because qualitative researchers are able to be much closer to those participating in a research study, especially compared to the use of instrumentation in quantitative research, they are poised to be able to gather data truer to reality. Qualitative researchers therefore aim to uncover the complexities of human behavior while attempting to provide the most holistic interpretation of the what is actually happening. Fortunately, those interested in employing qualitative research designs are not without answers, as data triangulation, member checking, the creation of an audit trail, and engaging in ethical research practices are effective ways to help improve the internal validity of a research study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Triangulation. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest, although qualitative research attempts to capture the truth behind a specific phenomenon, there are several strategies that researchers can use to increase the credibility of their findings.

Triangulation is one such example, a well-known strategy for greatly improving the

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

internal validity of a research study. Triangulation practices check multiple methods of qualitative data collection including interviews, documents, or observations against other dissimilar methods (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study for example, semi-structured interview responses were checked against direct observation data as well as any documents gathered pertaining to teacher leadership which assist in improving the internal validity of the study. Interview questions as well as direct observation and document review data gathering forms were derived from key emerging constructs in the literature surrounding autonomy, improved decision-making power, and improvements in the relationships and support from administrators (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). By aligning each data source around the emerging themes in the literature related to teacher job satisfaction, the researcher has improved the credibility of the study.

Member checking. The researcher attempted to protect the internal validity of the case study by establishing a member-checking process, a system by which the researcher shares the categories and coded data interpretation with several of the participants in order to see if the data interpretation is accurate per their individual experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This process happened upon completion of all interviews either by phone or through email communication depending on participant availability.

Audit trail. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) encourage researchers to employ the use of an audit trail, leading the reader through a detailed journey of how all forms of data were collected, an explanation of the category creation process, and how decisions were made throughout the research process. The researcher engaged in this process by keeping a detailed account of the dates and times of the semi-structured interviews, direct

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

observations, and document reviews in addition to the coding and transcription process during data analysis. These detailed accounts are included in the appendices of this report.

Ethics. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) report that researchers must ethically attempt to produce valid and reliable knowledge during the research process. Clearly important, applied fields such as education need research evidence that they trust will have a probable chance of success in helping those they teach or work with. Thus, the researcher attempted to ensure adequate levels of reliability and validity in the research study. Conducting the research in an ethical manner, the researcher is able to provide applied professionals with actionable evidence that may be able to change their daily practice in positive ways. Although qualitative research has the potential to strongly influence the professional world, it is not without its challenges, some of which relate to the size and scope of sample populations used in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These challenges are important to researchers as they attempt to use strategies such as triangulation and member checking to strengthen the internal validity and credibility of their research study. In addition, by attempting to improve the reliability and validity of a research study through the employment of effective strategies, qualitative researchers are able to strengthen the claims they are making about their data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

In this study, the researcher followed all ethical guidelines as outlined by the Youngstown State University Institutional Review Board. Evidenced in the interview protocols, participants were interviewed in a private, secure room, free of disruption. Also, participant confidentiality was protected because interviews were held off school

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

grounds and either before or after school hours. Lastly, direct observations were discrete and required only that the participant engage in their day to day responsibilities while the researcher used a standardized observation form to record data.

Additionally, strategies such as member checking and an audit trail were used to improve the internal validity and credibility of the research and its results. It was the intent that the research findings would match the reality of those teachers who teach in suburban school districts. Also, by including direct observation and document review data, the researcher was able to better capture the essence of teacher leadership practice more so than the administration of a survey instrument or questionnaire. As teacher leadership can be difficult to operationalize, the case study design selected was able to provide a better understanding of the actual roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders.

Research stance. The acknowledgment of one's personal subjectivity in qualitative research is an important step in the way that data is gathered and also interpreted. My research focus is one that is close to my heart. Over the past seven years I have been elected and appointed to various leadership positions within my school district. Acting as a department chair, building leadership team representative, district leadership team member, and instructional coach, I have experienced public school teaching in a deeper and more professionally satisfying manner.

Not only responsible for my students in my classroom, I also have served the other members of my department, colleagues within the building, and also the district at large. These responsibilities are part of a growing movement towards distribution of leadership, an administrative shift that has placed teachers closer to the center of day-to-

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

day decision making (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). This ability to lead from a position that once was devoid of any administrative leadership beyond the confines of the classroom (Danielson, 2006) has the potential to increase job satisfaction and even more important, teacher retention. Although these two are perhaps linked, my research study aims to explore the roles that teacher leaders play in their buildings and if in fact job satisfaction is elevated once placed in those positions.

Being an insider in terms of teacher leadership and teacher leadership policy creation has both its benefits and drawbacks in terms of research. As a teacher leader, I clearly understand the sometimes-subtle nuances of being a teacher leader, which helps me more clearly understand the data gathered from the teacher leaders in this study. I also am well-versed in the TLEP standards, which also allows me to see many of the hallmarks of the program evidenced in the data collection process.

Conversely, by being an insider, I also may fail to acknowledge certain aspects of teacher leadership as roles, responsibilities, and experiences may differ from my own. I see improved levels of job satisfaction from my teacher leadership role and clearly would like others to experience the same feelings. Therefore, it is entirely possible that since I am so close to teacher leadership both in practice and policy, I may unconsciously miss certain pieces of information that may in fact be present in the teacher leaders' responses or actions. Regardless, being a teacher leader does provide me with more credibility as a researcher in teacher leadership as does the fact that I helped to create policy in this area as well.

Personal, anecdotal evidence suggests that job satisfaction does increase for those accepting or being nominated to positions of teacher leadership, so I was interested to see

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

if others experience these same feelings. Therefore, on a personal level, I consider the study of teacher leadership and job satisfaction to be highly important. It is worth noting that my personal feelings may have very well impeded various parts of the data collection and interpretation which is why an honest look into my overall subjectivity of the subject matter is in order during the entire research process.

Personally, I have experienced elevated job satisfaction from leading in various capacities within my school district. Colleagues that I work with each day also have indicated similar feelings. Over the years I have had many personal conversations with other teacher leaders, and many have indicated that they too appreciate the decision-making power of their role and find that it allows them to experience their profession beyond the realm of everyday classroom teaching. Considering my own personal viewpoint and the others that I've spoken with, I believe that I have some personal biases that lead me to believe that most teacher leaders do experience similar feelings about teacher leadership and job satisfaction.

My initial role as researcher was to gather interview, direct observation, and document-based data from those who are included in my study. Analyzing the data collected from interviews, direct observations, and teacher leadership documents assisted me in analyzing the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders and how they relate to job satisfaction. As convenience sampling can be an easy route for researchers to take, I opted to instead attempt to provide greater generalizability by broadening and diversifying my sample population. Using the teachers in a school district an hour away from my own allowed me to help guard against the threats that exist when using convenience sampling. It would have been convenient to sample teacher leaders in

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

my own school building due to the ease of selection and interviewing, but I believe that my own biases and preconceived notions of certain building members may be present in my research. Therefore, by choosing an alternate district, I did not personally know any of the teachers in the study.

During the interview process I took the time to develop trust and rapport with the participants of the study, especially considering that I too am a teacher leader. I began each interview sharing my experiences as a teacher leader and attempting to create a personal relationship before beginning the interview questions. As previously mentioned, I do experience increased job satisfaction as a teacher leader. This being said, it is possible that those feelings may have influenced the interview process as I may want to affirm my own feelings about teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Having been a teacher leader in many different capacities for more than half of my teaching career, I feel that I have a fairly comprehensive grasp of the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders. To this point, I attempted to not make assumptions that weren't present or disregard themes that emerged that run contrary to my personal feelings. I also tried to keep my composure if an interview went poorly or a teacher leader's viewpoints were different from my own. By doing all of the above I helped ensure that the data collected added to the validity of the study.

Once the interview data was collected, it was important to exercise various strategies to promote validity and reliability. Therefore, I employed the use of other sources of data including direct observations and document reviews to broaden and enrich the data collected during the interview process. By including data triangulation, I attempted confirm the findings that may have emerged via the interview process.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Additionally, upon completion of the data analysis process, I took the information back to the people who were interviewed, which was an excellent way to ensure that the data gathered was in fact an accurate portrayal of a participant's feelings (Merriam, 2002). Lastly, as the interview questions deeply explored the topic of teacher leadership and job satisfaction, these methods provided readers with what Merriam (2002) calls a rich, thick description in addition to strengthening the internal validity of the study. This helped the readers to be able to indicate whether or not their personal experiences relate to the participants included in the study.

Acknowledging my own personal biases and assumptions of teacher leadership in relation to job satisfaction ensured that interview data was both gathered and interpreted with as little subjectivity as possible. By nature, qualitative research may always experience varying degrees of subjectivity, but researchers can aim to mitigate these personal biases by practicing deep introspection both prior to and during the research process. It is my hope that other teacher leaders do in fact experience similar feelings of job satisfaction as I do but by being keenly aware of personal biases I will be able to better understand their true feelings, even if contrary to my own, with much more clarity.

Data Analysis

Narrative approach to data analysis. As the data analysis process is ever-evolving, an emic approach was the starting point, analyzing the perspectives, thoughts, and words of those being studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Over time however, an etic approach was employed, comparing the pre-existing body of research to those that were studied (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As each approach was further explored and data were analyzed, the researcher attempted to determine whether certain evidence-based phenomenon did occur when compared to the sample population being studied.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The prior literature reviewed showed that autonomy, administrative supports, decision making, and positive environmental factors all played roles in improving the job satisfaction of teachers (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). As such, the interview questions used in this study aimed to uncover if these elements combine to improve the job satisfaction of the participants involved. Although few studies exist that directly attempt to define how teacher leadership improves job satisfaction, by combining the factors that have been shown to increase job satisfaction in the interview, direct observation, and document review process, the researcher was able to better understand the connection between teacher leadership and job satisfaction.

As Yin (2014) suggests, in the early stages of data analysis it is important to first search for patterns in the data that show consistency across all data types. The researcher initially explored interview responses, direct observation field notes, and reviewed documents to search for concepts and insights that share similarities. Although statistical analyses provide many models for analyzing data, case study data analysis depends more on the researcher to consider possible explanations and even alternate interpretations (Yin, 2014). The researcher elected to rely on a theoretical proposition supporting teacher leadership practices to assist in improving job satisfaction and teacher retention. Although little evidence exists showing that teacher leadership improves job satisfaction, the factors that influence job satisfaction in teachers have been shown to be present in those accepting teacher leadership roles. These factors include increased autonomy, decision-making power, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Therefore, the researcher constructed

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

research questions based on the theoretical proposition that teacher leadership may have the potential to influence job satisfaction.

Yin (2014) strongly encourages researchers to ensure that data analysis is completed at a high-quality level. Thus, several core tenets were followed to ensure data analysis was completed at this level. It is paramount that all evidence collected is included in the data analysis process. Also, any alternative interpretations were entertained in addition to reporting any evidence that addresses these interpretations. The data analyzed in this research study also addressed the most significant aspect of the research study conducted, focusing on the important issues instead of spending time with lesser issues. This is important because those with a critical eye may believe that a researcher purposely focused on lesser issue to divert attention away from potential contrary findings. Lastly, it is important that researchers use their expert knowledge to show a true understanding of their research topic so as to demonstrate a greater awareness of current trends and thoughts surrounding the topic of research (Yin, 2014).

Yin (2014) shares several analytic techniques that assisted in taking multiple forms of collected data and interpreting the findings. As mentioned above, the researcher attempted to determine if the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders influence job satisfaction. Due to this theoretical proposition, the pattern matching analytic technique was used to match the research hypothesis with the findings from the interviews, direct observations, and documents reviewed (Yin, 2014).

Semi-structured interview data were analyzed by comparing field notes and digital recordings to gain a better understanding of each participant's roles, responsibilities, and experiences as a teacher leader. Initially, field notes were hand

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

written and ultimately typed in the final research report. Additionally, digital recordings were transcribed, a process that was conducted by the CITI-trained researcher upon completion of the data gathering process. Document reviews were analyzed by determining if the artifacts gathered related to the emerging findings in the reviewed literature pertaining to autonomy, decision making, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Using a standardized document review form, the researcher attempted to identify how each artifact relates to the emergent themes in the literature.

Biographic approach to data analysis. Considering that teacher leadership practices vary across school districts, case study research has largely been used to capture the essence of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders. As such, qualitative research has been able to show a holistic picture of teacher leaders by analyzing questionnaire or interview data and determining key categories in which this data will be placed into. Historically, interviews, observations, and document reviews have been the three main data collection tools available to researchers employing a case study research design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This study attempts to uncover how each data source relates to elements of teacher job satisfaction including autonomy, decision making, and administrative support, all emergent factors in the literature reviewed that pertained to teacher job satisfaction.

Category and Coding Methods

As data were gathered it was important to accurately identify the categories into which data would be coded. Using a systematic process to identify categories, the researcher derived categories with the study's purpose, the researcher's knowledge, and the explicit meanings of those involved in the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Merriam

and Tisdell (2016) suggest that the researcher name each category based on three sources: the researcher, the exact words of those being researched, and sources outside of the study such as the key literature on the topic of study. It is of utmost importance that the categories selected are responsive to the research questions used in the study while also being exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitive, and conceptually congruent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

To assist in the category-creation process, the researcher utilized a systematic approach to coding the data collected. As several phases exist in the coding process, open coding was first used to identify any unit of data that may be relevant to the study. To follow, axial coding was then utilized to relate categories to one another, which aided in furthering the refinement of the categories as a whole. It is entirely possible that categories may be different across data sources; however, the researcher was explicitly listening and looking for examples of autonomy, decision making, and administrative support, all aspects of teacher job satisfaction that were emergent in the literature (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). Finally, selective coding was then implemented to identify a core category that would be used to organize further related data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Interview coding. Field notes and digital recordings were used to collect data during the semi-structured interview process. By using both methods of data collection, the researcher aimed to ensure the accuracy of the responses considering both field notes and digital recordings were later transcribed and analyzed. Several coding methods exist, but open coding was used to begin the category creation process while axial or analytical coding was implemented as key themes emerged from the interpretation of the data

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

gathered from the participants during the interview process. During this time, a list of notes, comments, and key terms was created to document the concepts that emerge from this data source (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This was an important process as direct observation and document review data were then coded in the same process but compared to the initial interview data gathered.

Direct observation coding. The researcher employed the use of a direct observation data collection form that had key job satisfaction factors in a graphic organizer format, allowing the researcher to quickly identify observed behaviors while aligning them with the appropriate factor. These factors were preselected by providing aspects of teacher job satisfaction emergent in the literature reviewed such as autonomy, decision making, and administrative support (Aspen Institute, 2014; Colbert et al., 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Remijan, 2014). In each section of the graphic organizer, there was ample space to provide narrative descriptions, quotes, and other key observed behaviors. As with the semi-structured interview data, direct observation data began with an open coding phase, moving to an axial or analytic phase, and ultimately compared against the initial interview categories that were created prior to direct observation analysis. A master was created of comments, notes, and terms that emerged in both the interview process and direct observation process, which served as a rudimentary outline showing the recurring patterns and themes in both data sources. These patterns and recurring themes eventually became the categories into which existing and further data were organized (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Document review coding. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggest, content analysis is almost always implemented when coding documents. Content analysis can

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

assist in looking for similar themes or responses as well as determining the variety of messages emerging from the set of documents. It is important that the documents analyzed provide insights that are relevant to the research questions being used; therefore, the researcher ensured that a list of document examples was evident on the invitation to participate sent to the ten teacher leaders in the research population. As the documents were collected from the four final participants, the researcher investigated if those documents related to the interview and direct observation data sources as well as the aspects of teacher job satisfaction emergent in the literature reviewed such as autonomy, decision making, and administrative support. Using a document review analysis form (see Appendix G), the researcher was able to determine what aspects of the documents reviewed fit into the predetermined factors mentioned above.

As with the semi-structured interview and direct observation data above, the researcher began by open coding the data, eventually utilizing axial or analytic coding to interpret the data gathered. As with the two other data sources above, document review data was then added to the master list of emerging comments, notes, and terms to determine key categories that emerge. Once this process was complete, the researcher then organized the entire master list of comments, notes, and terms into the categories that were elaborated upon in further analysis. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), categories must be responsive to the research question while also being exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitive, and conceptually congruent. The researcher made every attempt to ensure that these four criteria are met while analyzing interview, direct observation, and document review data.

Limitations and Delimitations

As with any study, several limitations exist that may affect the generalizability of the data gathered from the sample population. The four teacher leaders selected to participate in this study all work in an above-average socioeconomic, suburban school district. Although many districts across the nation likely mirror the demographics of this district, urban and rural settings likely vary in many ways. Additionally, the four teacher leaders selected all completed a formal teacher leadership endorsement from an accredited university, a factor that those operating as informal or formal teacher leaders in other districts may not have experienced. Considering this program also varies in scope and sequence from other endorsement and teacher leadership programs, the participants involved may have received different training than others who have completed leadership training programs.

Therefore, as a delimitation, the researcher has deliberately chosen to use purposive sampling to explore the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of four teacher leaders who have completed the same teacher leadership endorsement program instead of selecting teacher leaders at random from area school districts. Although the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of the selected teacher leaders may not be able to be generalized to all other populations of teacher leaders, the data gathered can provide school districts with foundational research in which to help develop, support, and sustain teacher leadership practices in their own school districts. In doing so, school districts may be able to improve the job satisfaction of those teaching in their school districts.

Summary

Through the semi-structured interview, direct observation, and document review process, the researcher was able to thoroughly explore how teacher leadership influences

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

job satisfaction in the sample population being studied. To strengthen these possible results, direct observations and document reviews were also implemented. In addition, a member-checking process and audit trail helped to improve the internal validity of the study, all triangulation efforts that aided in providing a thick, rich description of participants' responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

By ensuring that interview questions, direct observation protocols, and document review analysis procedures were aligned with the key constructs shown in the literature to improve job satisfaction in teachers, the researcher hopes to show that teacher leadership positions may be able to improve the job satisfaction in teachers by providing increased autonomy, improved relationships with administrators and colleagues, and also increased decision-making power. These results have the potential to influence not only teachers but also school districts, who then may be able to better retain their teachers by developing, employing, and sustaining teacher leadership positions.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Introduction

This study aims to provide in-depth exploration of how teacher leadership positions influence job satisfaction and teacher retention. Data were gathered from four teacher leaders through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and leadership-based document reviews. Data was gathered, coded, categorized, and later analyzed to determine how the teacher leaders studied were influenced by their leadership roles, specifically in the areas of autonomy, decision making, and administrative support. All three of these constructs have been thoroughly reported in the reviewed literature as being outcomes of teacher leadership that may relate to job satisfaction and teacher retention.

In the following section, a background of the school district in which the teacher leaders work is provided, in addition to descriptive information about each teacher leader. Additionally, emergent themes from the gathered data will be reported with a follow-up analysis ensuing afterward. Key themes were derived using both open and axial coding in addition to matching gathered data with an in-depth member-checking process to ensure the interview, observation, and document review responses reflect the authentic experiences of those being studied. It is the expressed hope of the researcher that the data gathered and shared has provided a thick, rich description of the four teacher leaders that were studied.

