DIFFERENCES IN JOB SATISFACTION BETWEEN SPECIAL EDUCATORS WHEN

CONTROLLING FOR SENSE OF COMMUNITY

by

Jennifer Casi Cooke

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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ABSTRACT

Attrition among educators is a continuing concern in the area of special education. Job satisfaction has been associated with teacher burnout and teacher attrition. Many times, multiple educators work in a close environment creating a need for community in special education. The purpose of this study is to identify differences in job satisfaction among special educator roles, including collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers, as well as self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals, when controlling for sense of community. A quantitative, causal comparative design was used to determine differences among job satisfaction between special educators. The study involved 93 participants with 34 collaborative general education teachers, 30 inclusive special education teachers, 14 self-contained special education teachers, and 15 paraprofessionals. Participants were selected from public school districts in Virginia containing elementary, middle, and high schools. Variables were collected using two survey instruments, including Paul Spector's Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), to determine educator satisfaction, and Wilfried Admiraal and Ditte Lockhorst's Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS) to identify educator's perception of community. Data was gathered using SurveyMonkey. In addition, data was analyzed using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) to determine if there were significant differences in job satisfaction between educator roles while controlling for the covariate, perceived sense of community.

Keywords: special educators, paraprofessionals, sense of community, job satisfaction

Copyright Page

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this research to my family. You have always encouraged me with my endeavors, I never would have been able to achieve my goals without your love and support. My mom who is always there for me and continually inspires me to work hard. I would like to dedicate this to my son, who is the light of my life, I love you so much! Additionally, I would like to dedicate this research to my amazing committee at Liberty, you have been so insightful and supportive throughout this entire process, thank you so much!

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List of Abbreviations

Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA)

Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA)

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)

Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)

Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS)

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The purpose of this quantitative, causal comparative study was to discover if there were differences among job satisfaction between special educator roles while controlling for perceived sense of community. Chapter one provides the background associated with attrition among special educators involving job satisfaction and sense of community, as well as a summary of the theoretical framework. The problem statement, purpose, and significance of the study is reviewed in terms of job satisfaction and sense of community. The chapter concludes with research questions and definitions of key terms related to the study.

Background

The high rate of teacher turnover is an ongoing issue among schools in the field of special education (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). According to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) (2019), the number of students with disabilities being served by public schools is increasing every year. This results in a greater need for special educators; teachers and paraprofessionals, also known as teaching assistants, that work directly with students receiving special education services (Biggs et al., 2016). In 2019, students receiving special education services comprised 13.5% of the total student population. In Virginia, however, special education teachers are continuously ranked first in endorsement area for critical teacher shortages (VDOE, 2019). Due to the limited number of educators and elevated attrition rates, it is a constant challenge to find and retain valuable teachers (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). In addition, there are significant difficulties presented with recruiting and retaining effective paraprofessionals (Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). As the number of students with disabilities continues to increase, so does the need for more educators in the area of special education.

Educator perceptions of workplace environments influence job satisfaction for both teachers and paraprofessionals (Ansley et al., 2019; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Special educators often work in single classroom settings. with multiple instructors, creating a collaborative environment that could affect perceived sense of community. A variety of associations have been identified, among factors connected to sense of community and educator satisfaction. Hagaman and Casey (2018) found that a reduced sense of support was recognized as a major contributor for why novice special education teachers leave the profession. In addition, through a mixed methods research design, Brown & Stanton-Chapman (2017) studied the association between perceived satisfaction exhibited by paraprofessionals in relation to directed work responsibilities. Brown and Stanton-Chapman (2017) found paraprofessionals expressed challenges in the areas of three key themes, including job satisfaction in terms of work recognition, as well as misunderstanding of work duties, and the impact of interactive power between teachers and paraprofessionals. Based upon, Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, acceptance from others is a primary psychological aspect connected with feelings to belong. Through a qualitative analysis of complex interviews Biggs et al. (2016), found that teacher and shared influences were two of five significant domains that affect the quality of teacher and paraprofessional relationships. Decreased job satisfaction can be a product of workplace stress, resulting in diminished accountability and teacher attrition (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Veldman et al., 2016).

Positive job satisfaction perceptions have been associated with increased positive perceptions of work environment and reduced level of teacher attrition rates (Ansley, 2019; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). Constructive connotations have found feelings of support, sustainability, and innovative practices (Devenyi et al., 2018; Thurlings et al., 2015). Collectivity

between educators has been connected to academic tools that demonstrate an increased level of responsiveness and sustainability (Devenyi et al., 2018). Furthermore, support exhibited by colleagues in the form of guidance, advice, and ability to share are substantial components related to teacher innovation (Thurlings et al., 2015). There is a reported relationship among collaborative experiences and opportunities to participate in decision making with increased feelings of professional worth (Price & Weatherby, 2018). Collaborative opportunities and active involvement between special educators connect to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory by providing opportunities for additional growth in the area of esteem related to success and dignity. Collaboration between special educators, including teachers and paraprofessionals, is significant for the creation and effective implementation of individualized education plans with students receiving special education services (Biggs et al., 2016). Collaboration through teacher communities effects the development of respect and self-confidence between educators (Vangrieken, 2017). As special education has transformed to include a variety of educators in both general education and self-contained classroom settings, it is believed there could be differences among educator roles (collaborative general education teachers, inclusive special education teachers, self-contained special education teachers, and paraprofessionals) regarding job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community.

Historical Context

Special education has transformed over the years to promote the inclusion of students receiving special education services in general education classrooms. Major educational reform occurred in the 1970's that resulted in the passing of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA), which required all children with disabilities to be provided with access to a public education (Essex, 2016). School system adoption of this act resulted in increased numbers

of students enrolled in public schools, creating a larger need for special educators. Subsequently, significant reforms occurred through numerous legislative acts, including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), providing students with disabilities a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), and promoting the inclusion of students with disabilities to have access to education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to meet individual student needs (Lindstrom & Drolet, 2017). The IDEA changed practices in schools to promote inclusion of students receiving special education services mainstreamed into general education classrooms (Soukup et al., 2007). This resulted in the transformation of educator's roles to include a variety of collaborative partnerships between general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals.

A half-century of educational and societal reforms for special education significantly changed the role of educators, resulting in both a greater demand for teachers and paraprofessionals in public schools. Responsibilities of general education teachers shifted to include educational services for students with disabilities. The educational transformation generated a need, for both special and general education teachers, to adjust rapidly with co-teaching, individualized interventions, and collaborative preparation (Lindstrom & Drolet, 2017). The change of roles created an increased need for collaboration; however, research has shown planning between special education and general education teachers is limited (Nilsen, 2017). Inclusive practice paradigms shifted for both traditional and special education classrooms, making it common for both general education teachers and special education teachers to be working in the same classroom. The roles of paraprofessionals changed to provide greater capacities for student with disabilities' instruction in a variety of settings, creating reduced

opportunities for collaboration (Giangreco, 2003; Giangreco et al., 2010). The roles of teachers adjusted to include expansion of teacher duties, and creating a leadership role for paraprofessionals (Giangreco, 2003). Emery and Vandenberg (2010) found that special education teachers are more likely to experience decreased rates of job satisfaction, greater stress, and increased attrition rates, thus creating a need for additional insights in the causes of such phenomena.

Although beneficial for students, these types of adjustments created a transitional period for educators in relation to defining roles, managing responsibilities, and determining most effective practices influencing workplace environment (Giangreco, 2003; Lindstrom & Drolet, 2017). Workplace environment is a key factor related with job satisfaction for both teachers and paraprofessionals (Ansley et al., 2019; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). An association was found between educator perceptions of effective relationships with colleagues and leadership personnel in relation to job satisfaction (Ansley, 2019; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012, Reeves et al., 2017). Additional research in the area of educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling for sense for community could impact both teacher and paraprofessional perceptions regarding workplace environment.

Social Context

The creation of opportunities to increase educator job satisfaction can benefit not only the educator, but also the school and other school stakeholders. When combined with a positive school environment, job satisfaction demonstrated a positive association regarding student academic achievement (Banerjee et al., 2017). Furthermore, associations have been found between teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction, resulting in higher teacher job satisfaction and increased self-efficacy (Klassen & Chui, 2010; Viel-Ruma et al., 2010).

Decreased job satisfaction has been connected to higher attrition rates that affects schools and students (Ford et al., 2018; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012). Studies have found a negative association between elevated teacher attrition and school finances (Guarino et al., 2016; Djonko-Moore, 2016). Additional costs related to teacher attrition and new educator training reduces available dollars in other budget areas. Attrition of teachers and paraprofessionals, in special education, provide additional deficiencies in a previously established high-need area (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Added pressure due to teacher shortages impacts students, as well as teachers and administrators. Both special educator and special education paraprofessional positions are considered essential. When a vacancy exists in a school, the position's duties must be covered, which can add strain on a variety of professionals. In addition, increased attrition rates can alter the building of effective relationships among colleagues and students. Attrition occurs more frequently for novice teachers (Conley & You, 2017). A mentor-mentee program has been found to be a beneficial strategy to help reduce novice teacher attrition rates by reducing the consequences of stress (White & Mason, 2016), thus demonstrating a positive collaborative association.

Theoretical Framework

Learning and professional growth are key elements regarding teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, and professional collaboration. As described by Bandura and Walters (1977) Social Learning Theory is the concept of learning through observation and experience. Social Learning Theory provides the idea that people learn through cognitive processes involving observational learning and vicarious reinforcement (Bandura & Walters, 1977). Behaviors more desirable to the observer are more likely to be reproduced (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

In addition, this concept is connected to Abraham Maslow's (1943, 1987) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, which identifies motivation in the form of a hierarchical progression. According to Maslow (1943), motivation progresses through a series of steps towards the goal of self-actualization, beginning with basic human needs as a foundation. As needs are realized, the individual progresses to the next level of desired motivation (Maslow, 1943, 1954, 1987). Tiers three and four represented in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory articulate the importance of relationships, connectedness, and appreciation in terms of human motivation. It is believed there is a positive association between psychological aspects associated with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory that can explain the significance of sense of community and job satisfaction among educators.