Description of Sample

Four teacher leaders agreed to participate in this study on teacher leadership and its effect on job satisfaction and teacher retention. Each participant works in the Smithville School District in grades K-12 and has been a teacher for at least four years.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Each teacher leader completed a twelve-credit-hour Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program (TLEP) program as a member of a ten-person cohort. The cohort completed all the same classes and course requirements including a culminating project, which had cohort members create a school-based initiative that would be implemented as a part of the program completion requirements. Each of the participants were designated as teacher leaders by their district due to their training, but not all participants had formal teacher leadership titles such as grade level chair, instructional coach, etc. This allowed each participant to lead in a way that they saw fit, selecting areas where they felt their skill set was needed. Aspen Institute (2014), Danielson (2006), and York-Barr and Duke (2004) espouse this belief and practice of informal leadership because it allows teachers to lead in the ways that they feel they are best suited.

Recruitment Process

Before the study commenced, ten teacher leaders were sent invitations to participate. Letters were hand delivered to the Smithville School District main office and were distributed to ten teacher leaders via interoffice mail. Although the researcher made every attempt to gain more participants, only four indicated interest in being a part of the study. Random selection was not administered due to the low response rate. After the four participants returned the invitation to participate letters, emails and phone calls were used to set up times for interviews and observations. All four teacher leaders who agreed to participate via the invitation to participate letter completed all stages of the research study including the interview, direct observation, and teacher leader document submission.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Teacher Leader Endorsement Program (TLEP)

The Teacher Leader Endorsement Program is a formal teacher leader training program that is offered by several universities in the state of Ohio. The teacher leadership program requires that applicants hold a master's degree from an accredited institution and have four years of experience to be considered for admittance. The teacher leaders studied were all required to complete four courses as curricular requirements. The four required courses were in the areas of: curriculum leadership, instructional leadership for teacher leaders, coaching and mentoring for teacher leaders, and an advanced practicum and internship. The program is based on the Ohio's Teacher Leader Standards, which align with the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession. The coursework requirements culminate in a comprehensive leadership plan that is designed to be implemented at the building or district level (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). When the coursework is completed, teachers may add a teacher leader endorsement to their teaching license or professional or permanent teaching certificate. At present, the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program is in revision as it is being specifically aligned with the newly created Ohio Teacher Leader Framework. The researcher is currently assisting the Ohio Department of Education in revising these standards.

Many teachers participating in the TLEP training completed the coursework as a cohort, including the four teacher leaders from the Smithville School District involved in this research study. As of this report, two ten-person cohorts have completed the TLEP training in the Smithville School District. At the beginning of this study the second ten-person cohort was still completing their coursework, which is why only ten teacher leaders at Smithville were available for study. All teachers in the Smithville School District were able to apply to be a part of the first TLEP cohort, although only ten were

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

ultimately selected by the district administration. Each teacher leader in this study was motivated or inspired to apply for the TLEP training for different reasons. The timing was right for Kelly. Sara was reluctant but decided it would be in her best interest. Ruby however, gave a much more in-depth testimonial in a set of journal entries she shared alongside her final project.

Initially Ruby indicated that she was interested in participating in the TLEP training because she needed credit hours for her teaching license renewal. In addition, Ruby was encouraged by her administrator, so she decided to enter the program shortly after. As she began her course of study and became immersed in the readings, activities, and dialogue with others, she indicated that the TLEP became much more than credit hours to her. She arrived upon the realization that “we are responsible for creating the leaders of tomorrow.” This gave a new importance to her time completing the cohort coursework as she thought not only about herself, but also her students and colleagues. Ruby wanted to learn more about leadership so she in turn could train others to be better leaders. The skills gained during the TLEP training will be a highlight of this report, as all the teacher leaders studied indicated improved job satisfaction and empowerment levels from completing the TLEP training.

School District Background

The Smithville School District is a semi-rural school district residing in Ohio. Presently, the school district enrolls 2,986 students grades Pre-K-12. The district is composed of five school buildings including one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools. Smithville School District has been listed as a U.S. News and World Report Best High School Gold Award winner and also achieved a performance index score that scored them as a top twenty-five school in the state of Ohio ([Smithville]

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

School District, n.d.). Smithville School District offers many sports, extracurricular programs, and community resources.

Smithville was founded in 1799, its first log cabin school opening in 1804 ([Smithville] Historical Society, n.d.). Over 15,000 people inhabit Smithville with a resident age average of nearly 48 years old ([Smithville, Ohio], n.d.). The average household income is approximately \$110,000 and median home values are \$242,000. 92% of the population in Smithville is white along with 3% black, 2% Asian, and 1% Hispanic respectively. The land area covers over 23 miles square miles with a population density of 678 people per square mile. The residents of Smithville have a 94% high school or higher education rate, with 50% of residents having at least a bachelor's degree or higher. The unemployment rate is 2.6% and the most common job occupations are management and sales. Politically, Smithville tends to be more liberal, having supported the Democratic party in all the past elections except for the 2016 election. Several church denominations are present in Smithville.

Teacher Leaders

Due to the small sample size, specific teacher leader profiles will be described in brief, so no teacher leader can be singled out and potentially identified. Although personal, professional, and demographic data will be generalized to protect the anonymity of each participant, profile information will be shared to gain insight into the attitudes and beliefs of each teacher leader.

The teacher leaders who participated in the study work in grades K-12, and each has been teaching for at least four years. Additionally, each teacher leader holds a master's degree. Both qualifications were prerequisites for entry into the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program (TLEP) they completed as a cohort. All teachers in the Smithville

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

School District were encouraged to participate in in the TLEP program by district administration, with ten ultimately submitting applications for review. Approximately 240 teachers and associated staff members work in the Smithville School District. After review of each application, all ten of the teacher leader applicants was accepted into the first cohort.

The Smithville School District secured a grant through a local university to cover the costs associated with providing the teacher leaders with TLEP training. Teacher leaders trained through TLEP received credit hours that could be applied to their teaching license renewal or for advancement on the education salary schedule. At present, the state of Ohio does not offer pay increases for TLEP completion. As of this report, twenty teacher leaders in the Smithville School District have completed a the formal TLEP training.

Ten teacher leaders were available for study, but only four were included after several attempts were made to increase participation. Most of the ten teacher leaders operate as informal leaders since Smithville School District does not staff many formal teacher leader positions. This belief in informal leadership runs true to the current thinking in teacher leadership practices (Aspen Institute, 2014; Danielson, 2006; York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Teacher Leader Profiles

Profile 1: Kelly

Kelly, an informal teacher leader, spends much of her time as a leader finding the “wiggle room,” searching for the times and places that she can make the most impact as a leader. Kelly spent much of interview sharing leadership related tasks that center around teaching, learning, and increasing student engagement. Kelly’s culminating Leadership

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Plan, a final project for the TLEP that required teacher leaders to develop an initiative which would be implemented in their school, focused specifically on the areas of increasing student engagement. Kelly spoke highly of the TLEP training, citing that in tandem with the teacher leadership role, she feels more empowered as a teacher leader. Additionally, during the observation portion of the study, the researcher witnessed a planning meeting between several grade level teachers that attempted to develop solutions for making lessons more engaging for students. Kelly indicated that she greatly enjoys her teacher leadership role even though she doesn't always see herself as a teacher leader. Indicating that teacher leadership is more of a mindset, Kelly has used her TLEP training to find the "wobble room," which has been both empowering while also increasing her job satisfaction.

Profile 2: Kim

Kim's role as a teacher leader spans beyond the school day as she leads an after-school adult and student group. Seeing the need many years ago, Kim took it upon herself to drive an initiative to create a group that would provide her students and their parents with an opportunity to be more involved not only in their school curriculum but the community as well. Kim spoke highly of her building administrator but indicated that a disconnect in leadership exists beyond the walls of her school. Kim's job satisfaction was high as she indicated that she has a great job and feels respected by both her peers and her community. Kim explained that she didn't feel her teacher leader role increased her job satisfaction but did indicate that the TLEP training helped her feel more empowered as a teacher and teacher leader. During the observation portion of the study, the researcher observed Kim leading an evening meeting of adults who were volunteering their time to be advisors for the students involved in the group.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Profile 3: Ruby

Ruby's teacher leader role allowed her to work more in a one-on-one fashion with her students. Ruby spoke highly of her building and upper administration, citing that she felt everyone worked together to achieve great things for the school, students, and community. Ruby indicated that her building principal was the primary driver of her satisfaction at work and that they both had a great personal and professional relationship with one another. After meeting her building principal during the observation portion of the study, I can see why Ruby enjoys her job. She shared that her teacher leadership role increased her job satisfaction mainly since her building principal is both empowering and supportive. Ruby stressed her desire to be a team player, but also shared that she doesn't always agree with colleagues, indicating that disagreements with staff members can be frustrating. Ruby plans to stay working in the district for the foreseeable future and is proud to be a part of the Smithville team.

Profile 4: Sara

Sara's teacher leader role also borders on the informal, although technically she does carry a traditional, formal leadership title. Sara spoke at length about the value of the TLEP training and believes that it has changed the way she carries herself each day. Like Ruby, Sara shared the challenges of working with colleagues, citing that some of the staff members she works with are resistant to change. Additionally, like Kim, Sara indicated that her building level administrator operates in a distributive leadership fashion while upper administration can sometimes feel much more top-down. Sara described many situations where she felt comfortable going to her principal with ideas and was both listened to and supported. During the observation portion of the study, the researcher was able to meet with the building principal and witnessed firsthand their ability to not only

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

listen but be open to new ideas. Sara explained that both the TLEP and the teacher leader role have empowered her to be a better leader and provide her with elevated levels of job satisfaction. As with the other teacher leaders studied, Sara indicated that she enjoys her job and plans to stay at Smithville for the foreseeable future.

Summary of the Results

Making Sense of the Data

Data was gathered from three sources: interviews, direct observations, and document reviews. Participants were interviewed in private locations, held before or after school hours and off school grounds. This was done to not only protect participant anonymity but confidentiality as well. Field notes and electronic recordings were taken during each interview to ensure the accuracy of the responses given by each participant. Prior to the interview process, participants were asked to bring at least one document that evidenced them engaging in leadership related activities. Direct observations were conducted during the school day. The researcher did not interfere in any way with the observations. The researcher used the same data gathering form for both document reviews and direct observations (see Appendix G).

Due to the immense volume of data collected during this study, the researcher analyzed data as they were collected, comparing newly collected data to existing interview, observation, and document review data in addition to the reviewed literature pertaining to both teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Because of this, the researcher was able to engage in an ongoing revision process, aiming to provide the most accurate portrayal of the experiences of the teacher leaders in the study. Although the interviews provided the researcher with the greatest volume and depth of evidence for analysis, the direct observation and document reviews added further clarity to the interview responses.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

It was important for the researcher to see teacher leaders in their natural environment, leading in real-world, practical ways. By observing each teacher leader, the researcher was able to increase his understanding of the experiences of those involved in the study. For example, during the observation process, the researcher was able to meet each building principal that the teacher leaders spoke so highly of, elevating the researcher's understanding of their daily experiences.

Interviews

As the researcher compared the results from the interviews, direct observations, and document reviews, it became clear that the data collected during the interview process provided the most insight into the experiences of the teacher leaders. Although the direct observations and document reviews added to the contextualization of the interview responses, the words spoken by each participant were powerful, passionate, and often inspiring. Each interview was recorded electronically and later transcribed to ensure the accurate representation of the teacher leaders' responses. In addition, the researcher was especially careful to capture the true nature of what was shared during the interview process by asking several clarification questions when answers were unclear or weren't specific enough to glean the appropriate context. In doing so, the researcher gained a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders in relation to job satisfaction and retention. Additionally, the researcher chose to not only show elements of each participants' teacher leadership experience that improved job satisfaction but also include factors that seemed to decrease their job satisfaction. For example, all participants indicated struggles with administrators and colleagues when it came to enacting change or offering suggestions for improved practice. By including

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

these in the key themes shared below, the researcher was able to capture a better understanding of the experiences of the teacher leaders studied.

Although participants were free to respond to interview questions based on their comfort level, all participants chose to elaborate upon their answers, providing several examples that directly aided in the understanding of their true feelings as teacher leaders. Interviews ranged from twenty-two minutes to an hour, and participants appeared to enjoy the mental exercise of reflecting upon their work in their schools. Many participants thanked me after the interviews, indicating their enjoyment of the process. It appears that teacher leadership roles in addition to the formal teacher leader endorsement training improved job satisfaction, outweighing the challenges experienced with colleagues, administration, and other workplace stressors. Below, each theme is explored and evidence of each is detailed with examples from the interview, observations, and documents that were reviewed for each participant.

Direct Observations

Teacher leader observations were conducted over the span of two school days, and the researcher was able to observe teacher leaders leading meetings, training parent volunteers, and planning building initiatives with colleagues. By observing teacher leaders in their natural environment, the researcher was able to view leadership practices directly. The researcher did not interfere in any way during the direct observation process and used the Direct Observation and Document Review Data Form (see Appendix G) to record observable evidence during the observation. Observations lasted no longer than 30 minutes. As will be reported in detail later, the researcher was able to view many examples of teacher leadership in the interactions with colleagues, support, staff, and administration. In this, the direct observations were integral in capturing the true nature of

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

the role that each teacher leader plays within their school district. It was particularly powerful for the researcher to meet building administrators during the observation process considering they were mentioned so many times in each of the teacher leader interviews. This allowed the interview data to “come alive” and provided the researcher with a much greater understanding of the experiences of each teacher leader and the positive influence their building administrators had on their overall work experience.

Document Reviews

Each teacher leader supplied the researcher with at least one document that evidenced them being a part of or leading some type of task or initiative unrelated to the classroom related duties that they perform daily. Documents gathered ranged from newsletters to staff, TLEP final projects that were enacted within the school district, and data collection forms that were created to assist staff members. Each of the documents were created by the individual and highlighted many of the cornerstones of teacher leadership including autonomy, decision making, initiative, and administrative support. As with the direct observations, the reviewed documents assisted the researcher in contextualizing the experiences of the teacher leaders studied. By comparing the teacher leader documents with the interview and direct observation data, the researcher was able to gain a better understanding of each teacher leaders’ roles, responsibilities, and experiences.

Coding and Category Creation

The researcher made every attempt to transcribe and analyze each source of data immediately after it was gathered to capture the subtleties or emotions shared during the interviews or observations. Each transcript was carefully analyzed by using both open and axial coding to develop and later refine categories, themes, and important findings

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

based on topics that were shared across all interviews, in addition to key findings from the reviewed research. During the open coding process, many codes were created, highlighting the key ideas teacher leaders shared during the interviews, displayed during the observations, or evidenced in the documents that were reviewed. Many codes were shared by all of the teacher leaders studied, while others were unique to specific teacher leaders. Open codes were then placed into broad categories such as empowerment, support, frustrations, autonomy, decision making, differences in administrative style, taking initiative, and relationships. During this preliminary process, it was helpful to refer to the conceptual framework and literature reviewed earlier in this report, a strategy that would be later revisited as themes and key findings were derived from the data collected.

Broad categories were initially created but as each interview was conducted, observation made, and document reviewed, the researcher began to crystallize the categories based on the synthesis of multiple sources of data from multiple participants. For example, after each interview was transcribed, the researcher went back to early interview transcriptions, observations, and reviewed documents, revising the categorization process to reflect new categories found in later interviews. Additionally, the researcher compared those findings with the reviewed literature to determine if the salient qualities of the interview, observation, and documents reviewed aligned with the existing body of literature or if new findings emerged. By doing this, the researcher was able to ensure that categories were true to what was heard, observed, or viewed and then compared against the existing body of research on teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Once this process was completed, key themes and important findings were generated that reflected how the four teacher leaders studied were influenced by their roles.

Audit trail. An audit trail was also used during this process to document the step-by-step process that was used to ensure that the categories and themes selected were not only the most emergent but the most salient aspects of what was gathered view the data collection process. Keeping the audit trail as a living document helped the researcher revise and refine the categorization, theme building, and important finding process and helped establish trustworthiness with anyone reading the final report. As can be expected, qualitative research affords much latitude in the data analysis process and the researcher wanted to provide the reader with an in-depth look into the actual data analysis process.

Member checking. In addition to an audit trail, the researcher completed a member-checking process by sharing the interpretation of the interview, observation, and document review data, taking it back to the participant, to ensure that what was captured and collected during the data collection process was what each participant was intending to evidence in their response.

Ruby enthusiastically agreed with the findings of the study indicating that “I think all the areas you shared on right on point.” She also reiterated her thoughts on her professional and personal relationship with her building principal and how influential this relationship has been in improving her job satisfaction. As mentioned earlier, her building principal has afforded Ruby with increased decision-making power in addition to a large amount of professional autonomy.

Kelly also agreed with the findings of the study, especially focusing on the areas of decision making and empowerment in her responses to the results. She also made special mention to comment that “[she] couldn’t agree more,” and that she feels empowered as a teacher leader. Additionally, Kelly shared that the TLEP training was a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

rewarding process and that she has seen improvements in her confidence and self-efficacy from completing the TLEP training.

Sara indicated that she agreed with most of the findings noting that she especially believed that teacher leadership doesn't have to be formal. Sharing that "many feel that they can't lead or drive initiatives because they don't have the right credentials or haven't taken certain classes." This statement aligns completely with the work by Danielson (2006). Interestingly, Sara does have a formal teacher leader title but stressed several times during her interview that she thought her informal teacher leader role was much more important to her.

True to her words earlier, although Kim shared that she feels more empowered to find the wiggle room after receiving the TLEP training, she feels that her ideas may not be listened to beyond her school building walls. Suggesting that perhaps a more formal teacher leadership role may help with this issue, she did not agree that she has experienced increased levels of job satisfaction largely due to this fact. Worth noting however is the fact that Kim indicated during her interview that she enjoyed her job and plans to stay for the foreseeable future.

Lastly, after the audit trail and member checking process the researcher asked several other teacher leaders who were not affiliated with the study if the results gathered were indicative of the feelings that they have as teacher leaders. Each teacher leader that participated in the study indicated that the results gathered were indicative of the general feelings they have as teacher leaders including elements of empowerment, autonomy, and improving decision making power. For example, one teacher who was not affiliated with this study agreed that being a part of the decision-making process helped him to feel

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

empowered because he felt like he was taken more seriously by administrators and colleagues after being a part of the building leadership team in his school.

Another teacher leader not affiliated with the study also shared that levels of decision making power were increased due to his teacher leadership role. He explained that due to his involvement on both the building and district leadership team, he feels more connected to key decisions made at his school and feels that he has a direct impact on those decisions. Lastly, one instructional coach not affiliated with the study shared that his sense of autonomy has been elevated since taking on his formal leadership role. He shared that his ability to find places where his skill set can be useful is a part of his daily practice as an instructional coach. Interestingly, this revelation directly supports the concept of “wobble room” that teacher leaders evidenced not only in their interviews but also in the direct observation process. During the member-checking process, all information shared protected the confidentiality and anonymity of each participant as pseudonyms were used throughout and any other distinguishing factors were generalized.

Resulting Themes

Theme 1: Teacher Leaders Feel Empowered

Empowerment was most clearly evidenced throughout the interview and direct observation portions of the study. Teacher leaders like Kelly, Sara, and Ruby all seemed passionate about finding the “wobble room” and searching for ways that they can make their school better. Each working with their unique skills sets, the teacher leaders studied each had something to add to their school that transcended their own classrooms and assisted others in areas of teaching, learning, and curriculum. Empowerment is not a word that is used lightly. Teacher leaders like Kelly and Kim used the actual word

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

“empowered” in their interview responses and people like Sara spoke about empowerment by saying:

I feel proud that this person who barely knows me comes and asks for my opinion and makes me feel like my thoughts and my ideas are worthwhile.

It became evident that, since the administrative team and the teacher leaders were all trained under the TLEP model, each group was educated in best practices that are helping move the district forward. Upon completion of the TLEP training, teacher leaders and administrators had a candid meeting to discuss what was learned and in what direction they wanted to head as a team going forward. About this meeting, Kelly indicated that she felt that the meeting was a “breakthrough” that has changed the culture at Smithville immensely. She indicated that the district administrative team was somewhat reluctant to relinquish some of the top-down control, but that they have embraced more of a distributive leadership model for the most part. In her interview, Kelly shared “Our district has truly empowered all teachers,” when referring to the fact that administrators and teachers are both now talking the same language when it comes to teacher leadership and leadership in general.

Because of this newfound understanding, teacher leaders like Kelly and Sara feel empowered to find the wiggle room and attempt to make real changes that will help their students and school buildings. This has had a ripple effect because teacher leaders are leading others who are slowly “getting on the bus.” As participants like Kelly, Sara, and Ruby indicated, the comfort level with trying to enact change in their school building has been elevated due to their teacher leadership role and that the district administrators were aware that they had received the TLEP training.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Another example of empowerment that was evident during the data collection process was the fact that the upper administrative team allowed the teachers to design their own curriculum for a specific subject area. They provided training for the staff in curriculum development, and they allowed teachers to work collectively to design, support, and implement a curriculum that they believe will improve student outcomes the most. Both teacher leaders and non-teacher leaders worked collaboratively on designing the curriculum.

At present, teacher leaders like Kelly and Sara indicate that they have assisted non-teacher leaders in supporting the implementation of the designed curriculum. Additionally, Kelly shared that the created curriculum is always a work in progress and that teachers are always attempting to make improvements that will better assist student learning. She also explained that the upper administration has been especially supportive in these areas. Kelly indicated these upper administrative efforts went a long way with the staff because it empowered teachers to make decisions and implement a curriculum that they could stand firmly behind.

After analyzing the TLEP training final projects that were supplied to researcher by both Kelly and Ruby, it became evident that they both felt empowered to attempt to make a real difference in their school. Throughout the final projects, collaboration with others was evident, including frequent collaboration efforts with building and district administrators. The final projects were bold and relevant, Kelly's attempting to improve student engagement and Ruby's attempting to improve staff relationships. Additionally, direct observation data showcased teachers working alongside colleagues and administrators in very collaborative ways. Ruby, for example, led a meeting of teachers

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

and administrators and showed confidence and poise when dealing with difficult situations or disagreements. Kelly evidenced her adeptness at finding the wiggle room by leading a meeting to suggest ways to make learning more fun for the students. Sara trained an adult volunteer while also facilitating a multi-media-based lessons for her students. Lastly, Kim facilitated an adult meeting with calmness and confidence as she made scheduling and organizational decisions that not only influenced her students but the parents of those students as well.

One area where teacher leaders like Kelly were empowered is in their day to day interactions with colleagues who had not been through the TLEP training. Kelly shared:

The ones that haven't gone through it, the ones that already are empowered are already starting to pick them up and saying it's okay that you're doing this...you're rubbing their backs at the end of the day...it's okay to make this decision you can try this and do that.

Indicating directly after this comment that some colleagues are still resistant, Kelly felt empowered enough to support her colleagues even if it came with some frustration. Ruby also evidenced this idea of helping lead others in her collection of journal entries. Not just regulated to leading students, Ruby felt that her TLEP training helped inspire others to become leaders themselves. As one can easily imagine, the Smithville School District will continue to be a high performing district if these are the beliefs of the teachers in their school. Now with twenty teachers who have completed their TLEP training, Smithville School District is poised to do great things as district.

Theme 2: Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program Training Improves Self-Efficacy and Confidence

Like some other states, Ohio has created and supported a Teacher Leader Endorsement Program that is offered by several universities. The goal of programs like these is to help build the capacities of teachers and provide them with the skills and experience to become better leaders in their own buildings. Each of the four teacher leaders studied completed a formal TLEP prior to participating in this study. Benefits of going through the TLEP were evidenced throughout each teacher leaders' interview responses and observations.

Teacher leaders like Sara and Kelly indicated that the confidence gained from going through the TLEP training has changed the way they interact with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents. Sara, for example, indicated that she felt like the TLEP training has improved her skill set and has provided her with a confidence that wasn't as present prior to the training. This was on display during the observation as Sara's building principal visited her classroom to see the good things going on that day. She seemed comfortable with him being in the room and welcomed the visit. Although no teacher leader specifically described improvements to self-efficacy, it was evidenced many times during the interview, observation, and document review process.

Improved confidence and self-efficacy has allowed teacher leaders to not only help drive initiatives but also be willing to stand by their decisions and actions even when they are not initially popular. Most of the teacher leaders commented that they prefer to try new teaching strategies or ideas in their own classrooms first and then often share results with others if those strategies or ideas are effective. Additionally, participants shared that both district and building administration sees them as go-to people when it

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

comes to input and other related needs. This identification was likely enhanced by the work each teacher leader completed when creating, initiating, and supporting their TLEP final projects.

The TLEP final projects supplied by Kelly and Ruby assisted in better understanding the culminating project of the TLEP and the skills necessary for proper implementation. After viewing each TLEP final project, it was clear that to properly roll-out and implement the planned initiative, many collaborative and leadership skills would be needed.

The TLEP final projects were mentioned on numerous occasions during both interviews and direct observations. Kim, for example, shared that her old principal was very supportive during the implementation part of her final project. Sara indicated that even though her project has long been completed, others are using her work to improve student outcomes. Kelly indicated support from her administration when implementing her final project. In discussing these projects further, each was a mildly apprehensive to share their projects because although they were clearly in the best interest of the students and staff, they weren't sure how they would be received by their colleagues.

Theme 3: Teacher Leaders Experience Role Ambiguity

As Kelly said, "I don't wake up in the morning and ask, how am I going to be a teacher leader today?" Three out of the four teacher leaders indicated that the title of teacher leader posed challenges for them because they didn't always see themselves as a teacher leader. Instead, both Sara and Kelly indicated that their teacher leadership role was much more of a mindset. During the observation portion of data collection Kelly, Kim, and Sara all indicated that they weren't sure how much leadership would be displayed. Their beliefs aside, during the observation process, Sara trained an adult

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

volunteer, Kelly met with team members to create a plan for improving student engagement, Ruby facilitated a meeting of teachers and administrators, and Kim lead a parent volunteer meeting. Therefore, even though teacher leaders we reluctant to call themselves leaders, they did lead in ways that were easy to identify.

Based on the interviews and observations conducted in this study, the researcher infers that although role ambiguity does exist for Sara, Kelly, and Kim, each enjoys the ability to find the wiggle room without feeling the need to complete the responsibilities of a formal teacher leadership role. Each has the freedom to find areas of need and fill them if they feel so inclined. Being able to pick and choose areas of interest surely must be exciting because the responsibilities and pressures of a formal leadership role are not present. From an administrative perspective, this may be challenging to manage but also potentially powerful as informal teacher leaders will likely be more passionate about helping when they find a wiggle room moment they believe in strongly.

Both Kelly and Sara indicated that they lead by example, searching for the space where they can find unique ways to help improve both school and student outcomes. This was especially powerful considering some of the teacher leaders have been able to influence changes at the building and district level. Teacher leaders like Kim, Sara, and Kelly evidence the fact that formal boundaries for their teacher leader role did not expressly exist and that it was up to them to decide what their role would look like daily. Although this autonomy is likely desirable, it also poses challenges when dealing with others because the role of teacher leader is not clearly defined. Both Kelly and Sara shared frustrations stemming from colleagues who felt the TLEP trained teacher leaders have been placed on a pedestal by the administration. To evidence this, teacher leaders

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

indicated some reluctance on behalf of their colleagues when implementing their TLEP final projects. As will be discussed later, colleague frustrations were common discussion points in each teacher leader interview.

Theme 4: Positive Relationships with Building Administrators Lead to Increased Job Satisfaction.

It was clear that each teacher leader had positive relationships with their building administrators, all indicating that they felt supported and valued each day. Ruby spoke at length about her administrator and upper administration.

My principal is not going to ask me to do something that [they are] not willing to do [themselves]....[they] lead right beside you. Not in front of you, not behind you, she is right there with you supporting you. And I believe that across the board for all of our administrators.

Additionally, Ruby added that she and her building principal were friends both personally and professionally. Ruby would go on to say, “she’s been an amazing influence [on me] professionally, but also, personally.” Ruby indicated that if her building administrator left the district, it would be a devastating blow to her both personally and professionally. Kim also described positive relationships sharing:

I know that if I went to [the principal] with an issue...I try to find a solution before I dump a problem on [them]. So I think [the principal has] been pretty open to having an open door policy for all of us which is a good professional relationship.

Others like Sara and Kelly indicated that building principals were open to new ideas and would support virtually any initiative if teachers could show that it will directly benefit the students. After meeting Sara’s principal after the direct observation, it was

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

clear that from a building administrative perspective, the teachers were supported in the areas of teaching, learning, and curriculum. To this point, Sara shares:

Our building principal, we have I think, a good relationship. it is [their] first year so we are all getting to know [each other] and I think that will only grow stronger. I feel comfortable going and saying, hey, you know, I'm thinking about doing this what do you think? And [they] will support it if I can back it up. Now [they are] not going to be just like you know do whatever you want but if I can back it up and explain what the benefits of it are to our students then I think [they are] all for it.

Positive professional and personal relationships with building administrators were vital to the feelings of empowerment and job satisfaction in the teacher leaders studied. This fact was directly observed as the researcher witnessed Ruby's building principal collaborate with others in a meeting on a level that showcased the positive relationships, support, and level of care that would improve the satisfaction of anyone working under their leadership. Building on these stories, each teacher indicated that their TLEP final projects were well supported by administrators.

Theme 5: Leadership Style Differences Exist Between the Building and Upper Administration

It was clear from the interview responses and the direct observations of teacher leaders that at the building level, they feel strongly supported. Due to the direct observation process, the researcher was able to gain firsthand experience in this area. As an outsider, it was clear that building leaders were supportive of the teachers. This was particularly evidenced during Sara's direct observation where the researcher had an opportunity to have an impromptu meeting with the building leader and talk about his

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

educational beliefs. This building administrator seemed to have the best interest of the teachers in mind in terms of teaching and learning but also had high expectations for them as well. The principal shared how every effort is made to be out and about the building during the school day, saving the managerial work for the end of the day. Stressing the importance of teaching and learning, the principal echoed the literature reviewed, highlighting a focus on instruction and learning instead of just the completion of managerial duties. Areas of discussion also touched on the changes the principal had experienced over the years as an administrator and that job satisfaction was elevated due to shifting efforts to areas of teaching and learning instead of management. During this conversation, the researcher was able to crystalize the reasons why teacher leaders working in this building enjoyed their jobs. This impromptu interaction was important for the researcher to truly understand the underlying meaning of the words shared during the teacher leader interviews.

Although all teacher leaders evidenced words and actions that showed they felt they were supported and listened to within their buildings, this belief stood in contrast to the feelings they had at certain times towards the upper administration, where feelings were not always positive in the areas of support. The researcher was surprised to hear this repeatedly in three out of four of the teacher leader interviews. Since this topic is clearly sensitive, no teacher leader names will be used.

To begin, one teacher leader shared that she thinks that the upper administrative team is supportive for the most part but can be “out of touch” because they don’t witness the day-to-day struggles of teachers at the building level. She would later laud the upper

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

administration in other areas, however. One teacher leader shared these comments on the matter:

As far as above administrators, I believe that as much as [Smithville] would like to say that we're collaborative, you know, we work together and all that, there is a little bit of a top down mentality that's going on right now. It's more than a little frustrating to somebody who felt like they were treated like professionals for the first [part of their career].

Another teacher leader also echoed these same sentiments, revealing that beyond her building, she isn't sure that she would be supported as well as she should be in terms of decision making. As an example, two of the teacher leaders studied indicated that the upper administrative team decided to implement a wide-sweeping change without any real input from the teachers or teacher leaders. This was alarming to these two teacher leaders because the decision dramatically affects the ways teachers complete their day-to-day tasks. Other teacher leaders differed in their beliefs on this topic.

I feel very supported. I felt very supported even before going into the teacher leader program that I went through. So, has that increased, maybe a little because of the programming and the projects going off from there. But I've always felt supported in my position, not only with my immediate administrator but with the administration district wide.

Although some teacher leaders were somewhat critical of the upper administration in terms of support, one later shared when talking about a cultural shift that has taken place in the district: "I don't feel like it's top-down anymore." Upon analyzing the responses and observations of each teacher leader, the researcher concludes that although

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

examples of top-down leadership exist, the Smithville School District has attempted to shift more towards a distributive leadership model. Building on the fact that twenty teachers have been trained in the TLEP, the district can surely make a case that they are attempting to shift towards distributive leadership. Adding in the fact that district administration has allowed teachers to build their own curriculum, it appears that Smithville is trending in a progressive direction with teacher empowerment at its core.

Theme 6: Colleagues Can Be Frustrating

During each participant interview, challenges with colleagues were brought up regularly. Kelly indicated that the ten initial teacher leaders who were selected for the TLEP training weren't always seen in a favorable way by their colleagues who were not involved in the program. She shared that the ten-person teacher leader cohort were the "elites" and some resentment was evident early on by those not involved in the program. For example, Kelly would share:

[After] the first round...it was, we are the ten elites. [Others would ask] how did you get this position? Who do you think you are? I kind of got that perception. We had to get them to buy in.

This was specifically difficult in her situation because five teachers trained in the TLEP were in her building alone. To alleviate this issue, the researcher might suggest strategically placing trained teacher leaders throughout the school district so that each building has teacher leadership representation. Additionally, it may be helpful to consider having more than one trained teacher leader in each school to provide a support system for the trained teacher leaders. Perhaps teacher leaders would experience improvements in colleague interactions if a "strength in numbers" approach was implemented. The

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Smithville School District did encourage all teachers to apply for the TLEP training but only ten replied, many of which who worked in the same school building.

Teacher leaders like Kelly, Sara, and Ruby indicated that other teachers did not always accept the leadership provided by the teacher leaders, sometimes questioning their actions and even resisting those actions at times. Teacher leaders shared that initiatives they attempt to implement are not always met with acceptance, and sometimes tact and leverage must be used when sharing ideas or best practices because not all colleagues are on board with the changes. Ruby echoed this same sentiment sharing, “We are change agents yet a lot of the times as educators we struggle the most with change.” During the observation portion of the study the researcher was not able to sense any of these frustrations with colleagues. Each teacher leader seemed to collaborate and interact well with other teachers. It is possible that teacher leaders were more guarded than usual given the presence of a researcher. Regardless, it is likely that although these frustrations were not specifically observed, teacher leaders still experience colleague frustrations.

One teacher leader took her responses along a different path, focusing instead on challenges she has with union leadership. Indicating that she greatly respects and supports the role and efforts of her union, she doesn't always agree with their actions, especially during negotiations years. This teacher leader explained that she regularly works “off the clock” and that some of her colleagues have challenged her on this issue. Additionally, she shared that she takes issue with teachers putting in time sheets for extra work when extra tasks are being completing in the best interest of the students. She did suggest that she feels confident standing up for what she believes in even though her actions might not always please her colleagues. As with the other teacher leader

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

observations, the researcher did not witness these union issues at any point during the observation process.

Theme 7: Teacher Leaders Are Satisfied and Plan to Stay

Not one of the teacher leaders studied indicated job dissatisfaction levels enough to consider leaving their school district. All participants shared that they enjoyed working in Smithville and planned to stay for the foreseeable future. One teacher leader even plans to move into the district, so her children can be closer to their friends. Kelly's level of satisfaction was high, indicating that "on a scale of one to ten, [my job satisfaction is] pretty high on the charts." All teacher leaders appeared comfortable in their schools, greeting others and maintaining a positive demeanor throughout the observation. When teacher leaders were interacting with adults, conversations were positive and upbeat and a spirit of teamwork evidenced throughout all interactions. When interacting with building administrators, a level of comfort was present that showcased the positive relationships that were discussed earlier. When interacting with students, teacher leaders were both kind and direct, a helpful combination when interacting with children.

Only Ruby indicated that she would consider leaving if another "dream job" became available where she could create her own position working with area schools in connection with area universities. Ruby did comment that this new job would surely have to be a perfect fit for her, and that she was very happy in her present position. She shares:

The appreciation and the mutual respect is what keeps me [in Smithville]...I've been given the opportunities to grow professionally and personally and that has been amazing for my career.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Ruby's trajectory to Smithville was a rocky road. Having endured a difficult time at her old district, she praised Smithville by saying:

My last year in my old district, I cried every day on the way to and from school because it was that awful personally and professionally. I started looking for a job in September that year, that is how bad it was. After a year of being in Smithville, I wanted to go back and thank [my old administrator] for being placed in my world and having me suffer that year because it lead me to where I was. It's just a great place to be.

Three out of the four teacher leaders indicated that stresses outside of their district's control, such as potential decreases in state funding or excessive state or national micromanagement may influence their decision to not just leave their district but leave education entirely. Kelly however shared that she felt that her district has been able to insulate their employees any time wide-sweeping mandates are implemented at the state or national level that are simply out of the district's control. One such example involved union membership where the district decided to support a strong union presence at Smithville when other districts were changing the nature of union-management operations in their districts.

Theme 8: Teacher Leaders Experience the Same Everyday Challenges as Other Teachers

Although teacher leaders such as Sara, Ruby, and Kelly indicated that the TLEP training helped them improve their skill set as teachers, all participants indicated that they were surely not immune from the challenges that affect all teachers regardless of leadership title or experience. Workload stresses were highlighted across all interviews,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

including topics related to students and parents, colleagues, administrators, high expectations, and safety challenges.