In the education profession, it is typical for educators to utilize Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory by learning through observation. Usher and Pajares (2008) found that demonstration of achievement through learned experiences is a substantial factor associated with self-efficacy. Benefits of Social Learning Theory (1977) have been recognized in the form of shared efficacy among teachers related to increased job satisfaction (Klassen et al., 2010). In addition, Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs is recognized through professional relationships connected with sense of community. There is an association between job satisfaction and sense of community related to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory with regard to constructive professional relationships (Ansley et al., 2019). In addition, Price and Weatherby (2018) found a positive relationship among feelings of value and job satisfaction, that relates to the esteem level projected by Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs.

Restricted planning time between teachers and paraprofessionals in special education present challenges for collaboration and building effective relationships. Due to limited

instructional knowledge and training, paraprofessionals are placed in positions that require self-navigation (Giangreco, 2003). There are connections between collaborative opportunities and increased job satisfaction for both teachers and paraprofessionals through shared feelings of team efficacy (Capizzi & Da Font, 2012; Giangreco et al., 2010; Klassen et al., 2010). Joint opportunities can present chances for educators to effectively learn from one another while building positive connections related to both Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory. It is believed that shared cultures, focused on Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, could influence special educator and special education paraprofessional job satisfaction through shared beliefs that increase positive workplace conditions.

Problem Statement

Associations have been found between teacher attrition regarding job satisfaction and working conditions (Ford et al., 2018). Job satisfaction has been associated with educator perceptions of workplace conditions (Ansley et al., 2019; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Research has found positive relationships between community among educational professionals. Collaboration among colleagues is associated with increased innovative practices and teacher critical thinking (Thurlings et al., 2015; Harris & de Bruin, 2018). In addition, Devenyi et al. (2018) found that collaborative lesson planning created a more open, sustainable, and supportive environment for resources associated with academic lessons. Sense of community between teachers and paraprofessionals in special education may highlight the effectiveness of Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory by creating opportunities for shared efficacy and professional growth. Feelings of self-worth and importance have positive associations with increased job satisfaction and are related to lower attrition rates

(Ansley et al., 2019; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). It can be challenging for teachers and paraprofessionals to find opportunities to build relationships and collaborate. Both are needed in special education classrooms involving special education; however, there is an ongoing educator attrition challenge (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). The problem is that the literature has not fully addressed there may be differences in job satisfaction regarding educator roles (special educators and special paraprofessionals) while controlling for sense of community that could impact retention rates, quality of instruction, student achievement, and administrative decisions (Ansley et al, 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this causal-comparative design was to determine if there were significant differences in job satisfaction between educator roles, special educators, and special paraprofessionals, while controlling for perceived sense of community. The study included one independent variable: educator role, one covariate: sense of community, and one dependent variable: job satisfaction.

Educator role is determined by the educator's professional discipline associated with the student's learning (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). For this study, educator roles consisted of inclusive special education teachers, collaborative general education teachers, self-contained special education teachers, and special education paraprofessionals. The control variable, sense of community, is defined as school or classroom environment or climate related to perceived professional camaraderie and collaboration (Banerjee, 2017). The study's dependent variable was educator job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as individual perceptions of professional role, specifically personal fulfillment or joy (Ellis et al., 2017). Job satisfaction was determined

using Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The sample of this study consisted of inclusive special education teachers, collaborative general education teachers in general education classrooms, self-contained special education teachers, and paraprofessionals in self-contained classrooms in Virginia Public Schools.

Significance of the Study

According to Bandura (1977), learning occurs due to observation in social environments (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). There is a need for special educators in single classrooms to build relationships and work collaboratively. Working conditions associated with professional relationships influence factors related to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and impact personal motivation. This study purports to provide additional knowledge related to Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory through data analyses specific to special educators' job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community.

Substantial factors aligned to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory are related to job satisfaction, including professional relationships and opportunities between educators to become dynamic collaborative partners in the school setting (Ansley et al., 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Currently in the special education profession, it is challenging to create collaborative opportunities due to limited time and increased workloads. Paraprofessionals typically remain with the students throughout the school day without scheduled planning times. In addition, special education teachers in inclusive classrooms may work with multiple teachers, presenting scheduling challenges related to collaboration. Professional learning occurs through experience and observation; therefore, understanding the differences between educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling sense of community can

contribute to understanding Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory. Empirically, this study determined if there were differences in job satisfaction among various roles of educators related to special education (inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers; self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals) while controlling for perceived sense of community as defined by the SCSS.

Practically, this study provided additional knowledge that can be utilized by educational leaders when making administrative decisions that could contribute to the increase in special educator job satisfaction as partially defined by increasing rates of retention. Special education is continuously growing and transforming resulting in a greater need for educational professionals. There is an ongoing need for special educator position allotments, as well as decreasing attrition rates of special educators in school systems (Ansley et al., 2019; Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Understanding differences in special educator job satisfaction and educator roles while controlling for sense of community can provide valuable knowledge that could be used to increase effectiveness of partnerships and relationships among co-educators. Collaboration has positive associations with increased student achievement, team efficacy, and innovative thinking (Conley & You, 2017; Reeves et al., 2017; Thurlings et al., 2015). Recognizing the relationship between educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community, could result in the identification of essential variables related to co-educators. This could lead to the need for educational reform, such as additional collaborative opportunities between professionals in special education. In addition, this type of knowledge could result in increased student achievement, a creation of more positive learning environments in classrooms, and reduced special educator attrition rates.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers when controlling for sense of school community scores?

RQ2: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals when controlling for sense of school community scores?

Definitions

1. *Attrition* – professional educators exiting the profession of teaching in a specific state or school district (Guarino et al., 2016)

2. *Collaboration* – planned occasion for professional development among classroom educators connected to special education for improved strategies related to student learning (Brownell et al., 2016)

3. *Collaborative General Education Teacher* – teacher that teaches general standard curriculum in an inclusive mainstream classroom setting with a special educator (Kurth, 2015)

4. *Educator Role* – specific professional discipline of educator associated with special education services (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019)

5. *Inclusive Special Education Teacher* – special education teacher that teaches students receiving special education services in a general curriculum classroom setting that is less restrictive (Kurth, 2015)

6. *Job Satisfaction* – personal perceptions of fulfillment in relation to defined professional educational role (Ellis et al., 2017)

7. *Paraprofessional* – educator that works as an assistant to the classroom teacher to support students receiving special education services (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012)

8. *Sense of Community* – educator perception on school climate in the sense of professional unity and educator collaboration (Banerjee, 2017)

9. *Self-Contained Special Education Teacher* – teacher that teaches a small group of students with similar learning needs, who require additional individualized supports, multiple subjects for the majority of the school day (O'Brien et al., 2019)

10. *Special Education* – educational plan provided to students with disabilities to offer an equitable educational environment that meets individual student needs (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019)

11. *Special Educators* – educators, including teachers and paraprofessionals, who work personally with students receiving individualized special education services (Biggs et al., 2016)

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Teacher retainment in special education is an ongoing concern across schools (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Increased job satisfaction among educators has been connected to higher rates of retainment and lower rates of educator attrition (Ford et al., 2018; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). This chapter offers a review of literature in relation to job satisfaction and sense of community among special educators. The first section discusses the theoretical framework in terms of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, and how the theories intersect connecting the topic of study. The second section reviews related literature in the areas of special education, teacher roles, sense of community, and job satisfaction. The chapter ends with a summary identifying the gap in literature and the significance of determining differences among special educator roles regarding job satisfaction and sense of community.

Theoretical Framework

Special educators typically work in cooperative settings, establishing a need to form relationships and learn in a collaborative manner. Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs Theory suggested that a healthy and positive environment is essential for individual success. Components related to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, in the areas of belongingness and esteem, are found in classrooms among special educators. Maslow (1943) believed that factors involving relationships, approval, respect, and esteem were associated with increased motivation to achieve directed needs. Furthermore, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory depicts behaviors are learned during social contexts based upon modeling, observation, and reproduction. According to Bandura and Walters (1977) for behaviors to be reproduced, the

observer must have a desire or be motivated to replicate the noticed behavior. With motivation as a key component in both theories, it is possible for an intersection between Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory to be seen among special educators in terms of sense of community and job satisfaction.

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory depicts that learning occurs based upon observation and reinforcement associated with observed behaviors. Due to time constraints, a substantial amount of learning and relationship building among special educators occurs during instructional periods. It is believed Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory could be utilized in a collaborative classroom setting in the form of observational learning in relation to work-based responsibilities. Furthermore, achievement, acknowledgment, recognition, and reputation portrayed in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs correspond to attention and motivational aspects addressed in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory. As addressed by Bandura and Walters (1977) for a learned behavior to occur there must be motivation to execute the behavior. Therefore, components related to relationships and self-esteem could enhance or possibly inhibit motivational aspects seen in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory between co-educators. It goes to reason that elements associated with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, influence both sense of community and job satisfaction among special educators.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow's (1943, 1987) Hierarchy of Needs Theory characterized motivation in terms of a hierarchical progression, where basic and emotional needs must first be met for self-actualization to occur. When a person achieves that last level, known as self-actualization, they are internally motivated to achieve mastery and continue to grow as an individual (Maslow,

1943). Maslow's (1943) original theory is illustrated in the form of five tiers reflecting categories of needs including: physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization. As time progressed, three more categories of needs were added to the original five to include: cognitive, aesthetic, and transcendence (Maslow, 1981). Maslow (1954) believed that without a safe and supported environment, people would demonstrate insecurities that would inhibit motivation for personal fulfillment and growth.

The first tier represented in Maslow's (1943) theory is physiological needs, which consists of basic human necessities required to achieve a physical level of homeostasis such as food, oxygen, shelter, sleep, and water. Once these needs are generally met, the primary focus shifts to the second level (Maslow, 1943). Safety needs, the second tier identified, focuses on eliminating feelings of "endangerment" through aspects including: individual security, resources, employment, health, and physical property (Maslow, 1943). After the first two tiers are primarily satisfied, a person will concentrate on the third tier (Maslow, 1943, 1954, 1987). The third tier demonstrated in Maslow's (1943, 1954) Hierarchy of Needs is love, which identifies factors associated with emotional connectedness such as relationships, family, and friends. When the third level is primarily satisfied, a person will move to the fourth-tier known as esteem (Maslow, 1943). Esteem emphasizes factors involving recognition, self-respect, appreciation, achievement, independence, and freedom (Maslow, 1943). The final tier in Maslow's (1943, 1954) original theory, known as self-actualization, identifies the need for an individual to pursue intrinsic capabilities.

Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Job Satisfaction

There is an association between psychological desires, depicted in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, with work motivation and job satisfaction (Stewart et al., 2018). In the area

of special education, numerous educators work together creating a setting for Maslow's (1943) love and esteem needs to be met. As demonstrated in Maslow's (1943,1954, 1987) theory, once the first two tiers of basic human needs are essentially met, motivation then focuses on needs associated with psychological aspects including love and esteem. In the classroom setting, some of these aspects could involve relationships, acceptance, position, respect, and sense of community (Maslow, 1943, 1954).

Scruggs et al. (2007/2016) found that, in numerous instances general and special education teachers reported corresponding views associated with coteaching based upon teacher compatibility. A connection was identified between negative perceptions regarding teacher incompatibility and instructor effectiveness, as well as positive classroom perceptions with coteaching compatibility (Scruggs et al., 2007/2016). This can be linked to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs by demonstrating the influence of coteaching relationships in terms of teacher perceptions. Maslow (1943,1954) depicted the significance of relationships and feeling accepted in terms of human behavior including motivation and satisfaction. Relationships must be formed between educators in collaborative settings, creating a need for additional insight in respect to job satisfaction.

Various associations have referenced the significance of workplace environments regarding teacher's satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al.; Price & Weatherby, 2018); corresponding to the factors demonstrated with love and esteem portrayed in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Ansley et al. (2019) found a significant correlation ($r = 0.457$, $p = 0.001$) between overall teacher satisfaction in terms of work and relationships with colleagues, such as other teachers and paraprofessionals. Additional aspects involving sense of community and teacher satisfaction have been connected to the domain of love and esteem included in Maslow's

(1943) Hierarchy of Needs. For instance, perceived acceptance and group fulfillment have been connected to increased job satisfaction for teachers and paraprofessionals (Fisher & Pleasants, 2012; Price & Weatherby, 2018). The importance of factors concerning components of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs is demonstrated in terms of personal growth and satisfaction. Building on the theory of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, it is believed effective professional relationships between special educators can support these needs and assist educators to advance towards personal growth, fulfilling one's intrinsic potential associated with self-actualization. At this point, people are motivated due to personal growth and fulfillment in comparison to effort for attaining a need, such as feelings of belonging and appreciation (Maslow, 1943).

Intrinsic potential can frequently be eclipsed by environmental influences from social stressors (Maslow, 1962). Decreased satisfaction and burnout have been associated with increased levels of emotional distress exhibited by teachers (Rumschlag, 2017; Von Fischer & De Jong, 2017). On the other hand, teacher satisfaction has also been connected to aspects involving components of educational leadership (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018). Both of these cases can be related to factors described in Maslow's (1943) theory, creating a need for further investigation. There is a connection between working conditions, such as educator support, recognition, and relationships among colleagues and teacher satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Additional examination on this association in collaborative classroom settings between co-educators would be beneficial. Desirable environmental factors between special educators create opportunities to meet needs associated with love and esteem portrayed in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Factors related to Maslow's (1943) theory, including recognition and appreciation, have been connected

with increased job satisfaction, creating an important association to special educators (Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Stewart et al, 2018).

Hierarchy of Needs Theory and Sense of Community

Relationships have been found between satisfaction of special educators and feelings of worth and appreciation associated with tiers three and four in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Ansley et al. (2019) identified teacher satisfaction had significant correlations to working environments including feelings of support from leadership roles, relationships with colleagues, educator confidence with student achievement, and positive workplace interactions with school personnel. Hence, demonstrating connections to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs in terms of interpersonal relationships and esteem in the areas of acceptance, trust, independence, and respect.

Diminished support and lack of recognition were identified as primary motives for the attrition of novice special education teachers (Hagaman & Casey, 2018), indicating the importance of esteem needs with perceived sense of community. Furthermore, Price and Weatherby (2018) expanded on the importance of love and esteem by finding connection between teacher self-efficacy in terms of personal teacher value and workplace conditions, including opportunities to be recognized, participating in school decisions. Thus, Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs provides illustrations demonstrating the potential impact of love and esteem regarding special educator perceived sense of community. It is believed that increased job satisfaction among roles of special educators could be connected to a positive sense of community when needs of love and esteem are achieved. Special educators constantly work in collaborative environments between both inclusive and self-contained classroom settings.

Recognition of differences in job satisfaction, based upon perceived sense of community, could provide valuable insights regarding aspects of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs in terms of professional relationships, status, recognition, and self-esteem.

Positive work conditions among educators have been associated with increased job satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012; Price & Weatherby, 2018), demonstrating a relationship of Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Appreciation and support have been identified as important elements related to job satisfaction for special educators and special paraprofessionals (Fisher & Pleasants, 2012; Hester et al., 2020). A survey analysis revealed that 40% (N =1,782) of paraprofessionals believed a deficiency in appreciation within the workplace to be a key concern in special education (Fisher & Pleasants, 2012). Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs explains the significance of supportive relationships among colleagues related to educator satisfaction, motivation, and achievement. It is believed that Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs provides an effective framework for the study of differences between special educator roles regarding job satisfaction when controlling perceived sense of community.

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory describes learning as a process of observation, cognition, and responses (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). Based upon Social Learning Theory (1977), people use reasoning to learn through experience and observation. It is believed that learning and imitation occur through a series of cognitive processes including attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

Attention is the first step described in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which depicts the person must attend to the observed behavior for learning to occur. Therefore, the

behavior must be noticed by the person who is observing. The second step illustrated in Bandura's (1977) theory is retention, which suggests there must be memory of the observed behavior in order for repetition to occur. Memories can be formed over time based upon the reoccurrence of observed behaviors. The third needed step, reproduction, is the physical ability to reproduce the behavior observed. In order for imitation to occur, the learner must be able to physically execute the observed behavior. The final step outlined in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory is motivation, which indicates not only must the learner have the first three steps, there also needs to be motivation to replicate observed behaviors. Motivation is more likely to occur when responses to observed behaviors are favorable such as a vicarious type of positive reinforcement desirable to the observer (Bandura & Walters, 1977).

Social Learning Theory and Special Educators

In the field of special education, there are normally multiple educators working in the same classroom setting, creating opportunities for continuous observation and modeling among team members (Giangreco, 2003). Many times, teachers who teach general content areas co-teach with special education teachers, or have paraprofessionals assist in inclusive classroom settings. Additionally, self-contained classroom environments involve both teachers and paraprofessionals. In both types of settings (inclusive and self-contained classrooms) educators typically have limited time to meet and collaborate without the presence of students (Giangreco et al., 2010). This creates an environment optimal for on-the-job learning, which may be done through direct observation among educators. In addition, a study by Giangreco et al. (2010) reported insufficient and limited training opportunities for paraprofessionals, increasing the need for social learning in terms of job roles and responsibilities.

Due to time constraints, challenges are presented in the areas of collaboration, professional learning, and relationship building. Often there is limited time designated or available for co-educators to collaborate outside the presence of students. Coteaching has been cited to be effective when certain conditions are met, including adequate time to plan and build constructive teacher rapport (Scruggs et al., 2007/2016). However, considerable obstacles are presented in finding time to collaborate among special educators (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). Therefore, it is believed that the majority of instructional learning and training occurs through modeling and observation. Due to time constraints, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory provides a structure that can be used to help build learning and connections among co-educators.

In addition to co-teachers, paraprofessionals are scheduled to work with the students throughout the entire school day. Many paraprofessionals assist with student transportation to and from school or have alternative working hours, as compared to teachers, therefore creating limited opportunities for collaboration outside school day hours. Additionally, there are times where paraprofessionals are placed in classroom settings without previous notice in response to limited staffing or unforeseen circumstances. Due to differing work schedules between paraprofessionals and special education teachers, there are limited opportunities to meet in a formal manner without the presence of students, creating obstacles regarding collaboration, community, and cohesiveness (Giangreco et al., 2010). Learning for paraprofessionals frequently occurs on the job with limited training and collaborative options (Giangreco, 2003). Educators learn from one another through observation and modeling, as illustrated in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory. This creates a need for further examination regarding relationships and social learning between co-educators.

Teachers have expressed concerns regarding adequate time to collaborate among inclusive general and collaborative special education teachers (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017; Lawrence-Brown & Muschaweck, 2004). Special education teachers have an abundance of responsibilities, creating limited opportunities for training and collaboration (Giangreco, 2003). Many times, collaborative teachers work in multiple classrooms creating additional responsibilities for collaboration among multiple teachers. Furthermore, special education teachers may have various roles regarding numerous learning communities involved with inclusive general education content teachers and other collaborative special educators. With additional duties and responsibilities, time is an ongoing challenge in the field of special education (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017; Giangreco, 2010; Lawrence-Brown & Muschaweck, 2004).

With limited time for collaboration, learning among educators in the area of special education is based on a foundation of modeling and observation. Many times, paraprofessionals are placed in situations where they are required to make instructional decisions with minimum guidance (Giangreco, 2003). Moreover, additional responsibilities among collaborative teachers limit opportunities for collaboration. Time is a significant obstacle encountered among collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory provides an essential framework for how special educators continuously learn in the classroom settings to support students.

Social Learning Theory and Sense of Community Among Special Educators

With minimal time to collaborate, it is believed that Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory could be utilized to help create a sense of community between special educators. Benefits

have been associated with collaboration among educators including higher retention rates, increased student achievement, increased instructional quality, and stronger relationships between team members (Biggs et al., 2016; Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Reeves et al., 2017). Working conditions and atmosphere, specifically in the areas of work requirements and professional community, have been identified as highly influential elements concerning teacher attrition and retention (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Sense of community in the areas of supportive leadership (0.44) and teacher-group efficacy (0.26) have been indirectly correlated to teacher attrition through the mediating variable job satisfaction (Conley & You, 2017, p. 533). Through a qualitative analysis, Lawrence-Brown & Muschaweck (2004) found that collaboration was an effective resource for success demonstrated between general and special education teachers in inclusive classroom settings. With challenges related to time, it is believed that on-the-job knowledge associated with Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory could help build relationships among co-educators through modeling, observation, and reproduction of learned behaviors.

As described in Social Learning Theory, learned behavior occurs more frequently among people in close contact (Bandura & Walters, 1977). When the person being seen is more desirable to the learner, the rate of attention tends to increase (Bandura & Walters, 1977). Therefore, there is a need for effective relationships among co-educators to increase the rate of learned and replicated behaviors related to constructive teaching. Stefanidis et al. (2018) found a positive association between joint planning and relationship values of co-teachers (collaborative general education teachers and special education) in cooperative settings regarding positive outlooks of coteaching. It is believed that additional knowledge can be added to Bandura's

(1977) Social Learning Theory by gaining information on the role of Social Learning Theory in relation to job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community.