Students. In terms of students, teacher leaders such as Ruby indicated that “kids are changing, families are changing, so that adds extra kinds of responsibilities and stress on my level.” She also shared that the social and emotional well-being of students has also become a real issue. Kim also indicated that certain grade levels in her building are notoriously challenging. During the direct observation portion of the study, challenging student issues were not observed although Kelly did lead a planning meeting to discuss ways to improve student engagement. Building on the work in her TLEP final project, Kelly’s belief in student engagement is clearly evidenced throughout her work as a teacher.

Colleagues. All teacher leaders shared examples of challenges they have experienced with colleagues. These challenges generally revolved around issues pertaining to new curricular or instructional changes or even the reluctance of teachers to accept help from teacher leaders or instructional coaches. Kelly would share examples of colleagues struggling with developing or maintaining a growth mindset. One teacher leader would also share disagreements with staff members over union related issues. It is entirely possible that teachers view teacher leaders in negative ways due to the title of teacher leader. As Sara says:

I don't know if some of them are resentful but with that phrase teacher leader it's like okay, I'm leading you. You're the teacher and I'm the leader. So I think people look into that phrase as oh, you're better than us.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

The researcher did not witness any disagreements with colleagues during the observation portion of the study. Although this was true, teacher leaders still struggle with many of the challenges that everyday teachers struggle with. It appears that the teacher leader role and training does not immunize them from these challenges but perhaps better equips them to handle frustrations with a solutions-based mindset. Building on what Sara mentioned in her interview, the skill set gained during the TLEP training could very well equip teachers with tools to not only handle frustrations but also search out solutions via the wiggle room philosophy.

Administrators. Building-level administrators appeared to offer more support and promote feelings of empowerment to the teacher leaders in the study. Although each teacher leader indicated that the upper administration has been mostly supportive in the past, building-level administrators provided more support across the board. There were many instances in interview responses where teacher leaders painted a detailed picture of a top-down, hierarchical upper administration. Interestingly, throughout the course of data analysis, the researcher found many examples of a deeply supportive upper administration. Two examples highlight this contrary evidence. Firstly, the upper administration has clearly shown a strong belief in training teacher leaders via the TLEP. As of this report, twenty teacher leaders from the Smithville School District have completed a formal TLEP. Additionally, both Kelly and Sara shared how the upper administrative team trained teachers in curriculum development and then allowed them to design their own curriculum. While these are only two examples, the researcher feels that these examples exemplify a strong commitment to distributive leadership practices.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

High expectations. Every one of the teacher leaders studied spoke of the high expectations at Smithville. These expectations appeared to be placed upon teacher leaders from both the community and the administration. As Ruby shared:

You are doing your job if you're working in Smithville schools because that is the expectation and that is what you do. It's the right thing to do. It's what the kids need but it's also the status piece of being one of the better districts in education.

As can be expected, being a top-performing district has its challenges. Interestingly, almost every person I interacted with at Smithville, teacher leader or not, mentioned the high expectations of the Smithville School District. None painted the district in a bad light by these comments, but this was evident in the language used when describing the school where they work. Walking through the school buildings and classrooms, the researcher gathered that teachers, students, and administrators were focused on teaching, learning, and leading. Educational quotes were painted on the walls and banners were hung indicating state and national awards, proudly displayed for all to see.

Safety. Sara spoke at length about the national issues related to school shootings. With events such as the Parkland shooting in Florida presently dominating news stories across the United States, school safety is at the forefront of discussion in any school district. As a teacher, Sara said that violent events such as these terrify her and cause her to experience increased stress during the school day as she worries about keeping her kids safe and what she would do in the event of a school-related shooting in her school.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Although Sara was alone in her comments about school safety, others such as Ruby did share concerns about the social and emotional well-being of students at Smithville.

Theme 9: Teacher Leaders are Able to Make Decisions

Throughout each interview and direct observation, teacher leaders evidenced many examples of making autonomous decisions that were in the best interest of their students and their districts. Teacher leaders such as Sara share:

I think it's the freedom to do what I want. To design my program based on the kids that I have...without having to go in front of the board and ask. I have that freedom to try new things and nobody's going to say oh my gosh what is she doing.

Kelly and Ruby would agree with Sara in this belief, citing several examples of times when they sought out the wiggle room in a situation to help create a solution to a problem. Kelly and Sara both shared that they felt that they had the freedom to make decisions in the areas of teaching and learning and felt supported by their building administrator in these areas. Kelly and Sara also shared that they felt empowered by the fact that their upper administration has allowed them to make decisions regarding the curriculum that they teach. Kelly also felt that the lines of communication were open, and she felt free to speak her mind with both building and upper administrators. To support this fact, Kelly shared:

Nobody's checking in on me saying, why aren't you doing this? So I don't feel like I'm micro-managed, which I think is a huge thing...I think it's empowering to have that opportunity. I probably wouldn't be able to walk into any district and act the way that I do. To have that freedom to speak

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

your mind and your opinions and not feel like you know, I won't have a job tomorrow because of something I said in a [a meeting] yesterday.

It appears that each teacher leader feels comfortable enough to make small autonomous decisions that impact their students but feel that if those decisions span beyond their classrooms, they need to consult their building principals first. Kelly shared that she generally tries out certain ideas related to teaching and learning in her own classroom and then presents the results to her building administrator if she feels like what she attempted with her own students would help others. These efforts are met with support as building administrators all appeared to be open to suggestions if these efforts will improve student outcomes.

This fact was evident in the direct observation conducted as Kelly collaborated with another teacher to devise a plan to increase student engagement. In this meeting, Kelly shared her concerns about her students needing more hands-on activities so that they will learn the material in more engaging ways. After the observation was over, the researcher asked if she planned on running her ideas by the building administrator first. She indicated that she did not plan to ask her administrator because the teachers have the freedom to design the lessons that they believe will help their students learn the best.

It became clear, after witnessing the planning meeting and asking the follow-up questions, that at the building administrative level, Kelly and other teachers are strongly supported in the areas of teaching and learning. She shared that this change in culture shifted shortly after completing the TLEP training. Describing a meeting between the upper administrators and the teacher leaders trained in TLEP, Kelly noted the importance of this meeting:

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

From an administrative standpoint, I feel very differently than I did four or five years ago. I kind-of had a breakthrough. We kind-of had a debriefing session after a round of teacher leadership classes and we sat down with our [upper administration]. Sitting down and talking to them and the people that were on the leadership team...we all felt empowered after taking all the coursework. I mean the nice thing is when you're in that cohort you are all in it together...it was kind of like that power in numbers...it only took a couple of people speaking up to try to help that culture change and I feel like we had a breakthrough there...the general message was, you went through this coursework. You know what we know. We know what you know, got it? We've got to empower each other to move forward. So, I mean we kind of threw it out there like what are the roadblocks? What holds you guys back?

After this revelation, it became clear that the administration was attempting to not only talk the talk but walk the walk in terms of teacher leadership and distributive leadership. Opening the lines of communication and aligning their efforts, TLEP-trained teacher leaders and administrators showed a true commitment to distributed leadership. Even though Kelly shared the reluctance of the upper administration to relinquish that control, and Kim indicated that the upper administration still feels somewhat top-down to her, building administrators have continued to support the teacher leaders in most areas. In addition, several examples were shared by teacher leaders that are encouraging signs that the upper administration at Smithville is heading in the right direction in terms of distributive leadership.

Putting It All Together

After exploring each of the key themes derived from the data, it will be important to highlight how each theme fits into the suggestion that the interplay between the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training seemed to influence job satisfaction in the teacher leaders studied more than just the training or just the teacher leadership role by itself. Additionally, key themes will be aligned with the research questions to provide an understanding of how each of the research questions selected for study was addressed by the themes derived from the data.

The concept map (Figure 1) provides a better understanding of each key theme in relation to job satisfaction, in addition to the TLEP training and the teacher leadership role. Job satisfaction was improved through just the TLEP training for Sara, as she indicated the training improved her confidence and self-efficacy, which led to improved job satisfaction. Additionally, she and other teacher leaders Kelly and Ruby indicated increased empowerment, improved relationships with building administrators, and the freedom to make decisions. Job satisfaction levels were elevated when the teacher leadership role and TLEP training were combined. Worth noting is that although Kim indicated that the TLEP was empowering, she did not indicate any improvements in job satisfaction from the teacher leadership role itself.

Lastly, teacher leaders weren't immune to educational stressors such as colleague frustrations, role ambiguity, everyday educational challenges, and administrative differences. Although teacher leaders indicated that each of these stressors led to job dissatisfaction, it appeared that the teacher leadership training may have been helpful in mitigating the impact of these stressors. The researcher will discuss these matters further in the discussion portion of the report.

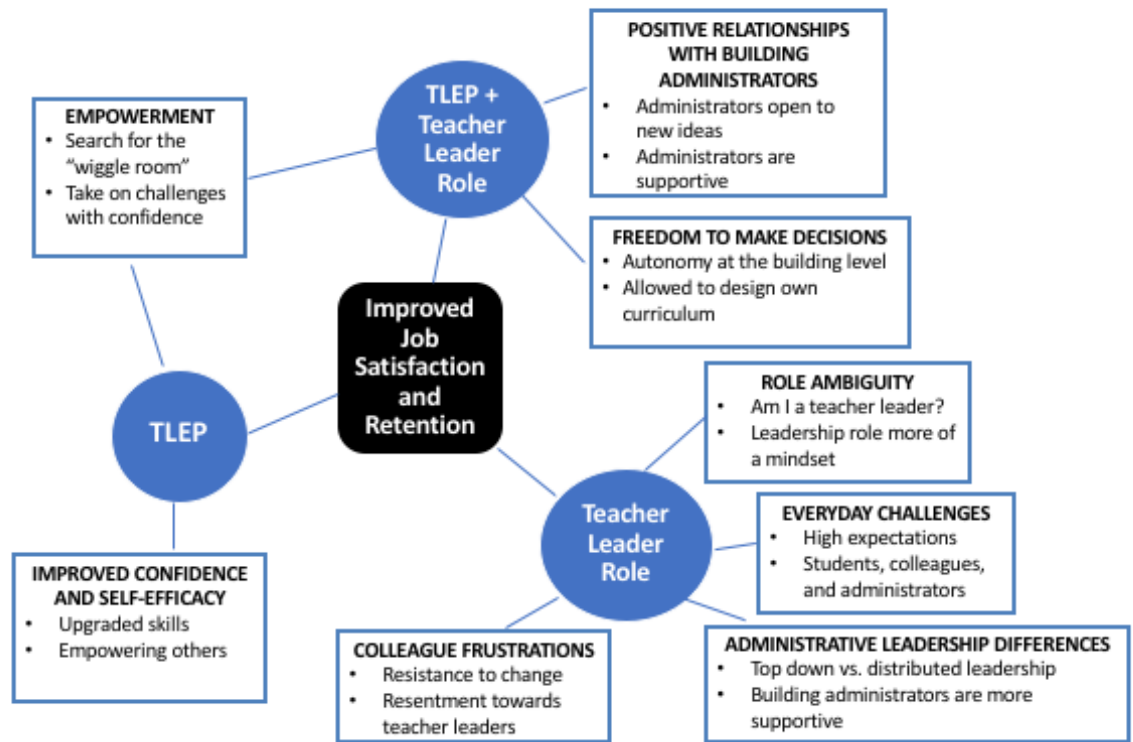


Figure 1. Concept map connecting TLEP and teacher leadership role to job satisfaction.

Table 1 identifies how each research question selected for study was addressed by each of the themes derived from the data gathered. The theme of empowerment relates to all three research questions since teacher leaders described feelings of empowerment in terms of their experiences, decision making, and improvements to job satisfaction. Additionally, the TLEP training also relates to all three research questions as teacher leaders like Sara describe improved confidence and self-efficacy in relation to the training in addition to others like Kelly indicates that the district now sees the trained teacher leaders as go-to people in terms of decision making. As expected, each of these factors influences job satisfaction in positive ways. All the teacher leaders experienced role ambiguity, which led to some frustrations because teacher leaders like Kelly and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Kim operate as informal leaders, where clear lines of responsibility are not always present. As expected, this leads to challenges with colleagues because teacher leaders like Kelly and Kim do not have formal titles and therefore not the same level of authority over certain decisions as a formal teacher leader might. All of the teacher leaders indicate positive relationships with building administrators, which again aligns with all three research questions since improved relationships allow their voices to be heard and a certain degree of freedom in the areas of teaching, learning, and curriculum.

Three teacher leaders shared stories of frustrations they had with upper administration, specific examples revolving around top-down decision making. These teacher leaders believed that these frustrations affected their experiences, decision making, and even job satisfaction at times. Although this was true, each of the three teacher leaders praised the upper administration in ways that were contrary to many of their responses at some point during the interview process. This contrary evidence will be explored later in the discussion section of the report. Teacher leaders also reported that colleagues were frustrating at times, which influenced their experiences as teacher leaders negatively. In addition, teacher leaders reported that colleagues weren't always receptive to new ideas shared and that these frustrations did in fact influence their feelings of job satisfaction.

In terms of job satisfaction and teacher retention, teacher leaders felt satisfied with their jobs at levels that will keep them working in the Smithville School District for the foreseeable future. Due to the improved experiences and decision-making power they have as teacher leaders, in addition to the personal improvements gathered from the TLEP training, the teacher leaders appear to be highly satisfied workers. Teacher leaders

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

still experience everyday workplace stressors, which although may be somewhat mitigated by the TLEP training, are still present. As expected, these stressors influence their everyday experiences and their job satisfaction. Lastly, teacher leaders have the autonomy to make decisions which largely influences their experiences and job satisfaction in positive ways.

Please refer to Table 1 to see how each theme from above relates to the three research questions selected for study.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Table 1.

Themes and Research Questions

Theme	Question 1: How do teacher leaders describe their roles, responsibilities, and experiences as leaders in their school building?	Question 2: How do teacher leaders describe their involvement in the decision-making process?	Question 3: How do teacher leadership practices influence job satisfaction and teacher retention?
Teacher leaders feel empowered	X	X	X
Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program training improves self-efficacy and confidence	X	X	X
Teacher leaders experience role ambiguity	X		X
Positive relationships with building administrators lead to job satisfaction	X	X	X
Leadership style differences exist between the building and upper administration	X	X	X
Colleagues can be frustrating	X	X	X
Teacher leaders are satisfied and plan to stay	X	X	X
Teacher leaders experience the same everyday challenges as other teachers	X		X
Teacher leaders have the freedom to make decisions	X	X	X

Conclusion

The teacher leaders involved in this study clearly evidenced many of the elements of job satisfaction that emerged in the literature reviewed for this study. Teacher leaders enjoyed improved decision making, increased empowerment, elevated relationships with administrators, and increases in confidence and skills stemming from their training through the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program. As will be explored later, it appears that the interplay between the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training was the defining factor that improved job satisfaction in the teacher leaders studied. As no formal research studies presently exist on the teacher leaders who have completed the TLEP training, this was an important finding.

Although the teacher leaders studied did evidence some elements of job dissatisfaction, they were all related to difficulties with other colleagues when attempting to enact change and frustrations with top-down leadership at the upper administrative level. At the building level however, teacher leaders all indicated that they had the freedom to make suggestions, take on initiatives, and work with others to help improve student outcomes. Most participants indicated that the training received via the Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program provided them with an improved skill set that gave them more confidence when working with both colleagues and administrators. Most participants also shared that because of their training and title of teacher leader, the building administration saw them as go-to people in their building.

Although this seeming “preferential status” has created frustrations with some colleagues, it appears that others are starting to recognize them as leaders. This recognition is likely because they are not only talking the talk but walking the walk when it comes to implementing best practices in their own classrooms. Frustrations about

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

instructional coaches who are not regular classroom teachers seem to be mitigated for the teacher leaders studied, because they are still in the classroom daily and are not out of touch when it comes to the day to day struggles that classroom teachers have.

Interestingly, all the teacher leaders indicated that although their building administrators operate in a distributive leadership fashion and are open to the suggestions and initiatives that the teacher leaders want to share and put into practice, the upper administration is still operating in a top-down way. This is interesting considering the upper administrative team was trained in teacher leadership the same way the teacher leaders were and spent considerable time and resources to train the teacher leaders in teacher leadership. Many participants shared that it wasn't that the upper administrative team was opposed to the suggestions and changes that teacher leaders and other building administrators wanted to share and make, it was just that they were out of touch with what was really going on in each specific building.

Kelly shared one example that suggested the upper administration was not out of touch and was firmly committed to building bridges between the teachers and upper administration. Indicating that the upper administration completed the same teacher leader training as the teacher leaders, Kelly explained the importance of this decision. She described a "breakthrough" meeting, where both TLEP-trained upper administrators and teacher leaders met to align their efforts going forward. Kelly believed this meeting opened the lines of communication and both administrators and teacher leaders agreed that they would forge ahead together using what they had learned in the TLEP training. She would describe this meeting as a turn-around for the district, a moment that would shift the leadership style from top-down to a more distributed leadership style. As

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Spillane (2001) suggests, those working together may be able to accomplish tasks that would be out of reach if attempted at the individual level. It appears that the Smithville School District is making a concerted effort to use the expertise of both administrators and teacher leaders to accomplish tasks.

The teacher leaders in this study were empowered to the point that all of them indicated that they had no plans of leaving, and some indicated that their teacher leadership role being taken away would be a big blow to their job satisfaction and might even encourage them to leave their district. In the following discussion, the researcher relates the results of the study back to the reviewed literature and makes future recommendations for research in teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Considering only a few studies exist that explore the relationships between teacher leadership and job satisfaction, and the fact that several states around the country are pushing out new frameworks for teacher leadership practice and teacher leader endorsement efforts, this study is a springboard for future research in these areas.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This study explored the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders to determine how they relate to job satisfaction and teacher retention. Throughout the course of the interviews, direct observations, and document reviews, the researcher was able to gain a better understanding of not only the teacher leaders involved in the study but also how their positions influence their daily decision making, confidence, and interactions with colleagues and administrators. Although the body of evidence on teacher leadership and job satisfaction as separate constructs is quite broad, very few studies explore the relationship between the two constructs. Additionally, no studies exist on teachers trained by the TLEP, making the results important for future decision making. As such, this in-depth analysis of four teacher leaders provides a candid and informative insight into the daily lives of the teacher leaders studied.

Many of the interview responses, observed behaviors, and reviewed leadership documents highlight the key elements of job satisfaction evidenced in the reviewed literature. Increased decision making, improved relationships with administrators, and elevated autonomy were evident in each participants' responses. In addition, job dissatisfaction stemming from workload, parent, administrator, and student challenges were also evident in the participant's responses. It clearly appears that the teacher leaders studied showed improved job satisfaction in terms of both their teacher leadership role in addition to their teacher leadership training through the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program. This interplay between the teacher leader role and TLEP training will be further explored in this section.

It also appears that an increase in job satisfaction from the role and training outweighs job dissatisfaction stemming from workload, parent, administrator, and student

challenges. This was most evident in the fact that all participants indicated that they greatly enjoyed working for the Smithville School District, and that they planned on staying with the district for the foreseeable future. Although some issues remain concerning relationships with resistant colleagues and the sometimes top-down nature of decision making coming from the upper administration, teacher leaders felt more empowered to be leaders, not only within their classrooms, but within their school buildings as well. In the following section, an in-depth discussion of results, synthesis of literature-based themes as compared to participant responses, and suggestions for future research will be provided.