Intersection of Theories

Educator satisfaction has been correlated to working conditions, including aspects of relationships among special educators (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Scruggs et al. 2007/2016). Multiple variables related to working environments have been connected to teacher satisfaction in the areas of "school leadership, workplace relationships, job design, and occupational stress" (Ansley et al., 2019, p. 10). With special educators working in shared classroom settings, it is reasonable that workplace relationships could be a significant variable related to educator satisfaction. A meta-analysis performed by Scruggs et al. (2007/2016) revealed from teacher perceptions that cooperative teaching requires adequate planning time, relationship compatibility between co-educators, professional development, and applicable skill levels from the students. Additionally, placing an emphasis on the perceived importance of workplace conditions in relation to job satisfaction and sense of community. Due to joint environments in single classroom settings, further investigation is needed controlling sense of community to determine if there is a more significant connection regarding job satisfaction between special educators. Based upon Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, positive workplace relationships between special educators should form if emotional needs are met in the areas of love and esteem. This concept coincides with motivational aspects related to Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, intersecting the two theories in the areas of sense of community and job satisfaction among special educators.

Maslow's (1943, 1954) Hierarchy of Needs Theory demonstrates an array of variables needed to progress to personal fulfillment and motivation, including factors associated with

feelings of belonging and esteem. Due to the collaborative settings involved with special

education, many of the factors connected with love and esteem can be related among co-

educators. For example, these characteristics can be identified through effective professional

relationships between special educators, such as feeling a part of a team, feelings of respect by

team members, positive feedback, sense of accomplishment, sense of community, and feeling

assured in one's work. Working conditions linked with teacher relationships have been

connected to job satisfaction and aspects related to sense of community exhibited among

teachers (Ansley et al., 2019; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Feelings of connection and appreciation

recognized through Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs can highlight attention and motivational

aspects portrayed with Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

Social Learning Theory represents the significance of attention and motivation for

learning to take place among individuals (Bandura & Walters, 1977). In order for a behavior to

be replicated the observer must attend to the behavior as well as be motivated to replicate the

behavior observed (Bandura & Walters, 1977). With minimal opportunities for co-educators to

build relationships outside of instructional hours, the concepts related to love and esteem among

co-educators regarding Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory can support Bandura's

(1977) Social Learning Theory. It is believed that when areas of Maslow's (1943) theory are

achieved between special educators, such as belongingness and recognition, it creates a more

supportive environment for observational learning to occur. Therefore, when needs associated

with love and esteem are achieved, it could create a more supportive environment that increases

the rate of attention and motivation displayed with Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory.

Understanding more information on the differences of educator roles regarding job satisfaction

when controlling sense of community can build on both Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs

Theory and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory.

Related Literature

Job satisfaction and sense of community are meaningful factors that contribute to the

field of special education. Special education creates a collaborative setting that incorporates

numerous educators (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017; Giangreco, 2010). Classroom settings

involve multiple educators working together to teach and increase student achievement such as

collaborative general education teachers, inclusive special education teachers, self-contained

special education teachers, or paraprofessionals. Teacher shortages, educator turnover, and

attrition are ongoing concerns in the area of special education (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019;

Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). In addition, as represented by VDOE (2019) special

education continues to be the number one high need area in terms of critical teacher shortages in

Virginia. Due to the collaborative environments experienced between educators in special

education, there is a need to gain additional knowledge related to sense of community, job

satisfaction, and educator roles.

Constructive factors have been connected to a positive sense of community among

educators. Positive outcomes have been associated with effective collaboration among special

educators, including innovative practices and effective lesson development (Devenyi et al., 2018;

Thurlings et al., 2015). Furthermore, a review of literature determined interpersonal relationships

in the areas of support, direction, and feedback must be present for teacher innovation to occur

(Thurlings et al., 2015). As described by Maslow (1943, 1954) relationships, recognition, and

support coincide with love and esteem tiers represented in the Hierarchy of Needs. Therefore,

constructive relationships that demonstrate Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs with love and

esteem, between special educators could possibly encourage innovative thinking in the classroom setting.

As depicted by Maslow (1943) there is a Hierarchy of Needs with steps that must be primarily fulfilled to progress to the next step in the pyramid. Feelings of belonging including relationships, feeling supported, being part of a group, and feeling accepted coincide with Maslow's (1943, 1954) "love" tier characterized in the hierarchy of needs. Once "love" needs are mostly established one can progress to the next level known as "esteem". With the esteem level, a person is trying to gain factors associated with esteem in two aspects including personal and social elements. Personal esteem needs may include gaining independence, mastering skills, where social esteem needs focus on respect and acknowledgment gained from others (Maslow 1943, 1954). Love and esteem needs coincide with a variety of characteristics connected to sense of community and job satisfaction exhibited by special educators creating a strong foundation for further research.

For example, Reeves et al. (2017) found a positive association between collaborative planning as a predicting factor regarding student success. Positive relationships among colleagues have been linked as significant contributors associated with job satisfaction among special educators (Ansley et al., 2019). Creating a connection to the love tier in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs with workplace relationships. Numerous studies have found connections between educator satisfaction and feelings of value (Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017; Price & Weatherby, 2018), representing associations to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory in social esteem. Furthermore, a recorded qualitative analysis determined central areas depicted by special paraprofessionals as areas of concern including understanding roles and responsibilities, hierarchical relationships with teachers, satisfaction with income, and acknowledgment.

An important association is identified between working conditions with sense of community and job satisfaction. Factors regarding sense of community displayed in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs have been associated to satisfaction among educators including recognition, relationships, and appreciation (Ansley et al., 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Price & Weatherby, 2018). In the area of special education, many times educators are faced with additional challenges relating to time. As described by Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood (2017) discovering time to collaborate has been identified as a significant obstacle between general and special educators. With ongoing time constraints, learning between co-educators occurs primarily through observation and modeling, creating a need to gain additional insight regarding the roles of educators in terms of sense of community in relation to job satisfaction. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory explains how behaviors can be learned through a series of steps involved with social observation and modeling. Learning and replication of observed behaviors occurs through four steps: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura & Walters, 1977). For a behavior to be replicated the observer must acknowledge the behavior, learn the behavior, be physically able to replicate the behavior, and be motivated to perform the learned behavior. With motivation as a key element regarding social learning, it is believed that motivational components related to Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory intersected with love and esteem factors portrayed in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs demonstrate the need for further investigation of perceived sense of community and job satisfaction exhibited by special educators.

Special Education

Special education provides personalized instructional supports designed to meet the exceptional needs of directed individual learners (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). Over the years,

special education has transformed through numerous legislative acts to help ensure specific educational needs of students with disabilities are being met (Francisco et al., 2020). These acts have adjusted the way schools' group and instruct students, focusing on school placements that involve the least restrictive environment (LRE). Student placement is designed to place students in the least restrictive setting (general education classroom) that will meet the unique needs of the individual learner (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019).

Special education classrooms first appeared in schools in the United States toward the second part of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. When special education first began, it consisted of only self-contained classrooms where the students were secluded from other students in the school with minimal interaction, even during more social times, like lunch or breaks, such as recess. It was not until the 1970's that laws were created to protect the right of individuals with disabilities to receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). With this shift, public education systems significantly transformed to promote inclusion of students with exceptional needs in the form of special education services (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). Accordingly, general education classrooms began servicing students with disabilities. In addition, there was a new need for general education teachers to work with special education teachers in the general education setting, creating collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers.

Presently, special education services involve multiple educators, including, but not limited to collaborative general education teachers, inclusive special education teachers, self-contained special education teachers, and paraprofessionals (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). From the 1990's, there has been a significant increase with student placement in inclusive academic settings for students receiving special education services (Francisco, 2020). With this significant

growth in special education, there have also been changes involving special educator responsibilities and duties, including additional collaborative requirements. The presence of multiple educators in both general and self-contained classroom settings makes collaboration and team approaches inevitable among team members (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). Educators must work together to teach and support student learning.

On the other hand, the field of special education also presents challenges for success among educators, including significant time constraints. Limited time for collaboration can create barriers for special educators related to relationship building and sense of community (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). Furthermore, persistent shortages and high rates of attrition are ongoing challenges with attaining skilled educators in the area of special education (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). As illustrated in the 2020-2021 VDOE (2020) critical shortage report, special education is still the number one critical need teaching endorsement in Virginia. Therefore, it is believed that classroom sense of community and increased job satisfaction between special educators provides opportunities for educators to meet components associated with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory in terms of personal motivation.

Teachers

Teachers are a primary factor in special education. Teachers connected to special education services include collaborative general education teachers, inclusive special education teachers, and self-contained special education teachers. In the field of special education, teachers frequently work with other educators, such as a collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers, or self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals. In addition, special education teachers may work with other service

professionals, such as speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, behavior specialists, social workers, clinicians, school psychologists, music therapists, and many more. Regardless of classroom setting, special education teachers are required to work with other team members to help create individualized education plans for students receiving special education services (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). Individualized education program team members consist of multiple parties, including both a special education and general education teacher, for each student receiving individualized special education services, creating an essential need for collaboration among team members.

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs can be utilized to further understand components related to teacher perceptions in relation to sense of community between general and special education teachers. Expanding on Maslow's (1943) theory, special educators have a desire to feel a part of one's classroom setting. When feelings of belonging are primarily met, an educator is able to move on to factors associated with esteem, such as accomplishment and respect. These types of components help create positive relationships that foster effective cooperation. There are various benefits related to collaborative environments among teachers. Effective collaboration between teachers creates opportunities for innovative thinking (Harris & de Bruin, 2018; Thurlings et al., 2015). Reeves et al. (2017) found a positive connection between collaborative lesson planning among teachers and student achievement. In addition, elements related to positive sense of community between teachers have been associated to increased job satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019; Fisher & Pleasants 2012; Price & Weatherby, 2018). With the retention of effective teachers being a continuing challenge among special education (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019), it is productive to gain more knowledge on improvements that could correspond to increased sense of community and job satisfaction exhibited by teachers. Ford et al. (2018)

described the significance of job satisfaction as a reactive factor and significant predictor associated with teacher attrition. It is believed that gaining additional insight on collaborative partnerships in terms of sense of community could provide valuable knowledge among special educators related to job satisfaction.

Poor working environments have been found to be an indicator associated with teacher attrition (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). Ansley et al. (2019) reported a significant correlation between workplace stress and job satisfaction. Furthermore, low teacher satisfaction has been associated with inability to identify objectives with student-teacher relationships (Veldman et al., 2016). Special education teachers are required to complete a daunting number of tasks, contributing to poor working conditions, making time a limited and valuable commodity. Time has been defined as a significant barrier related to collaboration among teachers (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). Lawrence-Brown and Muschaweck (2004) identified synchronized planning time to be the most significant asset to educators necessary for effective collaboration. With special education teachers working in close environmental settings, collaboration is a significant component among team members (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2019). Therefore, it is believed effective relationships are valuable among teachers and other special educators, making a need for further research regarding a sense of community.

Many studies have found considerable associations regarding job satisfaction and working environments related to professional support and relationships (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Significant correlations have been identified between teacher job satisfaction regarding support from administration with student discipline and personal encouragement (Ansley et al., 2019). Furthermore, there are significant correlations between positive interactions of teachers with school stakeholders including colleagues,

educational leaders, students, and parents, with job satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019). Supportive evaluations have been revealed to have an association with increased teacher job satisfaction, including evaluations conducted with teacher colleagues and evaluations which provided constructive feedback which was implemented (Ford et al., 2018).

In addition, teacher stress has been associated with a high rate of demands placed on special educators (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). Special educators have an abundance of supplementary responsibilities, such as paperwork (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019). In addition, special educators may have an increased number of meetings as well as collaborative partnerships as compared to other educators. Additional nonteaching responsibilities have been identified to put further strain on special educators, leading to possible attrition (Billingsley, 2004). Furthermore, increased stress and decreased working conditions have also been connected to educational leadership among teachers (Ansley et al., 2019). It is believed that teacher perception of the classroom community will have a significant impact among educator roles. Therefore, controlling sense of community is needed to provide further knowledge in terms of educator roles and job satisfaction.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals, also known as teaching assistants for this study, are essential employees in the field of special education. Paraprofessionals work directly with specific students receiving special education services throughout the school day. The role of a paraprofessional is to assist with instructional and support services for students under the guidance of a licensed professional, such as a teacher, specialist, or administrator (VDOE, 2005).

As education was transformed after the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) in 1997, there has been a significant increase in needing paraprofessionals within school systems in

Virginia, as well as a growth in duties and responsibilities (VDOE, 2005). In addition, with the advancement of inclusion for students in the LRE, new responsibilities were placed on teachers in terms of supervisory elements regarding paraprofessionals (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012; VDOE, 2005).

Paraprofessionals work with many different educators, including general education teachers, special education teachers, specialists, and other paraprofessionals. Depending on the type of classroom setting, there could be up to five or more educators working in a single classroom, creating a need for community among educators. Yet, there is minimal effective direction provided to assist paraprofessionals with their roles (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012, Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). Furthermore, there is limited guidance for teachers on how to properly supervise and support paraprofessionals (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012; VDOE, 2005). Typically, there are minimal training opportunities and, many times paraeducators are placed in classroom settings with limited no prior training creating a need to learn job skills while working (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012). It is possible for paraprofessionals to be placed in a setting with limited supervision and knowledge regarding individualized student needs (Giangreco, 2003). As described by Capizzi & Da Fonte (2012) paraprofessionals frequently learn based upon observations of teachers and other paraprofessionals, establishing a connection to Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory. Therefore, further inquiry on social based learning would be beneficial regarding paraprofessionals working in special education.

There are many roles exhibited by paraprofessionals, including both student and teacher support. In addition, paraprofessionals may support students in different ways, such as one-to-one assistance through the school day (Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012). Job responsibilities can range from an array of different duties, including student academic assistance, teacher support,

behavioral instructor, student self-care, collecting data, and bus transportation assistance (Ashbaker & Morgan, 2006; May & Marozas, 1981, as cited in Capizzi & Da Fonte, 2012). Uncertainty regarding responsibilities is a common challenge demonstrated by paraeducators (Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). References have been made by numerous studies regarding the benefits of structured support to help guide paraprofessionals (Biggs et al., 2019; Giangreco et al., 2010; Ledford & Zimmerman, 2018). Therefore, understanding paraeducator views regarding sense of community could help identify differences among special educator roles.

Like teachers, paraprofessionals are a high need area in the field of special education (Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). Positive associations have been found between professional relationships between paraeducators and teachers (Biggs et al., 2016; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017; Giangreco et al., 2010). Active collaborative relationships are essential for effective instruction between special educators and special paraprofessionals, specifically in influential areas from both teachers and paraprofessionals, shared influences, leadership influences, and fundamental influences (Biggs et al., 2016). Components that can potentially challenge relationships between special educators and special paraprofessionals include the uncertainty of responsibilities and hierarchical dynamics, which can lead to decreased paraprofessional satisfaction (Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). However, limited research has been completed regarding differences between special education teachers and paraprofessionals related to perceived sense of community. It is believed recognition of community perceptions among paraeducators and teachers could provide useful information regarding observational learning portrayed by Bandura's Social Learning Theory.

Educator Attrition

There are ongoing challenges in special education that lead to continuous high attrition and low retention rates among special educators (Ansley et al., 2019; Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Special education is a high need area, constantly requiring and attempting to retain quality educators (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). Working conditions have been linked to teacher attrition and burnout (Ford et al., 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). Therefore, further investigation is needed regarding working conditions among special educators.

Retention of special educators has been connected to increased job satisfaction among different working conditions. Working conditions involving constructive relationships with colleagues displayed a significant correlation to satisfaction exhibited among special education teachers. In addition, significant correlations were found regarding administrative relationships and feelings of support from administration with teacher satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019). Various qualitative studies have identified an array of stressors related to special educator satisfaction and intentions to leave. Variables regarding perceptions of educational leadership in terms of administration have been identified as a common theme across multiple studies (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Hester et al., 2020). In comparison, implications regarding teacher burnout have been connected to teacher attrition (Rumschlag, 2017; Hester et al., 2020, Veldman et al., 2016).

A common connection across multiple research studies is a positive association between feelings of support and teacher retention (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Lindstrom & Drolet, 2017). Direct and indirect relationships of teacher attrition have been identified with elements involving leadership support (Conley & You, 2017).

Furthermore, Hagaman & Casey (2018) identified stress, as well as limited support, to be key factors with attrition of new special education teachers. As described in Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, sense of connection is a significant necessity typically met before individual motivation focuses on personal esteem. Further understanding of components related to connectedness among special educators could provide beneficial associations regarding job satisfaction. Shared team efficacy has been connected to increased job satisfaction and innovative thinking (Harris & de Bruin, 2018; Liu et al., 2020; Thurlings et al., 2015). A literature review performed by Thurlings et al. (2015) identified teacher colleagues as the most influential factor regarding shared collaboration resulting in innovative thinking. Whereas negative associations have been found regarding adverse working environments and teacher retention (Ansley et al., 2019; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). There is minimal research in the area of job satisfaction between roles of special educators. Further knowledge related to the study of educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling community perceptions can provide effective knowledge beneficial to educator retention in the area of special education.

Sense of Community

Due to continuous shared environments and ongoing need for collaboration between special educators, sense of community is a significant component in the field of special education. Sense of community can be defined as educator perception, in the area of school atmosphere, in relation to professional congruence and collaboration (Banerjee et al., 2017). Special education consists of many components that contribute towards an educator's overall sense of community. Sense of community incorporates feelings associated with individual classrooms, as well as school environment. Furthermore, sense of community combines aspects

related to certain working conditions, including professional relationships and support (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018).

Educator perceptions regarding environmental conditions connected to sense of community, such as relationships, appreciation, and recognition, have been associated to job satisfaction, educator retention, and educator attrition (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). Ansley et al. (2019) found the most significant characteristics correlated with job satisfaction of teachers included relational aspects, consisting of feeling supported, and constructive relationships among faculty. In addition, Price and Weatherby (2018) identified teacher perceptions of feeling valued to be most strongly connected with job satisfaction in the areas of recognition and opportunities for school involvement by assisting with decisions. These types of community factors correspond to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs in the areas of love and esteem, including relationships, acceptance, recognition, appreciation, and achievement. Furthermore, it is believed that when these factors exist between co-educators, it could contribute to positive perceptions regarding sense of community and job satisfaction. This establishes a need for further investigation with respect to educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community.

Multiple educators are most likely present in classrooms connected to students receiving special education services. This creates needs associated with relationships and collaboration among educators. As described by Da Fonte (2012), time is a significant barrier experienced between general and special education teachers. In addition, time has been identified as an obstacle related to the establishment and learning of paraprofessionals (VDOE, 2005). This demonstrates supplementary hurdles for building relationships and classroom support between co-educators. Intersecting Maslow's (1943) love and esteem needs between co-educators with

Bandura's (1977) theory of observational learning and motivation provides inference on perceived sense of community and job satisfaction between special educators. Supplemental research referencing sense of community of special educators can provide further understanding of classroom environment and special educator perceptions.

Research has shown that supportive relationships among colleagues and leadership relates to beneficial outcomes, including reduced stress, student achievement, and lower attrition rates (Ansley et al., 2019; Hagaman & Casey, 2018; Reeves et al., 2017; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012). Collaboration, in the form of visiting other classrooms, related to high job satisfaction expressed by teachers, as well as a connection with increased student achievement resulting from collaborative planning (Reeves et al., 2017). Due to limited time, special educators face challenges with building positive professional relationships among colleagues, creating a need for further research. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory provides an additional foundation to Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory, based upon modeling and observational learning, helping special educators build effective relationships within direct teaching hours.

Collaboration

Collaboration is a significant resource among special educators that can be difficult to accomplish due to time constraints (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017). Collaboration can be explained as time between educators to improve practices and work on strategies centered around student learning (Brownell et al., 2016). Many studies have shown beneficial connections between educators and collaborative practices (Biggs et al., 2016; Reeves et al., 2017; Robinson et al., 2017; Thurlings et al., 2015). Effective collaboration among educators has been connected to increased confidence (Robinson et al., 2017; Scruggs et al. 2016), associated with esteem needs presented by Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs. Furthermore, collaboration in the form

of co-planning and quality of relationships between co-educators have been positively associated with favorable views of co-teaching (Stefanidis et al., 2019). This provides supplementary connections between collaborative practices among educators with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory in the areas of love and esteem. Understanding connections between collaborative practices and co-teaching would provide beneficial knowledge that could help promote a positive sense of community.