Research Question Results

This section will review each research question used in the study and determine how they were addressed by teacher leaders in the interview, direct observation, and document review process. During this process, the researcher will also provide explanation of the findings and provide pertinent examples from the teacher leaders involved in the study. In addition, the data gathered will be compared with the previous literature and research surrounding teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Concept maps will also be provided to visually showcase how each research question was addressed by each of the teacher leaders in relationship to the uncovered themes.

Research Question 1: How Do Teacher Leaders Describe Their Roles, Responsibilities, and Experiences as Leaders in Their School Building?

Roles. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) began the work of creating a framework for distributed leadership with the intent of showing how changes in leadership practices can transform teaching and learning. The researchers' theory was primarily focused on the ways that informal and formal teacher leaders are influenced by

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

a distribution of tasks that were historically the territory of building and central office leaders. As suggested by Aspen Institute (2014) and Danielson (2006), teacher leadership practices have changed over time, gravitating away from formal roles and instead focusing on informal teacher leadership.

The teacher leaders involved in this study operated mostly as informal leaders, some not considering themselves teacher leaders at all. Because of this, it is likely that some role ambiguity would be expected, as each teacher leader appeared to lead in ways that suited them best. All the teacher leaders attempted to find the “wobble room” in their daily work, looking for ways that they could provide support, influence decision making, or identify a need that needed filled. Danielson (2006), Aspen Institute (2014), and York-Barr & Duke (2004) would surely support the concept of “wobble room” as it aligns with their beliefs and findings in terms of informal teacher leadership practices.

Also evidenced in each teacher leaders’ responses and observations was a sense of autonomy when it came to making decisions. Sara wanted her actions to speak louder than her words. Kelly wanted to find the places where she was welcome and start there. Ruby was willing to fight for changes or initiatives that she thought were important. Kim created an after-school program because she felt her students needed an outlet that wasn’t being provided to them. As one can easily see, each teacher leader had a different role to play, one that was in many ways self-identified and personally important. This is not without challenges.

Jacobs, Gordon, and Solis (2016) indicate that districts that define teacher leader roles and responsibilities will provide teacher leaders with less conflict and resentment. As teacher leaders like Kelly, Sara, and Ruby indicated, several frustrations occurred

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

when trying to implement new ideas, and non-teacher leaders were sometimes resistant to change. This may be because teacher leaders like Kelly do not hold a formal leadership title. Sara also shared that using the term teacher leader seems to imply a sense of hierarchy that may pose challenges, considering some of the teacher leaders studied operated as informal teacher leaders. Kelley (2011) confirms this fact, reporting that conflicts may arise as teachers and teacher leaders do not always have the same perception of the nature of teacher leadership (Kelley, 2011). As suggested in the important findings later in this report, the Smithville School District might consider supporting teacher leaders in these areas by informing staff members of the purpose and importance of teacher leadership.

Responsibilities. As all teachers had different roles to play, responsibilities varied but generally centered around teaching, learning, and curriculum. Two of the teacher leaders studied had different responsibilities since their formal titles deviated from a typical classroom teacher. As such, each worked with students in different ways, some related to teaching and learning and others to the social and emotional well-being of students. All teacher leaders were members of the Smithville teacher's union and as such, operated under the same contractual constraints as everyone else. A few of the teacher leaders involved had increased responsibilities also, since they oversaw leading certain teacher or parent groups. These responsibilities would stand in contrast to those that are not teacher leaders in their school. Teacher leaders in this study indicated that due to their teacher leadership duties, which were at times self-imposed, they often experienced increased workload. This by nature was a key theme throughout each teacher leaders'

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

interview responses as all participants indicated that their responsibilities and workload have increased since they started teaching.

Experiences. Each of the teacher leaders studied either directly stated that they felt more empowered by either the teacher leadership role or TLEP training. This interplay will be later explored when analyzing the final research question pertaining to job satisfaction. In terms of empowerment, Kelly states:

I think it's great. I feel more empowered, I feel like my day to day practices are evolving. I feel like I am growing as an individual. I feel that having that leadership role it not only helps me but it helps others...I'm leading myself. that's the other piece. Which I think a lot of other people forget about themselves.

Although she was more critical of district administrative practices at times, Kim also echoed similar sentiments about empowerment including:

After the teacher leader endorsement program I feel more empowered to try to find the wiggle room...to try to find the why behind the things

Ruby would also share similar comments and even though empowerment wasn't mentioned specifically, one can easily identify her comments as feelings of empowerment. She would share:

I think that I've always been allowed to do what I felt was best for kids...[my building administrator] trusts me to make the decisions necessary at the time. I've always felt valued and I've always felt appreciated and had that mutual respect.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

During the interviews, each of the teacher leaders indicated that they enjoyed working in the Smithville School District, citing building administrators, colleagues, students, parents, and community members as key players in their satisfaction levels. Additionally, while observing teacher leaders in school setting, it was clear that they were satisfied employees. Although each teacher leader had different teaching responsibilities and areas of expertise, all of them indicated that their building principals largely influenced their feelings of empowerment, autonomy, and decision-making power. It is no surprise that lack of administrator support has been shown to increase job dissatisfaction in teachers. Additionally, teachers who receive little instructional support from administrators while operating in isolated teaching environment can experience increases in job dissatisfaction (Sass et al., 2010). The administrators who were directly involved in this study clearly understand the importance of positive relationships and creating a supportive environment for their teachers.

Kim, Kelly, and Sara clearly described the differences between leadership style at the building and upper administrative level, citing the building level administration being more “in touch” with the teachers they work with daily. One could easily expect this to be true as building level administrators would have more direct contact with their teachers daily when compared to upper administrative members.

Ruby stood in contrast, citing several times that she felt the district operated across the board as a team with the best interest of the kids in mind. Additionally, even though Kelly had some reservations about the top-down nature of decision making, she shared that on the whole “our district has truly empowered all teachers,” speaking specifically about the curricular choices teachers have been afforded by upper

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

administration in addition to the change in culture that happened after both teacher leaders and administrators completed the TLEP training and held a special debriefing meeting.

Although all of the teacher leaders indicated that they planned on staying in Smithville for the foreseeable future, some like Kelly indicated that if her teacher leadership role and her ability to find the “wiggle room” was taken away, she would feel much less satisfied coming to work and would even consider leaving the district.

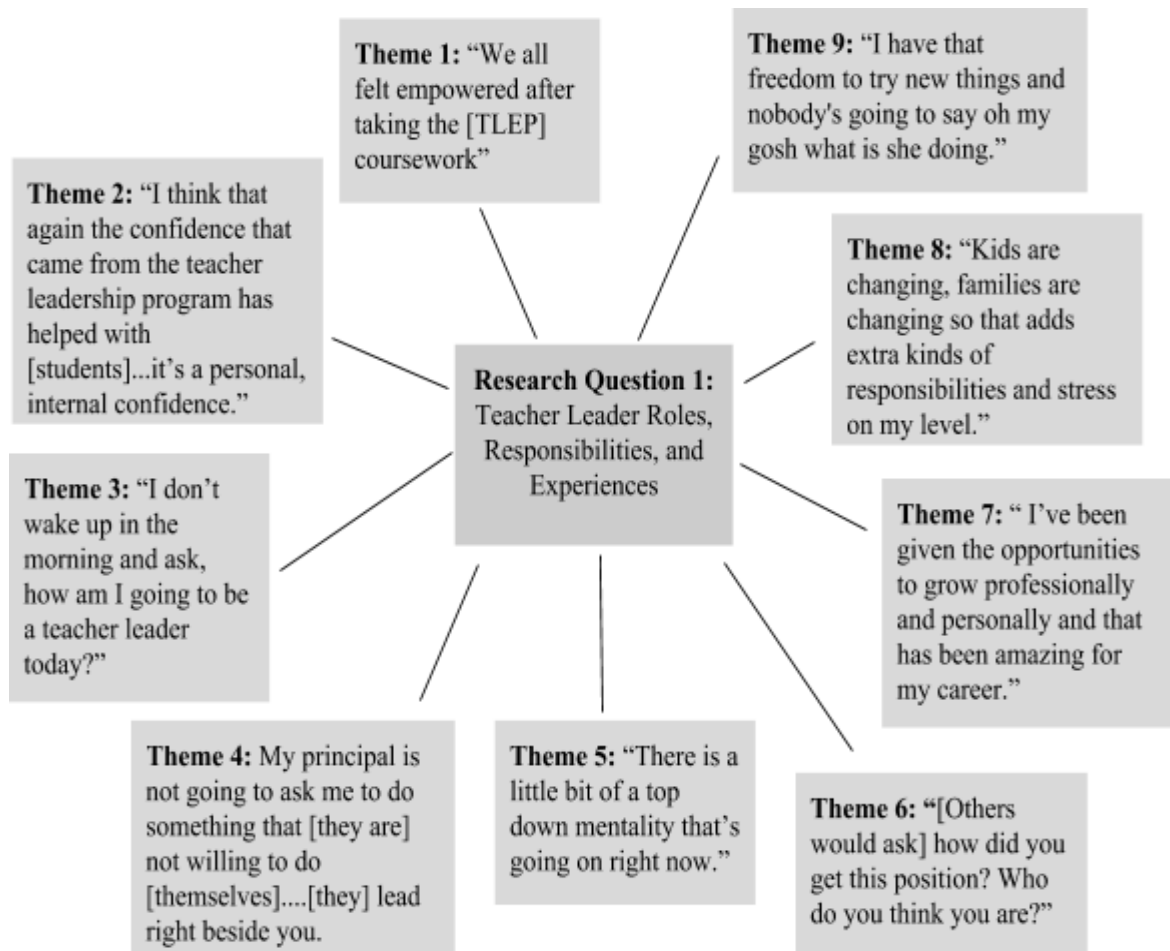


Figure 2. Research question one concept map

Research Question 2: How Do Teacher Leaders Describe Their Involvement in the Decision-Making Process?

After hearing the testimonies of the four teacher leaders involved in this study and observing them in a school setting, the researcher believes that the teacher leaders' involvement with decision making is stronger at the building than the district level. While this would be a natural conclusion, three of the four teacher leaders indicated that they were unsure if their voices would be heard beyond the walls of their own school. Upper administration was supportive in providing the TLEP training for teacher leaders, offering the training to anyone interested. Additionally, upon completion of the TLEP training, each teacher leader was extremely supported in the implementation of their culminating teacher leader project.

The Smithville School District made an important decision to provide both upper administrators and teachers with TLEP training. Mizell (2010) shares that administrators who choose to be instructional leaders are wise to participate in professional development that is intended for their teaching staff. By doing so, administrators can provide greater support for the outcomes of the professional development. Additionally, Mizell (2010) supports the fact that the collective growth of a group of educators has a greater impact on student learning than learning that takes place at the individual level. Therefore, the Smithville School District will likely see improvements in student achievement but also self-efficacy as teacher leaders and administrators alike benefit from the TLEP training.

Upon completion of the TLEP training, a special debriefing meeting was held between the TLEP-trained district administration and teacher leaders to align efforts going forward. Teacher leaders such as Kelly thought this was a “breakthrough” moment in terms of changing the culture at Smithville. This meeting provided administrators and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teacher leaders with a platform to voice any concerns and established a common ground. In this meeting, teacher leaders and administrators discussed any road blocks that might affect their efforts in addition to providing a safe place to voice any concerns.

Spillane (2001) suggests that often, leaders working together can accomplish more than leaders working by themselves. Offering many examples of districts using the skills of both teachers and administrators, Spillane (2001) suggests that the collective knowledge of the group may lead to an evolution of leadership practice. By utilizing the unique talents and skills learned from the TLEP, both the trained administrators and teacher leaders are poised to make a real difference in the Smithville School District. Other districts would be wise to not only train both administrators and teachers in formal TLEP's, but also attempt to align their efforts upon completion of the program.

Some teacher leaders indicated that the upper administration still operates in a top-down fashion on a regular basis, which sits in contrast to the distributive leadership style that all teacher leaders indicated are present in their respective buildings. Although this may be true, two examples stand in opposition to this contention, both evidencing the upper administration exhibiting leadership in different ways. Each example will be explored below.

The first example, shared by both Sara and Kelly, describes an upper administration who allowed teachers to develop their own K-12 curriculum for a specific subject matter. Teachers across the district were trained in curriculum development and were provided supports to create a curriculum that they felt would best help their students succeed. Instead of purchasing of pre-made curriculum, the district instead decided to support the teachers in implementing their own curriculum that they believed would best

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

benefit their students. The process engaged the teachers and provided them all with a seat at the table in terms of what will be taught and how it will be taught. Sara and Kelly both heralded efforts by the upper administration and believe that teachers have been empowered by this wide-sweeping initiative. To evidence this event, Kelly would share:

Our District recognized that it [the curriculum] wasn't a one fits all. Your kids are going to be different on a day-to-day basis or year-to-year basis. This program that we're going to buy and spend thousands and thousands of dollars on might not work for our kids. Why not train our teachers to be those curriculum developers?

The second example, shared again by a few teacher leaders, described an upper administration who decided upon a wide-sweeping initiative, this time making a unilateral decision without much input from the teachers. In this specific example, major changes would be made to the ways that student's grades are determined, with teachers assigning grades to students in ways that sit in sharp contrast to traditional methods. Although these changes may improve student outcomes, some of the teacher leaders in this study indicated that the teachers aren't sure why this initiative was delivered in a top-down way because it will impact everyone's practices immensely. One teacher leader would expand on this example by sharing:

A lot of what happens is very top down. They make decisions up here and then we deal with it. They've decided to change our report card system. And who is going to try it out? it's going to be [us] because we're always the guinea pigs.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

As you can see, teacher leaders are both grateful and critical when it comes to leadership from upper administration. Although some teacher leaders shared that they felt that everyone at Smithville operates in a team-like fashion with all stakeholders having a say in the process, others don't agree that true distributive leadership is always taking place beyond their own school buildings. Each teacher leader indicated that building level administrators provide them with the support they need to successfully find the areas that need improvement in their schools.

When it comes to daily decision making, teacher leaders such as Sara, Kelly, and Kim all indicated that they search for the wiggle room when attempting to make decisions or enact change in their school buildings. This term, used exclusively in their TLEP training, resonated with most of the teacher leaders in this study. In her interview, Sara described this concept best.

In our courses we learned a lot about wiggle room and finding a way to get in the door. Being able to look at a problem from a different angle to see that maybe I could do this, you know. What if I ask the PTO instead of the principal or what if I ask this teacher knowing that this teacher has a great relationship with that teacher?

It appears that teacher leaders such as Kim, Kelly, and Sara all made it a point to find areas of need and fill them with supports and efforts to help. These efforts complement the existing literature on teacher leadership. For example, The Aspen Institute (2014) identifies informal teacher leadership as "new" leadership, one that operates in a distributive leadership environment, shifting teachers away from managerial tasks and more into areas that they excel such as teaching, learning, and curriculum. The

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Ohio Teacher Leader Framework (2017) also evidences this fact by encouraging teachers to lead from the classroom, identifying areas of need and filling those needs with creative solutions. The teacher leaders in this study identify wiggle room moments to make real differences in areas they feel strongly suited towards.

Ruby spoke at length about her never-ending work of helping her students. She shared that she attempts to always do the right thing, even when it means taking on more work or staying beyond her work day. Kim also evidenced key elements of the concept of wiggle room in the creation of a student group that attempted to provide an academic outlet for students who needed something not related to sports. When asked how this group came about, Kim said:

I created it. I went to our tech guy and I said you know they're doing this in [another district]. I'd like to see what we can do with it here.

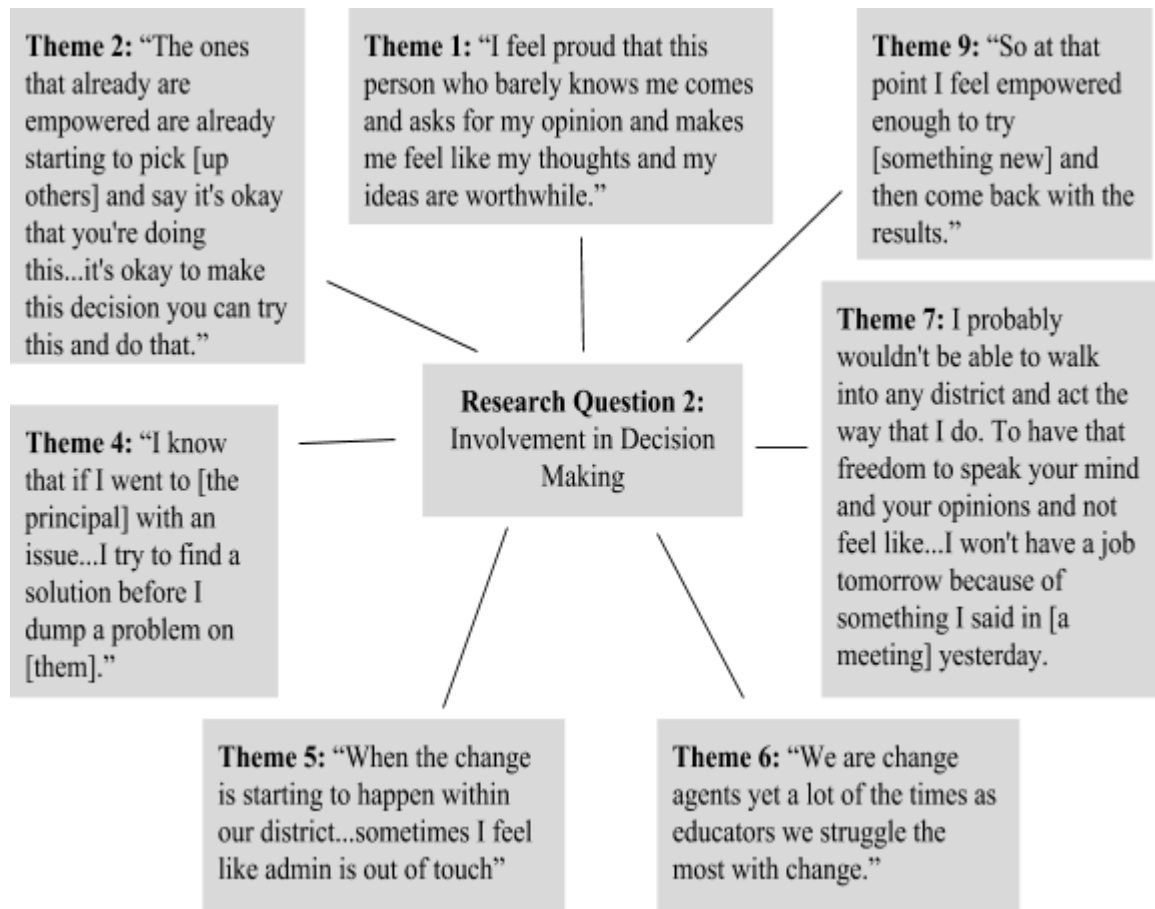


Figure 3. Research question two concept map.