There are many beneficial outcomes linked to effective collaboration between colleagues. A strong association has been found among teacher collaboration and innovative thinking (Devenyi et al., 2018; Harris & de Bruin, 2018; Thurlings et al., 2015). In addition, Reeves et al. (2017) found positive connections between collaborative practices among teachers and student achievement, as well as teacher satisfaction, referencing an association between sense of community and job satisfaction among educators. Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory demonstrates the importance of interactions regarding personal motivation and growth. It is believed Maslow's (1943) theory can be used to demonstrate the significance of collaboration as an aspect involved in perceived sense of community between special educators. Contradictorily, there are still challenges presented between special educators and collaboration in relation to time (Da Fonte & Barton-Arwood, 2017; VDOE, 2005). This generates a need for effective observational learning and modeling that could improve educator perceptions concerning sense of community. Overlapping Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory can provide additional insight with sense of community and job satisfaction between special educators. This provides additional knowledge on the association between social learning regarding relationships between special educators involving love and esteem aspects with Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs.

Existing findings have demonstrated a relationship among collaboration and job satisfaction (Reeves et al., 2017). Reeves et al. (2017) identified job satisfaction was related to collaboration involving classroom visits. However, there is limited research regarding differences between educator roles in both inclusive and self-contained settings in relation to job satisfaction. Understanding the differences among educator roles and job satisfaction when controlling perceived sense of community could have positive outcomes related to job satisfaction, student achievement, and effective administrative support.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction among educators is a significant predictor regarding teacher attrition (Ford et al., 2018; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). A research study found a relationship between decreased attrition rates and increased job satisfaction exhibited by teachers (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). In addition, job satisfaction has been linked to community factors related to working conditions, such as support and perceptions of value (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018), establishing an association between job satisfaction and sense of community with special educators.

There is a high level of educator attrition, including both teachers and paraprofessionals, in special education (Ansley et al., 2019; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017). Findings across numerous studies have demonstrated an association between perceived support and job satisfaction (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). This creates another connection to perceived job satisfaction and sense of community displayed by special educators. Additionally, forming a link between love and esteem needs projected by Maslow (1943) in the areas of belonging, trust, and respect.

Furthermore, job satisfaction has been connected to student achievement (Banerjee et al., 2017). It is believed that Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory can be used to explain associations between factors involving sense of community and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a corresponding factor regarding teacher retention and attrition (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018). Moreover, job satisfaction has been identified as a mediating variable between leadership support and team efficacy with teacher intentions to leave (Conley & You, 2017). Nevertheless, there is limited research regarding educator roles and job satisfaction with recognition in the area of sense of community. Understanding more information regarding differences among educator roles and job satisfaction when controlling for sense of community could help identify ways to increase educator satisfaction, which in turn, could connect to teacher retention.

Summary

Special education has a constant challenge of finding and retaining both teachers and paraprofessionals (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012). A positive association has been found between job satisfaction and retention rates demonstrated by educators (Ansley et al., 2019). Increased job satisfaction has been connected to more favorable views of working conditions within schools, including school community and relationships among colleagues (Ansley et al., 2019; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018).

Social Learning Theory discussed the significance of learning through modeling and observation within social contexts (Bandura & Walters, 1977). Due to limited time for collaboration, special educators, such as inclusive general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals, are constantly learning within social contexts through

observation. Using Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs Theory in conjunction with Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory can provide a valuable framework associated with the influence of increased sense of community with observational learning. Research has shown that collaboration among educators has been associated with beneficial outcomes, including innovative thinking, more effective resources, increased student achievement, and constructive perceptions of educators related to working conditions (Billingsley & Bettini, 2019; Thurlings et al., 2015; Devenyi et al., 2018; Reeves et al., 2017; Conley & You, 2017). Nonetheless, there is limited research on the differences of special educator roles with job satisfaction while controlling perception of community. Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory generates opportunities for shared values among educators, which can demonstrate the importance of community perception. In addition, Maslow's (1977) Hierarchy of Needs provides a framework for job satisfaction and connection through the meeting of personal needs. It is believed that differences in job satisfaction between special educator roles, controlling sense of community, can provide effective knowledge that could have positive influences in areas, such as educator retention, collaborative guidance, instructional quality, classroom climate, and student achievement.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Overview

Chapter Three includes an explanation of the research design selected for this study. The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant differences in job satisfaction between special educator roles while controlling perceived sense of community. The chapter reviews the research questions and corresponding hypotheses related to job satisfaction and special educator roles when controlling perceived sense of school community. Participants and setting for the study are explained. In addition, instrumentation, including the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) and the Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS) are addressed. The chapter concludes with a review of procedures and how collected data was analyzed.

Design

A quantitative causal-comparative design was used to identify potential significant differences among variables during this study. A causal-comparative design is a form of nonexperimental research that focuses on detecting relationships among variables through the formation of groups (Gall et al., 2007). Causal comparative research designs involve cause-and-effect relationships between a categorical independent variable and dependent variable (Gall et al., 2007). This makes this design applicable for this study with the categorical independent variable being teacher roles and perceived job satisfaction as the dependent variable.

Causal comparative designs have been used in previous studies to determine relationships between teacher status and job satisfaction (Topchyan & Woehler, 2021;2020). Furthermore, previous studies have used causal comparative research to identify the impact of professional development regarding self-efficacy specifically among co-teachers (Colson et al., 2021). This study focused on identifying significant differences between variables involving special educator

roles and job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community, making a causal comparative design applicable for this study.

This study concentrated on identifying relationships between special educator roles and job satisfaction while controlling perceived sense of school community. The study consisted of four groups of educators including inclusive special education teachers compared to collaborative general education teachers and self-contained special education teachers compared to paraprofessionals. There was one independent variable: the type of educator role-inclusive special education teacher, collaborative general education teacher, self-contained special education teacher, and paraprofessional. Additionally, there was one controlled variable during this study the covariate, perceived sense of school community. Perceived sense of school community was determined using means scores associated with the SCSS, a 33-item questionnaire, created by Admiraal and Lockhorst (2012). The dependent variable of this study is job satisfaction. The dependent variable was measured using JSS, a 36-item survey, developed by Spector (1985). During a causal-comparative design, variables are categorized and observed in a naturally occurring environment to determine relationships among groups (Gall et al., 2007). This type of design was appropriate for this study, because both the independent variable and covariate will not be manipulated to determine differences between different groups of educators and job satisfaction. Educators were categorized into groups based upon pre-existing job titles. In addition, existing perceptions of educators were represented through mean scores associated with the SCSS.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers when controlling for sense of school community scores?

RQ2: Is there a difference in job satisfaction between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals when controlling for sense of school community scores?

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses for this study are:

H$_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference in job satisfaction scores of inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), when sense of community is controlled as measured by the Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS).

H$_0$2: There is no statistically significant difference in job satisfaction scores of self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), when sense of community is controlled as measured by the Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS).

Participants and Setting

The study consisted of participants from public elementary, middle, and high schools located in the state of Virginia. Pseudonyms were applied throughout the study to protect privacy of participants, including educators, schools, and school districts. A letter was sent by email to 132 public district superintendents in Virginia, requesting permission to conduct research in each specified county. Responses granting or denying permission were returned via email to the researcher. There was a total of 26 participating districts with schools in both rural and urban

areas. Once approved, contact was made with administration of each school including, 108 elementary, 42 middle, and 45 high schools, to begin research.

Population

Populations for this study included full-time special education teachers and special paraprofessionals, representing the state of Virginia. Populations of the participating school districts ranged from approximately 600 students with 2 schools to 14,000 students with 19 schools. As of 2022, an average of 14.65% of the student population received special education services and 52.06% of students came from homes who were economically disadvantaged. All of the participating schools were accredited by VDOE.

Sample

Nonprobability sampling was utilized during this study in the form of convenience sampling to select participants for each teaching category, beginning in the spring semester of the 2021-2022 school year. With administrative approval, emails were sent directly to educators, including inclusive special education teachers, collaborative general education teachers, self-contained special education teachers, and paraprofessionals, requesting participation (See Appendix A). A total of 520 surveys were sent to educators, with an 18% return rate of 93 willing participants.

The total number of participants selected for this study included 93(N=93) with 64 inclusive special education and collaborative general education teachers for research question 1; and 29 self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals for research question 2. The sample size was 93 participants, which did not meet the required minimum of 66 for an ANCOVA with 3 groups when assuming a medium effect size with statistical power of .7 and alpha level, $\alpha = .10$ (Gall et al., 2007, p. 145). Each group consisted of group sizes that were

close to equal. The breakdown of the final sample was 30 inclusive special education, 34 collaborative general education teachers, 14 self-contained special education teachers, and 15 paraprofessionals. Ethnicities of the participating sample were 3.23% Black, 94.62% White, 0% Asian, 2.15% Hispanic, and 0% other origins. Demographics demonstrated 83.87% of the participants being female and 16.13% male. Educational attainment of the participating sample showed 8.7% had attained a high school diploma, 35.87% had a bachelor's degree, 45.65% had a master's degree, and 8.7% had an advanced degree (specialist or doctorate). Licensure of participating teachers (inclusive special education, collaborative general education, and self-contained special education teachers) portrayed 73 teachers with renewable licensure and 5 with provisional licensure. Every educator during the study was a full-time employee in the participating school district. Each group of educators were naturally occurring in terms of educational role and licensure, no adjustments were made to participants regarding group assignments.

Inclusive Special Education Teachers

Demographics for each category displayed that of the inclusive special education teacher group 3.33% of teachers were Black, 96.67% White, 0% Asian, 0% Hispanic, and 0% were from other origins; 27 teachers were female and 3 were male; 13 had a bachelor's degree, 13 had a master's degree, and 4 had an advanced degree; 27 held a renewable teaching license and 3 held a provisional license. All participants had at least 1 year of experience, with 4 teachers having 1-2 years, 7 with 3-5 years, 6 with 5-10 years, and 12 teachers with over 10 years of experience. There were 14 teachers who taught elementary school level, 3 who taught middle school, and 13 who taught high school.

Collaborative General Education Teachers

Of the collaborative general education teachers 0% were Black, 100% White, 0% Asian, 0% Hispanic, and 0% were from other origins; 26 teachers were female and 8 were male; 13 had a bachelor's degree, 18 had a master's degree, and 2 had an advanced degree; 33 held a renewable teaching license and 1 held a provisional license. All participants had at least 3 years of experience, with 3 teachers having 3-5 years, 12 with 5-10 years, and 19 over 10 years of experience. There were 11 teachers who taught at the elementary school level, 6 at the middle, and 17 at the high school level.

Self-contained Special Education Teachers

Demographics of the self-contained teachers displayed 7.14% of the teachers were Black, 85.71% White, 0% Asian, 7.14% Hispanic, and 0% came from other origins; 12 teachers were female and 2 were male; 3 had a bachelor's degree, 10 had a master's degree, and 1 had an advanced degree; 13 held a renewable teaching license and 1 had a provisional license. All participating teachers had at least 1 year of experience, with 1 having 1-2 years, 1 with 3-5 years, 3 with 5-10 years, and 9 with over 10 years of experience. There were 10 teachers who taught elementary school level students, 1 who taught middle school level, and 2 who taught high school level.

Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessional demographics showed 6.67% of professionals were Black, 86.67% White, 0% Asian, 6.67% Hispanic, and 0% were from other origins; 13 of paraprofessionals were female and 2 were male; 8 had a high school diploma, 4 had a bachelor's degree, 1 had a master's degree, 1 had an advanced degree, 1 preferred not to say. Years of experience ranged from 1 professional having less than 1 year, 5 with 1-2 years, 3 with 3-5 years, 2 with 5-10 years,

and 4 with over 10 years of experience. There were 6 professionals who taught at the elementary school level, 3 at middle school, and 6 at high school.

Instrumentation

Instrumentation for this study included a questionnaire to identify educators' perceived sense of school community and a survey to determine job satisfaction. Admiraal and Lockhorst's (2012) Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS) was used to measure the covariate, sense of community. The SCSS has been used in other studies focused on community perceptions of teachers, including Bach (2019) and Sinkonis (2018). Bach (2019) used the SCSS to examine relationships between perceptions of sense of community exhibited by high school teachers in rural and urban settings, demonstrating relevance to this study. Furthermore, Sinkonis (2018) used the SCSS to focus specifically on special educator's sense of community in relation to self-efficacy, creating an association to this study, which examines relationships between special educators sense of community and job satisfaction. SCSS has been referenced by Wendt & Rockinson-Szapkiw (2015) as a resource for sense of community among teachers who work in person with one another, creating an association to this study in relation to co-educators in single classroom settings. The SCSS focuses specifically on sense of community among teachers making it a beneficial instrument for this study.

Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) was used to identify perceived job satisfaction among special educators. The JSS has been used in a variety of research studies associated with job satisfaction, in the field of education, including Benevene et al. (2018), Wong and Zhang (2014), and Blood et al. (2004). Benevene et al. (2018) found job satisfaction to be a mediating factor between teacher esteem and health. This connected to areas represented in Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, making it a constructive instrument for this research

study. Additionally, Wong and Zhang (2014) used the JSS to compare relationships associated with school community, teacher's wellbeing, and personality, demonstrating a connection to the current study in terms of teacher's job satisfaction and perceived sense of school community.

Sense of Community in School Scale

The SCSS, developed by Admiraal and Lockhorst (2012), was utilized to identify perceived sense of school community among educators, including inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers, and self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals. The SCSS was established based upon an existing valid and reliable questionnaire developed by Burroughs and Eby (1998), Psychology Sense of Community at Work (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012). The SCSS was created to quantify views of community possessed by educators in schools, who work together in smaller groups (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012). Permission to employ the questionnaire during this study was granted and is located in Appendix B.

The SCSS is a 33-item questionnaire that is composed of a five-point Likert scale for each prompt, resulting in responses ranging from "*1-does not apply at all*" to "*5-does apply very much"* (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012, n.p.). The SCSS measures community through the use of six subscales: *group identity, shared domain, interactional repertoire, emotional safety, tolerance for individual differences,* and *meaningful relationships*, with four to six items for each field (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012, n.p.). Scoring for the SCSS consisted of a continuous score determined by the total mean average ranging from 1-the lowest sense of community to 5- the highest sense of community value. Additionally, mean averages could be calculated for each of the six subscales using a one to five scale with one displaying the lowest sense of community and five demonstrating the highest sense of community in the defined area (Admiraal &

Lockhorst, 2012). There were no prompts in the SCSS that require reverse scoring, therefore, means were calculated based upon total average and average values for each subscale.

Reliability and validity of the SCSS were determined based upon factor analyses and multi-level regression analyses performed by Admiraal & Lockhorst (2012). As shown in Table 1, the instrument is significantly reliable as displayed for each subgroup, ranging from the lowest Cronbach alpha at 0,70 for Interactional Repertoire to the highest Cronbach alpha value at 0.90 for Group Identity (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012).

Table 1

Sense of Community in School Scale Subscales

Subscale	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Group Identity (GI)	6	0.90
Shared Domain (SD)	6	0.76
Interactional Repertoire (IR)	4	0.70
Emotional Safety (ES)	6	0.84
Tolerance for Individual Differences (TID)	6	0.81
Meaningful Relationships (MR)	5	0.79

Note. **Reliability values for each subscale in the SCSS**

Measures were taken to determine construct validity, predictive validity, and differential validity. Validity was determined based upon multiple regression analyses between the dependent variable: teacher dialogue, and the interaction between the independent variables including: the six subscales associated with the questionnaire and type of educator, teacher, or

student teacher (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012). Differential validity was identified through comparison of educator roles, teacher, or student teacher. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was used to determine interactions between variables. The VIF displayed values ranging from 1.6 to 3.6 (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012).

Job Satisfaction Survey

Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) was utilized to measure the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Permission to employ the instrument was granted (Appendix C). The JSS, a 36-item survey, focused on determining features related with perceptions of employees associated with work (Spector, 1997). The JSS uses a six-point Likert scale for each prompt displaying "1-disagree very much, 2-diagree moderately, 3-disagree slightly, 4-agree slightly, 5-agree moderately, and 6-agree very much. The JSS has nine subscales, to quantify job satisfaction, with four items per each scale (Spector, 1985). The nine subscales consist of "*pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards (performance-based rewards), operating procedures (required rules and procedures), coworkers, nature of work, and communication*" (Spector, 1985, n.p.). Scoring for the JSS can span from a low score of 36 to a high score of 216 for total job satisfaction and 4 to 24 for each of the nine subscales (Spector, 1985, n.p.). Low scores represent lower job satisfaction where high scores represent higher job satisfaction among participants. Total Job Satisfaction was calculated using the sum of all 36 item responses. Total Job Satisfaction scores can span from 36 to 216. Item responses range from a score of 1 (lower job satisfaction) to 6 (higher job satisfaction). Reversed scoring was used for prompts: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36 (Spector, 1985).

Table 2 provides scoring reliability data generated from a test-retest procedure 18 months apart (Spector, 1985; Van Saane et al., 2003).

Table 2

Reliability Job Satisfaction Survey

Subscale	Cronbach Alpha
Pay	0.75
Promotion	0.73
Supervision	0.82
Fringe Benefits	0.73
Contingent Rewards	0.76
Operating Procedures	0.62
Coworkers	0.60
Nature of Work	0.78
Communication	0.71
Total	0.91

Note. **Reliability for the JSS applied with Cronbach alpha scores**

Convergent and content validity were examined through multi-methods, which analyzed traits related to job satisfaction with job index descriptors and the amount of relation of work aspects to determined instrumentation (Van Saane et al., 2003). Data displayed for criterion and convergent data were deemed "acceptable at 0.50 or higher, or a sub-scale correlation range of at least 0.50" (Van Saane et al., 2003, p. 193).

Procedures

Before district approval was received, a written proposal was created to gain consent from Liberty's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to perform research, Appendix E. To gain permission for research, a letter was created and emailed to 132 district superintendents in

Virginia (see Appendix D). The letter discussed the researcher's interest to conduct research in the county and proposed research topic. Responses granting or denying permission to participate in the study were received via email to the researcher. Documentation of district responses were kept on a Word document located on the researcher's computer protected by facial recognition and a passcode. Responses of participating districts were saved in an email format. Based upon the minimal number of participants needed ($N = 66$) for each research question, 132 responses from 26 participating districts were necessary for a valid study (Gall et al., 2007, p. 145). With permission from district superintendents, the researcher emailed the school administrators of each school (elementary, middle, and high) associated with the participating counties. Via email, the researcher presented information to the participating district superintendents and administrators reviewing the purpose of the study, confidentiality, participant groups, time commitment, and introduced instrumentation.

Beginning in the spring of 2021-2022 school year, the researcher provided emails, to school administrators introducing the study, rights, confidentiality procedures, benefits, and minimal risks associated with the study. The researcher discussed that study participation was completely voluntary and the participant had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The researcher presented information respectfully and provided contact information. If participating, the researcher requested administrators to provide email addresses of all potential participants (inclusive special education teachers, collaborative general education teachers, self-contained special education teachers, and paraprofessionals) in each of their schools. If no response was given, the researcher sent follow-up emails to school administrators.

The researcher sent the SCSS and JSS via email using Survey Monkey software, with a cover letter, consent form, and short demographic questionnaire to each interested school

administrator. The digital content for both the cover letter and consent form was constructed by

the researcher through the addition of pages using Survey Monkey. The SCSS and JSS survey

instruments were transcribed, by the researcher into Survey Monkey. The researcher forwarded

the survey to potential participating educators per administrators. The cover letter explained

directions regarding each survey and how to return the surveys electronically through the Survey

Money (www.surveymonkey.com) platform. The cover letter reviewed that all surveys would

remain anonymous to the researcher upon submission. A consent letter detailed the study

content, confidentiality procedures, and rights of the participant (Appendix F). At the bottom of

the consent letter, consent was acknowledged by clicking the "accept/next" button. If agreeing,

participants clicked next at the bottom of the consent form page to be directed to a short

demographic questionnaire requesting participant's professional role (inclusive special education

teacher, collaborative general education teacher, self-contained special education teacher,

paraprofessional), gender, ethnicity, school level taught (elementary, middle, high), years of

experience, education, and licensure status (not applicable, provisional, renewable teaching

license). Participants clicked "next" again, at the bottom of the page, to get to the JSS. The JSS

consisted of 36 item prompts with six circles available to respond beside each prompt, ranging

from *1 –disagree very much to 6 –agree very much*. Participants clicked one circle by each

prompt to designate their selected choice. Once the JSS was completed, participants then clicked

"next" at the bottom of the page to get to the SCSS .The SCSS consisted of 33 item prompts with

five boxes available to choose for each response containing numbers *1 (does not apply at all) to

5 (does apply very much)*. The participants clicked one box for each prompt. Prompts were

formatted going down each page onto the next until completed. Once completed, participants

clicked the green "Submit" button. Participants were able to save progress and return to the

survey if needed. The Survey Monkey software was encrypted to ensure confidentiality of all

participants. Throughout the study, data remained on the researcher's computer, protected by a

passcode, to ensure responses remained confidential.