Research Question 3: How Do Teacher Leadership Practices Influence Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention?

The final research question directly addressed the job satisfaction of teachers and explored how teacher leadership may or may not influence job satisfaction and retention. Early theories designed by humanistic thinkers such as Maslow (1943) and more contemporary researcher by Tschannen-Moran (1998) suggest that employee job satisfaction has the potential to lead to increased worker productivity and in the world of education, teacher retention. The researcher was expressly interested in determining if

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

teacher leaders do experience greater level of job satisfaction and retention, the focus of this study.

In terms of this study, it was theorized that the teacher leadership role would create higher satisfaction levels, but interestingly, it was the teacher leadership role and the Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program training together that appeared to increase job satisfaction in three out of the four teacher leaders studied. Observation and document review data further support the importance of this interplay between the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training by showcasing the real work of implementation plans that were enacted within the Smithville School District.

This interplay was crucial in improving confidence levels, administrator relationships, leadership skills, and autonomy to find pertinent educational needs and seek out solutions. These outcomes support the work of Bandura (1977), who suggests that people will take on tasks that they feel match well with their skill sets. As each teacher leader indicated personal and professional improvements because of completing the TLEP training, it can be assumed that the teacher leaders take on more challenging tasks because they feel confident they can find appropriate solutions while at the same time feeling supported by their building administrators.

Job satisfaction and retention levels of teachers are influenced by a variety of factors. As evidenced by Herzberg's (1968) motivator-hygiene theory, job satisfaction can be affected by extrinsic motivators such as pay and recognition but also affected by factors such as job security, work conditions, and even colleague interactions. Additionally, Hackman and Oldham (1975) show that the core job dimensions, such as a person's work environment, would ultimately lead to improved personal and work

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

outcomes. To this point, Sutchter et al. (2016), Ingersoll (2001), and Sass et al. (2010) suggest that administrators influence the job satisfaction and exit attrition of teachers, in addition to other factors like pay and classroom related issues. Additionally, Early research completed by Ingersoll (2001) shows that administrative support, student behavior issues, limited decision making power, and low salaries have been shown to influence teacher retention. Based on these studies, it was interesting to see many examples of administrative support and improved decision-making power evidenced throughout the data collection process. These factors both empowered teachers to be more engaged leaders and find their wiggle room.

Teacher leaders such as Sara, Kelly, and Ruby spoke fondly of their ability to lead within their school, citing the teacher leadership training as being important. This was perhaps most evident in one of Sara's interview questions responses where she shares:

I have learned so much about how the brain works and how people, not just kids, learn and how to effect change and how to talk to people...I feel like I just have more of a skill set but also more knowledge than I did before...I questioned everything I did...I'm more confident in the choices that I make for what my students need and that's I think one of the biggest changes that I've seen. I also see myself as more responsible to the building like I have a role to play and if nobody else is going to step up to do something then I need to do that.

Sara's testimony about her TLEP training was powerful. One can easily see that the TLEP training has made a real difference in her daily practices but also her confidence, self-efficacy, and feelings of empowerment. Bandura (1977) suggests that

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

those with higher self-efficacy will be more likely to persist with difficult tasks while those with lower self-efficacy may be more likely to either avoid difficult tasks or give up entirely. This has implications for organizational management in that employers must recognize the actual and perceived ability levels of their workers if they want their organization to be most successful. Also, it may be deduced that by increasing the skills of workers, their sense of self-efficacy will likely rise, which may lead to improved job satisfaction. Bandura (1977) would surely agree that self-efficacy is arguably one of the most important traits that a successful educator must possess if they are going to feel like they can meet the demands necessary in their profession.

Kim did not believe her teacher leadership role has improved her job satisfaction but she did indicate she has felt more empowered by her TLEP training.

It's not about the leadership role. I wish it was...I stay in Smithville because I know I am respected by my peers and my community. After the teacher leader endorsement program I feel more empowered to try to find the wiggle room and try to find the why behind the things...But job satisfaction in general I felt like I had greater job satisfaction under previous upper administrations.

Even though Kim's feeling of job satisfaction stood in contrast to Sara, Ruby, and Kelly's, each teacher leader did indicate that they plan to stay in the Smithville School District for the foreseeable future. Each teacher leader indicated that the culture, building administration, ability to influence change, and administrator and colleague relationships keep them working in Smithville. Interestingly, none of the teacher leaders discussed pay as a factor that would influence them to leave unless it was reduced in some way. This

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

stands in contrast to some of the literature and theory suggesting that low pay is one of the factors that leads to job dissatisfaction in teachers (Herzberg, 1968; Ingersoll, 2001). Because the Smithville district employees are compensated well for their work as compared to other districts, one can assume that pay isn't as much of an issue in Smithville. One teacher leader supported this assumption when referencing her disagreements with the union by saying "I'm not going to fight for more money when we get a hell of a salary as it is."

Although Sara, Kelly, and Kim indicated that they feel the upper administration can operate in a top-down fashion, they also appreciate the efforts that were made to encourage teachers to complete the TLEP training. As mentioned earlier, it was surprising to hear how much of an impact the TLEP training affected the daily practice and mindset of the teacher leaders studied. The Smithville School District's decision to train the teacher in the TLEP was important since research studies suggest teachers may require leadership training to lead beyond the walls of their classrooms.

This was confirmed by Vernon-Dotson and Floyd (2012) who indicate that teachers may need some training to become leaders and it cannot be assumed that all teachers are able to lead effectively without training. To this point, Angelle (2010) encourages administrators to support teachers by practicing distributive leadership to allow teachers to build their skills over time. Taylor, et al. (2011) further expand this belief citing that teachers may need these important leadership skills before administrators will support initiatives or changes that they feel are important. The research is clearly supporting the actions of the Smithville School District. Upon further

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

analysis, it appears that the TLEP training had important implications for all of the teacher leaders involved in this study.

To highlight this importance, Sara indicated that her confidence level was increased by completing the TLEP training.

I think [TLEP training] definitely makes me feel more satisfied and I'm going to use the word confident again, more confident in what I am doing and that what I'm doing makes a difference...it's a personal, internal confidence...I didn't realize at the time how powerful it would be and the connections that I would make with other people in the district.

Aligning with the spirit of many of Sara's responses, Kelly also indicated that the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training increased her job satisfaction. When asked what her level of job satisfaction was after going through the TLEP and operating as a teacher leader, she said, "Immensely. On a scale of 1 to 10, it's pretty high on the charts." Kelly finished her interview by sharing:

I can't tell you how many times administration has said how much they value the wonderful teachers that work in our district. Our turnover rate is tiny because of that.

She went on to share that she believes the district has insulated the teachers against issues that affect all district including decreased state funding, teacher evaluation, and even efforts to decrease the strength of unions. She expanded on this topic by sharing:

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Even when all the union stuff happened, our district was like we're going to let you guys keep it. They could have come back and said you're done, we're shutting you out. We are taking control but they haven't done that.

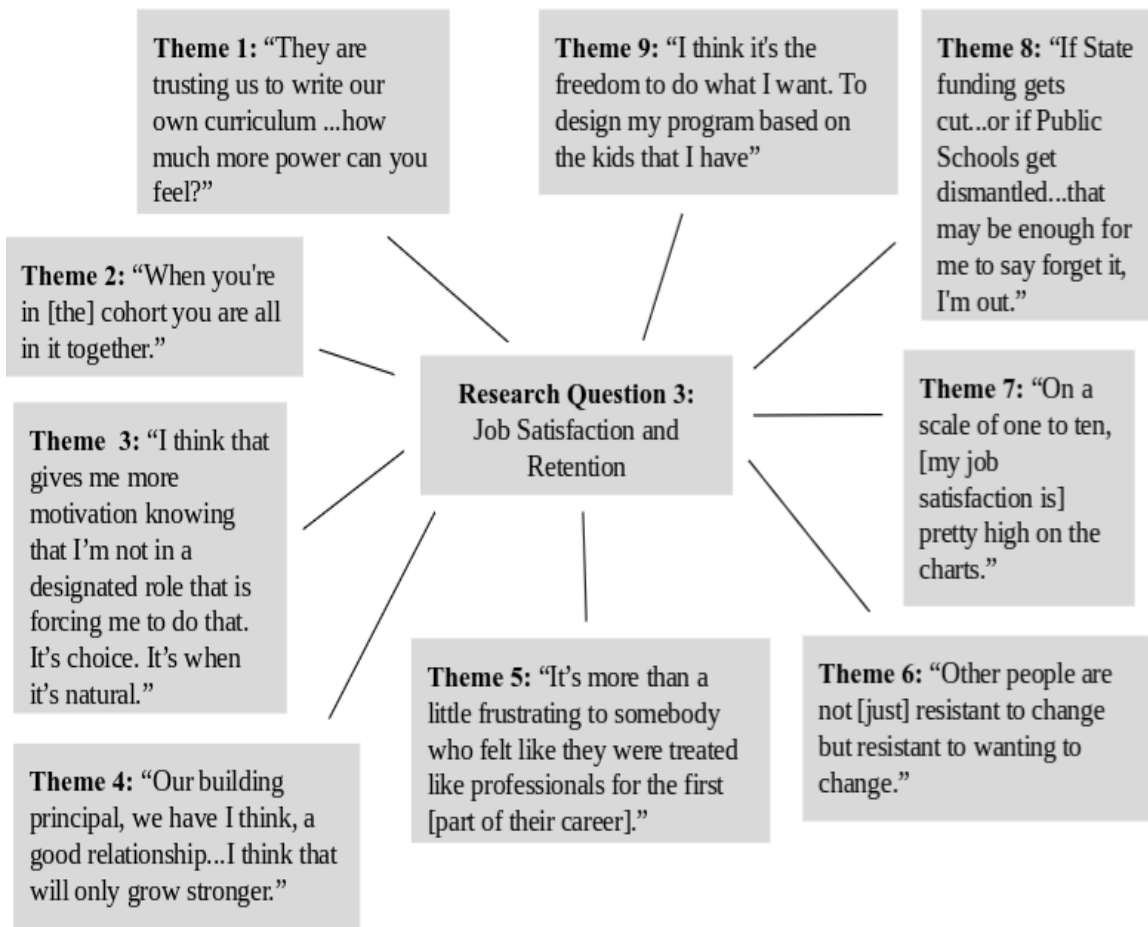


Figure 4. Research question three concept map.

Important Findings

After exploring each of the themes, analyzing how each research question was addressed by the teacher leaders studied, and connecting results to the reviewed literature and research, the researcher has narrowed down the data gathered into five important findings. Each of the findings will be explored below and will later be related back to the literature and research reviewed to confirm the findings and determine if any new findings exist.

Important Finding One: The Interplay Between The Teacher Leadership Role and the Teacher Leadership Endorsement Program Training Improves Job Satisfaction

After the data was collected and analyzed, it emerged that the researcher greatly undervalued the role of teacher leadership training as a key factor influencing job satisfaction in teacher leaders. Throughout the interview portion of the data collection process, the researcher was repeatedly reminded of the importance of the TLEP training in terms of self-efficacy, confidence and job satisfaction. Seeing as many of the teacher leaders simply didn't see themselves as teacher leaders, instead sharing that their training greatly upgraded their leadership "skill set," providing them with more tools and motivation to lead effectively further underscores this point. Clearly, one can easily see how training in any area can be of value but in this study, it appears that the training may even outshine the role because the skills gained transcend the role, permeating into classroom teaching, decision making, and interactions between both administrators, colleagues, students, parents, and community members. This is an important revelation which has not been formally researched in relation to programs like the TLEP.

Important Finding Two: Teachers May Need Training to Become Effective Leaders

Although teachers are clearly leaders in their own classrooms, it is possible that those leadership skills don't always transfer to areas beyond their classroom walls. Considering that leadership training is often lacking in undergraduate education programs, the district administrative team at Smithville should be lauded for their decision to train their teachers in a formal TLEP. Although professional development is offered by most school districts, it is likely that teaching, learning, technology, and curriculum are largely areas of focus. Therefore, the Smithville district administrative teams' actions directly address a possible weakness that districts face when trying to distribute leadership among their teaching staff: Do teachers know how to lead effectively beyond the walls of their classrooms? A progressive district in teacher leadership, as of this publication, the Smithville School District has provided twenty teacher leaders the ability to complete a formal TLEP, clearly showing their level of commitment to teacher leadership practices. Additionally, the Smithville School District made the commitment to educating the upper administration in TLEP training, which improved the communication between the upper administration and teacher leaders in addition to improving the understanding of teacher leadership in both groups.

Important Finding Three: Teacher Leadership Doesn't Have to be Formal

Teacher leadership is practiced in a variety of ways, including formal and informal teacher leadership. Both have their strengths and weaknesses, but it appears that many districts are beginning to place less of a focus on managerial duties and more on teaching, learning, and curriculum. Therefore, district administrators need teacher leaders who choose to lead because they have identified a need and have the skills necessary to find solutions. Because of this shift, teachers can now lead in ways where they excel and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

drive initiatives in a more organic, personal manner. Additionally, they no longer need a formal title to engage in leadership related tasks. The Ohio Teacher Leader Framework evidences this fact by encouraging teachers to lead from the classroom, identifying areas of need and filling those needs with creative solutions.

Although each participant was identified as a teacher leader by their school district, Sara, Kelly, and Kim all indicated that the title was more of mindset and way of doing things than an actual title. These three teacher leaders also spoke about finding the wiggle room, a way for teacher leaders to identify certain times or situations where their unique skill set could assist in solving a problem or coming up with a solution.

Role ambiguity may still exist with certain teacher leadership positions; therefore, districts may find it necessary to establish certain boundaries to assist teacher leaders and non-teacher leaders. As expected, a formal leadership title would most often have a set of responsibilities. This may be challenging to create with informal leadership roles. Colleagues may become frustrated when informal teacher leaders attempt to lead but fail to have a formal title to show a certain level of authority. This is interesting because both Kelly and Sara indicated that teachers who had not received the TLEP training openly shared resentment toward those trained in teacher leadership practices. Therefore, administrators at Smithville would be wise to inform all teachers about the purpose of teacher leadership positions and define the roles of teacher leaders to reduce these potential conflicts. Even if teacher leaders choose to lead informally, district staff would be well served by being apprised to the importance and purpose of teacher leadership practices.

Important Finding Four: Administrators Can Make or Break the Job Satisfaction of Teachers

The four teacher leaders openly shared that their relationships with building administrators were positive. These positive relationships generally provided the teacher leaders with the ability to make suggestions, drive initiatives, or have open conversations with their building administrators. Time and time again, teacher leaders shared stories of supportive building administrators. In addition, the researcher was able to meet two building administrators who were mentioned during the interview process. After dialoguing with one principal, for example, about the importance of being an instructional leader as an administrator, the researcher gained a better understanding as to why teacher leaders indicated improved job satisfaction levels stemming from the support by their building administrators.

Sara shared that she was excited about the potential of her building administrator, indicating that she felt that she could go to her administrator with an idea and truly be heard. Kelly suggested that she had the freedom to try things in her own classroom first but then share her ideas with building administrators if she thought it would help others. Kim felt her administrator would be open to any suggestion she had. Lastly, Ruby spoke at length about the level of trust and support offered by her building administrator. When comparing these results with the literature, building administrators are offering a level of support that has increased the job satisfaction of the four teacher leaders studied. As can be expected, given the praise teacher leaders have given their building administrators, non-teacher leaders are likely also experiencing this support.

Important Finding Five: Teacher Leaders Aren't Immune to Workplace Stress

As expected, teacher job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors. Teacher leaders, still operating as regular teachers in addition to their formal or informal leadership roles, likely experience the same challenges and frustrations that non-teacher leaders experience daily. The teacher leaders studied clearly benefited from their TLEP training and most felt that their teacher leader role influenced their job satisfaction in positive ways. It was suggested that teacher leaders were able to draw on their TLEP training to help mitigate these challenges and frustrations. Each teacher leader shared common frustrations and challenges including poor student behavior, disagreements with administrators and colleagues, the changing nature of children and families, union-related issues, state mandates, high expectations, and lack of time to complete work-related tasks. As evidenced in the literature, many of the challenges that the teacher leaders face daily are factors that decrease job satisfaction.

One might suggest that the TLEP training may have helped the teacher leaders better insulate themselves against these stressors. As explained earlier, the researcher hypothesized that the teacher leadership role would improve job satisfaction, but again, it is more likely that the interplay between the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training has more of an influence on job satisfaction than the teacher leadership role by itself. This is especially important because teacher leaders like Kim, Sara, and Kelly suggested that they didn't really see themselves as teacher leaders.

Table 2 highlights how each of the important findings relates to the literature and research pertaining to teacher leadership and job satisfaction. All findings confirm what is already present in the literature, except the revelation that teacher leadership and TLEP training combined to improve job satisfaction in the four teacher leaders studied. This is a

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

new finding as no empirical evidence could be found on improvements to job satisfaction when combining teacher leadership training and teacher leadership roles. It will be important for further research to explore this topic further as states like Ohio have begun to strongly support teacher leadership practices in a variety of ways.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Table 2.

Comparison of Important Findings With Existing Research on Teacher Leadership and Job Satisfaction

<u>Important Findings</u>	<u>Previous Research</u>
The interplay between the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training improves job satisfaction	As no research exists studying teacher leaders trained in the TLEP in terms of job satisfaction, this is a new finding. Bandura (1977) would agree that an upgraded skill set would likely improve self-efficacy.
Teachers need training to become effective leaders	Confirms the research by Angelle (2010), Taylor et al., (2011), & Vernon-Dotson and Floyd (2012) highlighting the importance of leadership training for teachers. Confirms Bandura (1977) in terms of the importance of self-efficacy. Confirms work by Mizell (2010), suggesting administrators and teachers should engage in the same professional development.
Teacher leadership doesn't have to be formal	Confirms Danielson (2006) & Aspen Institute (2014) that teacher leadership should largely be informal
Administrators make or break the job satisfaction of teachers	Confirms research by Sutchter et al. (2016), Ingersoll (2001), & Sass et al. (2010), underscoring the role of the principal as being integral to job satisfaction in teachers.
Teacher leaders aren't immune to workplace stress	Although no research studies exist comparing teacher leaders and non-teacher leaders in terms of comparison work stress, this study does confirm the research by Sutchter et al. (2016), Ingersoll (2001), & Sass et al. (2010), which identifies several factors that increase stress in teachers.

Limitations

With a sample of four teacher leaders, the results may be limited to those that the researcher interviewed, observed, and collected documents from. As with any qualitative researcher study, determining causation is also not possible. Additionally, the school district in this study was a high performing, affluent school district, which is not indicative of all school districts in the nation. The teacher leaders in the study generally operated as informal leaders, which may not be the norm in other school districts where

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

formal leadership practices are more greatly utilized. Because the teacher leaders in the study were informal leaders, often choosing to find the wiggle room, it would be challenging to compare their roles with other teacher leaders who operate on a more defined track.

Additionally, participants from all grade levels and school buildings in the district were not included in this study because after several attempts, those participants could not be secured. Other grade levels and school buildings may experience dissimilar results considering different administrators, students, families, and colleagues. Early-career teachers were not included in this study, as a prerequisite for entry into the TLEP training was four years of teaching experience.

Although this study has limitations, the researcher has made every attempt to capture the true feelings of the teacher leaders studied in terms of their roles, responsibilities, and experiences as they relate to job satisfaction. As many more teacher leaders have completed or are in the process of completing a TLEP training in Ohio, more research is clearly needed in this area. Considering the favorable results of this study, districts may be able to improve the job satisfaction and retention of their own teachers by supporting both teacher leader practices and TLEP training which has important implications for the future of education.

Implication of the Results for Practice

It appears that when analyzing the four teacher leaders studied, the teacher leadership endorsement training not only improved job satisfaction, but also improved the ability of the teacher leader to be a better leader within their school. Informal teacher leadership roles that allow teachers to find the wiggle room appear to also increase

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

feelings of empowerment and job satisfaction as well. Based on the data collected and analyzed in this study, the researcher suggests that teacher leaders experience improved job satisfaction levels when paired with a Teacher Leader Endorsement Program.

Based on these results, I would highly suggest school districts to train their teachers in teacher leadership through a formal teacher leader endorsement program. I would also suggest that districts support teacher leadership practices by offering their teachers the ability to lead both informally and even formally in areas such as teaching, learning, and curriculum. Additionally, I would suggest that administrators also go through the training so that both teacher leaders and administrators can work together as a unified whole. Considering that the teacher leaders studied all indicated that the teacher leader training has improved their relationships with their administrators, this has important implications for job satisfaction in addition to school improvement.

With the newly created Teacher Leader Framework in Ohio, in addition to the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program offered by several Ohio universities, district administrators would be wise to invest in their district by enrolling teachers in the program while supporting teacher leadership practices. Based on the results from this study, districts may be able to reproduce these results and improve not only the job satisfaction of their teachers but also the leadership capabilities of those teachers as well. In doing so, they may be able to better retain teachers by helping them to feel more empowered in their roles as teachers and teacher leaders.

Recommendations

Recommendations for Administrators

Considering studies such as this are clearly showing that teacher leadership and teacher leadership training influences job satisfaction and teacher retention levels,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

administrators would be wise to engage in developing and supporting teacher leadership practices within their school buildings. As teacher leadership does not have to be formal, administrators can encourage teachers to lead informally as they identify areas of need in their own building. Luckily, Ohio administrators now have the Teacher Leader Framework, which was developed by a workgroup of administrators, teachers, teacher leaders, and higher education professors. Additionally, the Teacher Leader Endorsement Standards are presently being revised to closer reflect the Teacher Leader Framework.

Almost every one of the participants shared the phrase “looking for the wiggle room” when talking about their leadership style. Evidenced often in their coursework, this core belief of teacher leadership encourages teachers to find the space to make a difference and act in a way that they think will help others. There are times that one might have to wait to find this moment, but when an opportunity arises to share a best practice or suggest an improvement, the wiggle room moment is at hand. Danielson (2006) would surely support this concept that teacher leaders need to find their way to lead, and that each person has a certain skill set that is waiting to be tapped at the right moment. Administrators would be wise to not only allow teacher leaders to find the wiggle room but also encourage them to lead in certain areas when they think they might have something good to offer. Several teacher leaders in this study indicated that building principals tapped them for tasks because they were perceived as being skilled at completing the task. These types of practices go back to the empowerment that was clearly evidenced throughout the interview, observation, and document review process of this study.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Each teacher leader shared that the building administrator was integral in their ability to feel empowered and offered suggestions for improvement in a variety of areas within their school building. The teacher leadership training increased that empowerment, which led to not only improved job satisfaction but also improved relationships between teachers and building administration. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) indicate that the principal has an enormous effect on those working in their school building so improved relationships between administrators and teachers will clearly help improved all outcomes in a school building.

Lastly, it may be wise to strategically place trained teacher leaders throughout the school district to allow teacher leaders to have a support system in place. By doing this, districts would not only have trained teacher leaders working in each of their school buildings but also be able to provide those teacher leaders with a support system that would allow teacher leaders to work together to implement changes within their school buildings. Spillane (2001) would agree with the decision, suggesting that collective power has greater potential than individual power in terms of leadership. Depending on the size of each school building the critical mass point may vary. Therefore, districts will need to determine the appropriate number of teacher leaders needed for each school building.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

States like Ohio, Tennessee, Massachusetts, and Colorado are on the forefront of the teacher leadership movement in the United States. As distributive leadership models further proliferate school districts nationwide, it will be important for local, state, and national policy makers to engage school districts in developing and supporting teacher leadership practices in addition to teacher leader training for both teacher leaders and

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

district administration. The Ohio Department of Education has spent considerable time and resources developing a high-quality Teacher Leader Framework, which can be used by local districts to develop teacher leadership practices in their own buildings. In addition, the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program standards that are currently being revised reflect the salient elements of the research on teacher leadership. Future Ohio Department of Education plans entail a Teacher Leader Framework Toolkit, which will provide districts with all of the supplementary tools to successfully implement these practices.

Upon looking at the results of this study, policy makers may also consider providing financial incentives for districts to train teachers in formal TLEPs and help districts encourage teachers to become teacher leaders by providing funds for small stipends. Just as a school pays someone to lead an after-school organization or sport, teacher leader stipends could encourage teacher leaders to be compensated for their extra efforts in the areas of teaching, learning, and curriculum. Espousing the concept that if you value what someone does you pay them for their work, policy makers may be able to better retain teachers by offering small financial stipends. This idea is supported by the Ohio Teacher Leader Framework (2017).

Lastly, leadership training must be present in teacher preparation programs. This will assist early-career teachers who often struggle to stay in teaching compared to those with more experience. At present, most TLEP's require at least four years of teaching experience so unless these prerequisites change, it will be important to front-load these leadership concepts in teacher preparation programs so as to help retain early career teachers by providing leadership related skills.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research could surely use this research study as a springboard to further explore teacher leadership and job satisfaction. It will first be important to operationalize the term teacher leader, as each district likely uses these positions in different ways. It was important to select the population in the study because all participants were trained in the same teacher leadership methods and followed a prescribed curriculum as outlined by the Ohio Teacher Leader Endorsement Program. Additionally, new teacher leadership practices are beginning to deviate from formal title to roles that encompass the hallmarks of informal leadership (Aspen Institute, 2014; Danielson, 2006). As researchers attempt to explore teacher leadership practices around the country, apples to apples comparisons will be important.

This study explores how teacher leaders experience their roles and if those experiences influence job satisfaction and teacher retention levels. Interestingly, it appears that both the teacher leadership role and the TLEP training increases the job satisfaction in the teachers studied, but more extensive research is needed in this area. As several other cohorts exist in Ohio that have been recently trained through various TLEPs, future research could explore these teacher leaders to determine if their job satisfaction has also increased due to the training and the role itself.

Considering that the sample size of this study was small, further research could more deeply explore teacher leadership and job satisfaction by examining larger populations of teacher leaders in a variety of educational settings. In that the completed study focuses on one upper-middle-class school district, urban and rural school districts are largely untouched in this area of research. The effects that teacher leadership positions can have on early-career teachers is another area left unexplored in this research

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

study. All of the teacher leaders studied had at least five years of teaching experience. Making it to this level in their careers increases retention dramatically when compared to early-career teachers who leave teaching at an alarming rate (Boe et al., 2008; Fisher, 2011; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll et al., 2014). Therefore, it will be important for researchers to explore how school districts can support early-career teachers by either encouraging leadership training or perhaps supporting informal leadership practices early in teachers' careers. Additionally, descriptive and inferential studies could more deeply uncover the retention rates with respect to districts existing in a variety of socio-economic and diversity strata's.

Because Ohio has newly created the Teacher Leader Framework and is presently revising the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program standards, it will be important for researchers to evaluate the impact of these newly created and revised programs and standards. The Teacher Leader Framework makes many suggestions for implementation dealing with stipends, creative scheduling, and role creation, so it will be important for researchers to analyze the impact and outcomes of such efforts. I laud the work of the Teacher Leader Framework group and Teacher Leader Endorsement Program revision group for attempting to ensure that school districts in the state of Ohio recognize the importance of teacher leadership practices and TLEP training and how they can impact not only the students but also the teachers and administrators that work in those districts.

Conclusion

It is my expressed hope that results like the ones found in my study can be a springboard for school districts to not only develop teacher leadership practices in their schools, but also support the training of their teachers and administrators in teacher

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

leadership via formal endorsement programs. By training both teachers and administrators with the same teacher leadership practices, it is likely that less conflict will result and allow distributed leadership practices to be more successful. As Kelly indicated, it will also be helpful to have a focused debriefing session upon completion of the training for both administrators and colleagues. By supporting teacher leadership, teacher leadership training, and proper inter-district alignment in relation to teacher leadership, it is likely that both teachers and administrators will experience improved relationships, empowerment, and team work that will improve the job satisfaction of all in involved.

These changes will require that districts revisit the traditional hierarchies of leadership in their buildings, shifting instead to a distributive model of leadership. With teacher leaders, both formal and informal, empowered to assist district leadership in areas of curriculum and instruction, districts will be able to improve not only student outcomes but also the job satisfaction of those empowered to exercise leadership from beyond their own classrooms.

As states like Ohio are starting to formally support teacher leadership, districts would be wise to use the Ohio Teacher Leader Framework and the Teacher Leader Endorsement Program to develop, support, and sustain teacher leadership practices. District leaders will likely need to get creative with finances and schedules to allow teachers to have time to become leaders during the school day. Although teacher leaders such as many of those in my study, lead informally, it may be helpful to provide teachers with extra time during the school day to perform teacher leadership related tasks.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Teacher leaders are poised to make a real impact in the field of education. Additionally, these positions and designations may be able to help retain teachers, so they can continue to work in areas where they are best suited. As Danielson (2006) would agree, a teacher leader's strength is that they are first and foremost a teacher, knowledgeable in the teaching and learning practices that help improve student outcomes. Some teachers have the desire to lead beyond their classroom walls. Teacher leadership practices, whether they be formal or informal allow teachers to find the wiggle room, identifying needs and attempting to find solutions. Based on my findings, it appears that trained teacher leaders are poised to not only make a real difference in the districts that they work, but also be highly satisfied employees who feel empowered, valued, and respected.

REFERENCES

- Angelle, P. S. (2010). An organizational perspective of distributed leadership: A portrait of a middle school. *Research in Middle Level Online Education*, 33(5), 1-16.
- Armor, D., Conroy-Oseguera, P., Cox, M., King, N., McDonnell, L., Pascal, A., Pauly, E., & Zellman, G. (1976). Analysis of the school preferred reading programs in selected Los Angeles minority schools (Report No. R-2007-LAUSD). Santa Monica, CA: RAND. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 130 24.
- Aspen Institute. (2014). *Leading from the front of the classroom: A roadmap to teacher leadership that works*. Retrieved from <http://www.aspendri.org/portal/browse/DocumentDetail?documentId=2402&download>
- Aurora City School District. (n.d.). *About the District*. Retrieved from <http://www.aurora-schools.org/Administration2/34>
- Aurora Historical Society. (n.d.). *School History*. Retrieved from <http://aurorahistorical.org/in-our-museum/aurora-school-history>
- Aurora, Ohio. (n.d.). In *City-Data.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.city-data.com/city/Aurora-Ohio.html#b>
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191-215.
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachaudran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Human Behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). New York: Academic Press. (Reprinted in H. Friedman [Ed.], *Encyclopedia of Mental Health*. San Diego: Academic Press, 1998).

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Bassett-Jones, N., & Lloyd, G. C. (2005). Does Herzberg's motivation theory have staying power? *Journal of Management Development*, 24(10), 929-943.
- Battle, A. A., & Looney, L. (2014). Teachers intentions to stay in teaching: The role of values and knowledge of adolescent development. *Education*, 134(3), 369-379.
- Berry, A. B., Petrin, R. A., Gravelle, M. L., & Farmer, T. W. (2012). Issues in special education teacher recruitment, retention, and professional development: Considerations in supporting rural teachers. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 30(4), 3-11.
- Boe, E. E., Cook, L., & Sunderland, R. (2008). Teacher turnover: Examining exit attrition, teaching area transfer, and school migration. *Council for Exceptional Children*, 75(1), 7-31.
- Bonde, D. (2013). Qualitative Interviews: When enough is enough. *Research by Design*, 1-10.
- Cleveland State University. (2017). *CSU Empowered Leaders Teacher Leader Endorsement*. Retrieved from <https://www.csuohio.edu/cehs/casal/cel-empowered-leaders-teacher-leader-endorsement>
- Colbert, J. A., Brown, R. S., Choi, S., & Thomas, S. (2008). An investigation of the impacts of teacher-driven professional development on pedagogy and student learning. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 35(2), 135-154.
- Craig, C. J. (2014). From stories of staying to stories of leaving: A U.S. beginning teacher's experience. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 46(1), 81-115.
doi:10.1080/00220272.2013.797504.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Dagli, U. Y. (2012). America's public school kindergarten teachers' job turnover and associated factors. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 12*, 3121-3134.
- Danielson, C. (2006). *Teacher Leadership that Strengthens Professional Practice*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Danielson, C. (2007). The many faces of leadership. *Educational Leadership, 14*-19.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Teacher education and the American future. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1-2), 35-47.
- DeAngelis, K. J. (2013) The characteristics of high school department chairs: A national perspective. *High School Journal, 97*(2), 107-122.
- Denver Public Schools. (2017). *Teacher Leadership and Collaboration*. Retrieved from <http://teacherleader.dpsk12.org/>
- Elfers, A., & Plecki, M. (2016). The role of a district teacher leadership program in supporting school and district improvement initiatives. *The WERA Educational Journal, 3*.
- Feeney, E. J. (2009). Taking a look at a school's leadership capacity: The role and function of high school department chairs. *Clearing House, 82*(5), 212-219.
- Fisher, M. H. (2011). Factors influencing stress, burnout, and retention of secondary teachers. *Current Issues in Education, 14*(1), 1-37.
- Gardner, R. D. (2010). Should I stay or should I go? Factors that influence the retention, turnover, and attrition of K-12 music teachers in the United States. *Arts Education Policy Review, 111*, 112-121. doi:10.1080/10632910903458896.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Goddard, R. D., Hoy, W. K., & Hoy, A. W. (2000). Collective teacher efficacy: Its meaning, measure, and impact on student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal, 37*(2), 479-507.
- Gonzalez, L., Stallone-Brown, M., & Slate, J. R. (2008). Teachers who left the teaching profession: A qualitative understanding. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(1), 1-11.
- Greenlee, B., & Brown, J. J. (2009). Retaining teachers in challenging schools. *Education, 130*(1), 96-109.
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1976). Motivation through the design of work: Test of a theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 16*(2), 250-279.
- Hahs-Vaughn, D. L., & Scherff, L. (2008). Beginning English teacher attrition, mobility, and retention. *The Journal of Experimental Education, 77*(1), 21-53.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishing.
- Hancock, D., & Muller, U. (2009). Different Systems—Similar challenges? Factors impacting the motivation of German and U.S. teachers to become school leaders. *International Journal of Educational Research, 48*, 299-306.
- Henry, G. T., Bastian, K. C., & Fortner, C. K. (2011). Stayers and leavers: Early-career teacher effectiveness and attrition. *Educational Researcher, 40*(6), 271-280.
doi:10. 3102/0013189X11419042.
- Herzberg, F. (1968). One more time: How do you motivate employees. *Harvard Business Review, 81*(1), 87-96. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2003/01/one-more-time-how-do-you-motivate-employees>

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Hoppey, D., & McLeskey, J. (2013). A case study of principal leadership in an effective inclusive school. *The Journal of Special Education, 46*(4), 245-256.

doi:10.1177/0022466910390507.

Hughes, G. D. (2012). Teacher retention: teacher characteristics, school characteristics, organizational characteristics, and teacher efficacy. *Journal of Educational Research, 105*, 245-255. doi:10.1080/00220671.2011.584922.

Ingersoll, R. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal, 38*(3), 499-534.

Ingersoll, R., & May, H. (2011). Recruitment, retention, and the minority teacher shortage. *CPRE Research Report, 1-63*.

Ingersoll, R., Merrill, L., & May, H. (2014). What are the effects of teacher education and preparation on beginning teacher attrition? *CPRE Research Reports, July 2014*.

Jacobs, J., Gordon, S. P., & Solis, R. (2016). Critical Issues in teacher leadership. *Journal of School Leadership, 26*(3), 374-406.

Jerome, N. (2013). Application of the Maslow's hierarchy of need theory; impacts and implications on organizational culture, human resource and employee's performance. *International Journal of Business and Management Invention, 2*(3), 39-45.

Kalleberg, A. L. (1977). Work values and job rewards: A theory of job satisfaction. *American Sociological Review, 42*, 124-143.

Kelley, J. D. (2011). Teacher's and teacher leaders' perceptions of the formal role of teacher leadership (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Educational Policy Studies Dissertations: http://scholarworks.gsu.edu/eps_diss/70

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Kensler, L. A. W., Reames, E., Murray, J., & Patrick, L. (2011). Systems thinking tools for improving evidence-based practice: A cross-case analysis of two high school leadership teams. *High School Journal, 95*(2), 32-53.
- Kent, A. M., Feldman, P., & Hayes, R. L. (2009). Mentoring and inducting new teachers into the profession: An innovative approach. *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies, 5*(1), 73-95.
- Kent State University. (2013). *Kent State University's Teacher Leader Endorsement Program*. [PDF file]. Retrieved from <https://www.kent.edu/sites/default/files/file/tlep-brochure.pdf>
- Klassen, R. M. (2010). Teacher stress: The mediating role of collective efficacy beliefs. *Journal of Educational Research, 103*, 342-350.
doi:10.1080/00220670903383069.
- Klassen, R. M., Usher, E. L., & Bong, M. (2010). Teachers' collective efficacy, job satisfaction, and job stress in cross-cultural context. *Journal of Experimental Education, 78*, 464-486. doi:10.1080/00220970903292975.
- Lewis, T. J., & Sugai, G. (1999). Effective behavior support: A systems approach to proactive schoolwide management. *Focus on Exceptional Children, 31*(6), 1.
- Louis, K. S., Mayrowetz, D., Murphy, J., & Smylie, M. (2013). Making sense of distributed leadership: How secondary school educators look at job redesign. *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management, 1*(1), 33-68.
- Margolis, J. (2008). What will keep today's teachers teaching? Looking for a hook as a new career cycle emerges. *Teachers College Record, 110*(1), 160-194.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Margolis, J., & Deuel, A. (2009). Teacher leaders in action: Motivation, morality, and money. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 8*, 264-286.
doi:10.1080/15700760802416115.
- Martinez, I. L., Frick, K. D., Kim, K. S., & Fried, L. P. (2010). Older adults and retired teachers address teacher retention in urban schools. *Educational Gerontology, 36*, 263-280. doi:10.1080/03601270903212302.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., & Leiter, M. P. (1996). *Maslach Burnout Inventory*. (3rd ed.) Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review, 50*(4), 370.
- Maxfield, C. R., & Flumerfelt, S. (2009). The empowering principal: Leadership behaviors needed by effective principals as identified by emerging leaders and principals. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership, 2*(2), 39-48.
- Mee, M., & Haverback, H. R. (2014). Commitment, preparation, and early career frustrations: Examining future attrition of middle school teachers. *American Secondary Education, 42*(3), 39-51.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative Research in Practice: Example for Discussion and Analysis*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B. & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Mizell, H. (2010). *Why professional development matters*. [PDF file]. Oxford, OH: Leaning Forward. Retrieved from https://learningforward.org/docs/default-source/pdf/why_pd_matters_web.pdf
- Murphy, J., Smylie, M., Mayrowetz, D., & Louis, K. S. (2009). The role of the principal in fostering the development of distributed leadership. *School Leadership and Management, 29*(2), 181-214.
- Myung, J., Loeb, S., & E. Horng. (2011). Tapping the principal pipeline: Identifying talent for future school leadership in the absence of formal succession management programs. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 47*(5), 695-727.
- Ng, J. C., & Peter, L. (2010). Should I stay or should I go? Examining the career choices of alternatively licensed teachers in urban schools. *Urban Review, 42*, 123-142. doi:10.1007/s11256-009-0120-7.
- Nolan, B., & Palazzolo, L. (2011). New teacher perceptions of the “teacher leader” movement. *NASSP Bulletin, 95*(4), 302-318. doi:10.1177/0192636511428372.
- Ohio Department of Education. (2017). *Ohio Teacher Leadership Framework*. [PDF file]. Retrieved from http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/News/Ohio-Teacher-Leadership-Framework-now-available/Ohio-Teacher-Leader-Framework_508_compliant.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US
- Petty, T. M., Fitchett, P., & O'Connor, K. (2012). Attracting and keeping teachers in high-need schools. *American Secondary Education, 40*(2), 67-88.
- Pink, D. H. (2009). *Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates us*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Pucella, T. J. (2011). The impact of national board certification on burnout levels in educators. *The Clearing House*, 84, 52-58. doi:10.1080/00098655.2010.511306.
- Raffanti, M. A. (2008). Leaders “sitting beside” followers: A phenomenology of teacher leadership. *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research*, 3, 58-68.
- Remijan, K. W. (2014). Improving teacher motivation in secondary schools with hybrid positions. *American Secondary Education*, 42(3), 30-38.
- Robinson, V. M., Lloyd, C. A., & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: An analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 44(5), 635-674.
- Roby, D. (2012). Teacher leader human relation skills: A comparative study. *Education*, 132(4), 898-906.
- Ronfeldt, M. (2012). Where should student teachers learn to teach? Effects of field placement school characteristics on teacher retention and effectiveness. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 34(1), 3-26.
- Ross, S. W., Romer, N., & Horner, R. H. (2011). Teacher well-being and the implementation of schoolwide positive behavior interventions and supports. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, 1-12.
doi:10.1177/1098300711413820.
- Sass, D. A., Seal, A. K., & Martin, N. K. (2010). Predicting teacher retention using stress and support variables. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 49(2), 200-215.
doi: 10.1108/09578231111116734.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

- Scribner, S. M. P., & Bradley-Levine, J. (2010). The meaning(s) of teacher leadership in an urban high school reform. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(4), 491-522.
- Seashore Louis, K., Dretzke, B., & Wahlstrom, K. (2010). How does leadership affect student achievement? Results from a national U.S. survey. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 21(3), 315-336.
- Shaw, J., & Newton, J. (2014). Teacher retention and satisfaction with a servant leader as principal. *Education*, 135(1), 101-106.
- Shillingstad, S. L., McGlamery, S., Davis, B., & Gilles, C. (2015). Navigating the roles of leadership: Mentors' perspectives on teacher leadership. *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, 81(2), 12-20.
- Spillane, J. P., Anderson, L. (2014). The architecture of anticipation and novices' emerging understandings of the principal position: Occupational sense making at the intersection of the individual, organization, and institution. *Teachers College Record*, 116, 1-42.
- Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating school leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Educational Researcher*, 30(3), 23-28.
- Steinhardt, M. A., Smith Jaggars, S. E., Faulk, K. E., & Gloria, C. T. (2011). Chronic work stress and depressive symptoms: Assessing the mediating role of teacher burnout. *Stress and Health*, 27, 420-429.
- Stewart, T. (2012). Classroom teacher leadership: service-learning for teacher sense of efficacy and servant leadership development. *School Leadership & Management*, 32(3), 233-259.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Stone-Johnson, C. (2014). Not cut out to be an administrator: Generations, change, and the career transition from teacher to principal. *Education and Urban Society*, 46(5), 606-625.

Supovitz, J., Sirinides, P., & May, H. (2010). How principals and peers influence teaching and learning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 46(1), 31-56.

Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L., & Carver-Thomas, D. (2016). *A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S.*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Tamir, E. (2009). The retention question in context-specific teacher education: Do beginning teachers and their program leaders see teachers' future career eye to eye. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26, 665-678.

Taylor, M., Goeke, J., Klein, E., Onore, C., & Geist. (2011). Changing leadership: Teachers lead the way for schools that learn. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(5), 920-929.

The Ohio State University. (2017). *Teacher Leader Endorsement*. Retrieved from <https://ehe.osu.edu/educational-studies/endorsements/teacher-leader>

Teacher Leadership Exploratory Consortium. (2011). Teacher Leader Model Standards. [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://www.ets.org/s/education_topics/teaching_quality/pdf/teacher_leader_model_standards.pdf

Tennessee Teacher Leader Network. (2015). 2015-16 Guidebook. [PDF file]. Retrieved from

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/reports/331047_tchr_leader_guidebook_2015-16.pdf

Trochim, W. M. K. & Donnelly, J. P. (2008). *The research methods knowledge base*.

Mason, OH: Atomic Dog.

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Barr, M. (2004). Fostering student learning: The relationship of collective teacher efficacy and student achievement. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 3*(3), 189-209.

Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A. W., & Hoy, W. K. (1998). Teacher efficacy: Its meaning and measure. *Review of Educational Research, 68*(2), 202-248.

Vernon-Dotson L. J., & Floyd, L. O. (2012). Building leadership capacity via school partnerships and teacher teams. *Clearing House, 85*, 38-49.

doi:10.1080/00098655.2011.607477.

Wahlstrom, K. L., & Louis, K. S. (2008). How teachers experience principal leadership:

The roles of professional community, trust, efficacy, and shared responsibility.

Educational Administration Quarterly, 44(4), 458-495.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

York-Barr, J., & Duke, K. (2004). What do we know about teacher leadership? Findings

from two decades of scholarship. *Review of Educational Research, 74*(3), 255-

316.

Zagorsky, J., Olsen, R., Hawley, J., & Gnagey, J. (2013). *2013 teacher supply and*

demand in Ohio. Columbus, OH: Ohio Education Research Center.

APPENDIX A: RESEARCH AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Research Question	Teacher Leadership Interview Questions
<p>How do teacher leaders describe their roles, responsibilities, and experiences as leaders in their school building?</p>	<p>Please describe your leadership role in your school.</p> <p>How did you become a teacher leader in your school?</p> <p>What motivated you to pursue this role?</p> <p>Compared to your previous role, please elaborate on the responsibilities, workload, and stress at school.</p> <p>Please describe your professional relationships with administrators and colleagues.</p>
<p>How do teacher leaders describe their involvement in the decision making process?</p>	<p>Please describe the decision making process for you as a teacher leader.</p> <p>What kind of support do you receive as a teacher leader in your school?</p> <p>What does it mean for you to enact change in your school district?</p>
<p>How do teacher leadership practices influence job satisfaction and teacher retention?</p>	<p>Please elaborate on the differences between your job satisfaction since taking on a teacher leadership role.</p> <p>What aspects of your leadership role influence you staying in your school district?</p> <p>What factors would influence your decision to leave your school or the teaching profession?</p>

APPENDIX B: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

January 1, 2018

Dear Teacher Leader,

I am a teacher and instructional coach in the high school setting. I am also a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Youngstown State University. To help complete my dissertation process, I will be conducting interviews, direct observations, and document reviews as part of a research study to explore how teacher leadership practices affect job satisfaction in teachers. As a trained teacher leader you are in an ideal position to provide valuable, first-hand information from your own perspective. This letter will serve as a formal invitation to participate in my research study.

As multiple sources are crucial in qualitative research, prior to the interview and direct observation process, I will ask you to bring at least one document showing evidence of you leading as a teacher leader. These documents may be in the form of but are not limited to, meeting minutes from department, data, or PLC meetings, as well as documents pertaining to professional development, instructional coaching, etc. These documents will be gathered for later analysis so please make copies prior to the our meeting time.

The interview portion of the research study will need to be conducted off school grounds, either before or after school and will take no longer than 60 minutes of your time. Although there will be no compensation for participating in this study, your participation will be a valuable addition to the field of educational research and findings could lead to a greater understanding of teacher leadership practices in relation to job satisfaction. During the interview process I will be attempting to capture your thoughts and perspectives on being a teacher leader in you school district. Your responses to the interview questions will be kept confidential and your participation in the study will be kept anonymous.

In addition, to the interview process, I will need to directly observe teacher leaders completing leadership tasks during the school day. My presence in the observation room will be minimally invasive and I will not interfere at any time with the observed leadership task. Examples of such tasks may be but are not limited to, data meetings, department meetings, instructional coaching sessions, mentoring meetings,

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

professional development sessions, etc. Each observation will last no longer than 30 minutes.

If you are willing to participate in my research study, please return this form via the stamped envelope provided no later than X and we will then determine a time that will work best to complete the interview and direct observation process. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you!

440-477-1190

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT

CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Chris Basich and I am presently a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership program at Youngstown State University. I am also a teacher and instructional coach at the high school level. To help complete my dissertation process, I will be conducting interviews, direct observations, and document reviews as part of a research study to explore how teacher leadership practices affect job satisfaction in teachers. Personal data such as gender, age, etc. will not be collected although your role in relation to job satisfaction will be fully explored.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- A. Explore the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders.
- B. Determine if the roles, responsibilities, and experiences improve the job satisfaction of teacher leaders.

RESEARCH STUDY DESIGN AND DURATION

This research study will utilize a case-study design encompassing the following parts:

- A. Semi-structured interviews - No more than 60 minute interview following a set of scripted interview questions that align with literature-based themes pertaining to teacher leadership and job satisfaction. Responses will be recorded digitally and also with handwritten notes.
- B. Direct Observations - 30 minute observation of teacher leader engaging in teacher leadership role beyond typical classroom teaching. Field notes will be taken and teacher leadership actions will be documented on observation form that is based on literature-based themes.
- C. Document Reviews - Teacher leaders will share leadership-based documents with the researcher including but not limited to meeting minutes, teacher leadership professional development materials, instructional coaching information, etc.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY

By participating in this study, you will be able to better understand your roles, responsibilities, and experiences as a teacher leader and also see how those factors influence your own job satisfaction. Additionally, you will be able to help address a gap

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

in the literature that exists connecting teacher leadership to job satisfaction. Although the researcher will take every precaution to protect your confidentiality, it is possible that your responses may identify you which may lead to various risks including adverse social and employment consequences. As such, please only share information you feel comfortable sharing.

STATEMENT OF DATA CONFIDENTIALITY

As a participant in this study, I will not be identified by name and any reports or publications. My confidentiality and anonymity will be ensured during this study and all data gathered will be subject to standard data use policies which protect your privacy and personal information. Only the researcher will have access to the personal data gathered during this study.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW FROM THE STUDY AT ANY TIME WITHOUT PENALTY

If you feel uncomfortable at any point in the research study, I have the right to refuse to answer any question and may also end the interview or direct observation immediately upon request.

QUESTIONS

The researcher will offer to answer any questions prior to and during the research study. No deception will be used in the research study.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Chris Basich - Researcher

585 Riverside High School

Painesville, OH 44077

440-477-1190

Dr. Jane Beese - Dissertation Chair

1 University Plaza

Youngstown, OH 44555

330-941-3000

SIGNATURES

I have read all of the above information about the research study in addition to my rights as a research participant. I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of this form.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

My Printed Name: _____

My Signature: _____ Date: _____

AGE DECLARATION

I agree that I am at least 18 years of age and therefore do not require parent or legal guardian permission to take part in this study.

My Printed Name: _____

My Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of the Researcher: _____

Christopher Basich - Youngstown State University

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the Office of Research Services at YSUIRB@ysu.edu or 330-941-2377.

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW AND DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

1. As each participant arrives to the arranged interview location, the researcher will meet them at the door, introduce themselves and ask the participant to be seated.
2. For the interview data collection process, all participants will be seated across from the researcher at a table or large desk.
3. The only materials on the table will be a pen, the researcher's field notes, a digital recording device (turned off prior to the start of the interview process), and informed consent forms which will be filled out by the participant.
4. The informed consent forms will disclose full details of the study including the interview, direct observation, and document review process in addition to the benefits and risks associated with the study.
5. The participant will be handed the informed consent form and given enough time to read the document and determine if they will in fact participate in the study. The form will be returned signed and dated if the participant decides to participate in the interview, direct observation, and document review process.
6. Upon signing of the informed consent form, the researcher will spend at least five minutes building rapport with the participants by informing them about the researcher's present teaching position while also asking about the participants teaching position as well. The intent of this process is to build trust between research and participant which aims to help improve the depth of further interview questions. None of the information shared during the rapport building process will be recorded or used for further analysis.
7. After the rapport building process, the researcher will ask each participant to furnish their document example(s) evidencing teacher leadership practices. Participants were advised to bring these documents and were provided with examples on the invitation to participate form (Appendix B).
8. At this time, the participant will be alerted that the digital recording device will be turned on and that the researcher will begin writing field notes based on their

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

responses. Teacher leader participants will then be asked a series of structured interview questions.

9. Ample time (no longer than 60 minutes as indicated in the informed consent form) will be given to allow the participant to elaborate upon their responses. Using a semi-structured format, the research will have the freedom to ask for clarification and explore topics further if doing so will provide a more detailed understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and experiences of teacher leaders.
10. After all questions have been answered, the researcher will indicate to each participant that the digital recording device will be turned off and field notes will cease. The researcher will then thank the participant and ask them if they would like to receive a copy of the case study results when completed. If they indicate that they would in fact like this information, contact information will be exchanged so that results can be forwarded upon completion of the study.
11. The researcher will then escort the participant from the interview location and prepare for the next interview (if applicable). If multiple participant interviews are conducted during the same day, they will be staggered to allow at least 15 minutes between interviews. This will help ensure that the confidentiality of each participant is protected and will also give the researcher time to organize materials for the next interview.

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION PROCEDURES

1. The researcher will meet each participant in a previously determined location to begin the observation process. Every effort will be made to arrive at the start of the leadership related task session so as not to disrupt anyone taking part in the task. No students will be present for any direct observation.
2. The researcher will sit or stand in a space that does not inhibit anything that is going on in the room, most likely at a desk or table towards the back of the observation room.
3. During the direct observation, the researcher will use a standardized form (see Appendix G) to record observation data, which will be categorized into pre-selected constructs that have emerged from the literature including autonomy, working with others, and working with administrators. In addition, identifiers such as subject, years of experience, leadership role, date, time, and location will be recorded for data analysis but then generalized for final reports to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of each participant. Any other identifiers (names, genders, etc.) will also be changed to protect confidentiality.
4. If at any point during the observation, a person in the room comments as to the researcher's presence, it will be stated that the researcher is present to observe the participant for the purposes of research. No other information will be provided and other participants' identities will not be identified.
5. The researcher will conclude the observation by quietly leaving the room.

Aurora City Schools

www.aurora-schools.org

Board of Education
102 E. Garfield Rd.
Aurora, OH 44202
330-562-6106
330-954-2228
Fax: 330-562-4892

Miller Elementary
646 S. Chillicothe Rd.
Aurora, OH 44202
330-562-6199
Fax: 330-995-5459

Craddock Elementary
105 Hard Rd.
Aurora OH 44202
330-562-3175
Fax: 330-954-2087

Leighton Elementary
121 Aurora-Hudson Rd.
Aurora OH 44202
330-562-2209
Fax: 330-562-2265

Harmon Middle School
130 Aurora-Hudson Rd.
Aurora OH 44202
330-562-3375
Fax: 330-562-4796

Aurora High School
109 W. Pioneer Trail
Aurora OH 44202
330-562-3501
Fax: 330-562-3588


November 17, 2017

Youngstown State University
Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Phelps Building
One University Plaza
Youngstown, OH 44555

Dear Youngstown State University IRB:

Aurora City School District agrees to participate in a research study that explores how teacher leadership practices affect job satisfaction in teachers. Those participating in the study will engage in an interview, direct observation, and document review process. All of the required tasks will take place on the district's campus, and the district agrees to interact with YSU doctoral student Chris Basich to meet data collection procedures and objectives.

Sincerely,


Pat Ciccantelli
Superintendent
Aurora City School District
102 E. Garfield Rd.
Aurora, OH 44202
330-562-6106

TEACHER LEADERSHIP

APPENDIX G: DIRECT OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENT REVIEW DATA FORM

Observation Date, Time, and Location:

Leadership Task

Observed: _____

Teacher years of experience, leadership role,

subject _____

Autonomous Processes	Working With Others to Make Decisions	Working With Administrators	Other Interactive Processes
Additional Notes:			

APPENDIX H: IRB APPROVAL FORM



One University Plaza, Youngstown, Ohio 44555

Office of Research
330.941.2377
www.ysu.edu

January 28, 2018

Dr. Jane Beese, Principal Investigator
Mr. Chris Basich, Co-investigator
Department of Counseling, School Psychology and Educational Leadership
UNIVERSITY

RE: IRB Protocol Number: 076-2018
Title: Teacher Leadership: Effects on Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention

Dear Dr. Beese and Mr. Basich:

The Institutional Review Board of Youngstown State University has reviewed the above mentioned Protocol via expedited review and determined that it fully meets YSU Human Subjects Research Guidelines. Therefore, I am pleased to inform you that your project has been fully approved for one year. You must submit a Continuing Review Form and have your project approved by January 27, 2019, if your project continues beyond one year.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Institutional Review Board and may not be initiated without IRB approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the IRB. Best wishes in the conduct of your study.



Michael A. Hripko
Associate Vice President for Research
Authorized Institutional Official

MAH:cc

cc: Dr. Jake Protivnak, Chair
Department of Counseling, School Psychology and Educational Leadership

Youngstown State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, age, religion or veteran/military status in its programs or activities. Please visit www.ysu.edu/hls-accessibility for contact information for persons designated to handle questions about this policy.