Every participant was asked to complete both surveys within three weeks. An email was

sent to consenting participants after a week and a half as a friendly reminder to complete the

survey (Appendix G). A second reminder was sent, via email, during the last week of the three-

week period (Appendix H). Anticipated time to complete both surveys was estimated to be

between 15 and 25 minutes, actual average completion time of surveys was 11 minutes and 32

seconds.

Data Analysis

The two research questions were analyzed using an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 25 was used to analyze data gathered from the

JSS and SPSS for both research questions in this study. An ANCOVA is a quantitative

measurement, used in causal comparative studies, to determine differences among two groups on

a specific variable while controlling for initial differences (Gall et al., 2007). This type of

statistical method requires an independent variable that is categorical, as well as a continuous

dependent variable, and covariate to control for initial differences (Gall et al., 2007). An

ANCOVA is used when a researcher wants to investigate differences between groups (Gall et al.,

2007). An ANCOVA was applicable because this study seeks to find potential differences

between educator roles regarding job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community.

Kwon and Woo (2018) applied an ANCOVA to identify differences in flipped learning methods

between students with cooperative mindsets and students with competitive mindsets. This

research study identified differences between two groups regarding one independent variable on

one dependent variable with pretest scores as the covariate for student learning. This connected

to the current study to examine differences between the independent variable (educator role) with

the dependent variable (job satisfaction) while controlling for community perceptions, making an

ANCOVA the best measurement tool for this study.

Null Hypotheses for Research Question 1

The purpose of the first research question was to determine if there was no significant

difference between job satisfaction scores of inclusive special education teachers and

collaborative general education teachers while controlling for sense of community. An

ANCOVA was utilized to determine the differences between inclusive special education teachers

and collaborative general education teachers in terms of job satisfaction scores while controlling

perceived community teacher perceptions. The independent variable for the first research

question formed two groups based upon educator role, inclusive special education teachers and

collaborative general education teachers, the covariate was perceived sense of community

exhibited by educators, and the dependent variable was job satisfaction scores.

Data analysis of the ANCOVA began by testing related assumptions to ensure data could

be properly evaluated (Warner, 2013). Two box and whisker plots were created to determine

outliers among inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers.

The first box and whisker plot demonstrated educator roles with sense of community scores. The

second box and whisker plot revealed educator roles with job satisfaction scores. A visual scan

was completed on both graphs to determine any extreme outliers associated among educator

roles with perceived sense of community scores and educator roles with job satisfaction scores.

Assumption of normality tests were conducted between variables for inclusive special education

teachers and collaborative general education teachers using a Kolmogorov-Smirnov, due to a

larger sample size of greater than 50 ($N>50$). The assumption of linearity was tested through the use of two scatter plots involving sense of community scores and job satisfaction scores. One scatter plot demonstrated sense of community scores and job satisfaction scores of inclusive special education teachers, and the other scatter plot identified sense of community and job satisfaction scores of collaborative general education teachers. Furthermore, assumption of bivariate normal distribution was performed through a visual scan detecting extreme outliers based upon graph shape using the same type of scatter plots as with the assumption of linearity. Homogeneity of slopes between covariate scores regarding sense of community and job satisfaction scores across groups was determined using tests of between-subjects effects table. Finally, the assumption of equal variance was tested using Levene's test of equality of error variances.

An ANCOVA was performed to determine if there was a difference among job satisfaction scores between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers while controlling differences related to sense of community. Central tendency measures included demographic statistics between groups, including means and standard deviations. Effect sizes were determined for differences among educator roles on job satisfaction scores, using partial eta squared values. A p-value of less than 0.05 ($p < .05$) was used to determine rejection of each null hypotheses.

Null Hypotheses for Research Question 2

The second research question had one independent variable, educator role, there was one covariate, sense of community, and the dependent variable was job satisfaction scores of educators. The purpose of the second research question was to determine if there was no significant difference between educator roles including self-contained special education teachers

and paraprofessionals in terms of job satisfaction scores when controlling for perceived sense of school community.

An ANCOVA was used to control for specific variables that could cause differences between groups before a statistical comparison was conducted (Gall et al., 2007). An ANCOVA was an appropriate analysis for this study to identify potential differences between educator roles (self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals) and job satisfaction scores while controlling for perceived sense of community scores.

Before facilitating an ANCOVA of the collected data, assumption tests were completed to ensure appropriateness. The collected data was visually inspected for missing data points and inaccuracies. Box and whisker plots were examined to detect any extreme outliers. Box and whisker plots provided information of self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals regarding sense of community scores and job satisfaction scores. Due to a small sample size ($N<50$) a Shapiro-Wilk assumption of normality test was administered to determine normal distributions among educator roles including self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals with job satisfaction. Assumption of linearity was determined through the use of scatter plots demonstrating specific educator role in terms of perceived sense of community and job satisfaction scores using a line of fit. Additionally, a visual scan determining shape of the same scatter plots was used to determine the assumption of bivariate normal distribution. The assumption of homogeneity of slopes was tested using a between-subjects effects table between the covariate, sense of community scores, and job satisfaction scores. Levene's test of equality of error variances was utilized to determine the assumption of equal variance among variables with an alpha level of 0.05.

An ANCOVA was administered to analyze data corresponding to the null hypothesis regarding potential differences among educator roles including self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals with job satisfaction scores when controlling for sense of community scores. Measures of central tendency were conducted to identify demographic statistics in terms of mean and standard deviations between groups. Partial eta squared values were analyzed to determine effect sizes regarding differences among educator roles (self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals) and job satisfaction scores while controlling for sense of community scores. The null hypotheses were rejected using a *p*-value (*p*<.05) less than 0.05.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Overview

The purpose of this casual-comparative study was to identify if there are differences in job satisfaction between educator roles, while controlling for sense of community. Chapter 4 will review research questions, as well as corresponding null hypotheses. Collected data will be reviewed in terms of descriptive statistics and assumption tests. Finally, the chapter will conclude with statistical analyses for both research questions in relation to hull hypotheses.

Research Question(s)

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers when controlling for sense of school community scores?

RQ2: Is there a difference in job satisfaction between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals when controlling for sense of school community scores?

Null Hypothesis(es)

The null hypotheses for this study are:

H$_0$1: There is no statistically significant difference in job satisfaction scores of inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), when sense of community is controlled as measured by the Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS).

H$_0$2: There is no statistically significant difference in job satisfaction scores of self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), when sense of community is controlled as measured by the Sense of Community in School Scale (SCSS).

Descriptive Statistics

The total number of participants during this study was 93 (*N*=93). There were 64 participants involved in the first research question and 29 participants for the second research question. Job satisfaction was the dependent variable for both research questions with sense of community scores being used as a covariate. Descriptive statistics were examined to demonstrate data related to both research questions, including mean, range, and standard deviation among educator roles.

Table 3 displays descriptive statistics for the first research question with 64 participants, including 34 collaborative general education teachers and 30 inclusive special education teachers.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics Research Question 1

	Educator Role		Statistic
Job Satisfaction	Inclusive Sped Teacher	Mean	129.0
		Std. Deviation	25.4
		Minimum	83.0
		Maximum	189.0
		Range	106.0
	Collaborative Gen ed Teacher	Mean	136.0
		Std. Deviation	22.7
		Minimum	93.0
		Maximum	200.0
		Range	107.0
Sense of Community	Inclusive Sped Teacher	Mean	3.4
		Std. Deviation	0.8
		Minimum	1.6
		Maximum	4.8
		Range	3.2
	Collaborative Gen ed Teacher	Mean	3.5
		Std. Deviation	0.8
		Minimum	2.2

Maximum	4.9
Range	2.6

Review of descriptive statistics for research question one displays, both inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers had mean average scores close to the middle level range of overall job satisfaction on the JSS. The lowest possible job satisfaction value on the JSS is 36 with the highest possible job satisfaction value at 216 and median value of job satisfaction at 126 (Spector, 1985, n.p.). Inclusive special education teachers had a mean score of 129.0 ($M = 129.0$) and collaborative general education teachers displayed a mean score of 136.0 ($M = 136.0$). Standard deviations for both inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers were high, demonstrating scores of the JSS being more scattered among participants. Furthermore, range values were similar between the two groups of participants with inclusive special education teachers having a range of 106 and collaborative general education teachers at 107 between the lowest and highest job satisfaction scores of each group.

According to the SCSS, sense of community scores may range from one the lowest sense of school community score to five representing the highest sense of community (Admiraal & Lockhorst, 2012). Sense of community scores, which is the covariate variable for this study, displayed comparative results for both mean scores among inclusive special education teachers ($M = 3.4$) and collaborative general education teachers ($M = 3.5$). The standard deviation for inclusive special education teachers was $SD = 0.8$ and $SD = 0.8$ for collaborative general education teachers, displaying less disparity among participant responses during the SCSS as compared to the JSS. Range value was higher for inclusive special education teachers

demonstrating a larger scale between the lowest and highest sense of community score at 3.2 as compared to collaborative general education teachers at 2.6.

Table 4 displays descriptive statistics related to the second research question consisting of 14 self-contained special education teachers and 15 paraprofessionals creating a total of 29 participants.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics Research Question 2

	Educator Role		Statistic
Job Satisfaction	Self-Contained Teacher	Mean	129.1
		Std. Deviation	23.6
		Minimum	83.0
		Maximum	181.0
		Range	98.0
	Special Paraprofessional	Mean	154.7
		Std. Deviation	23.6
		Minimum	110.0
		Maximum	183.0
		Range	73.0
Sense of Community	Self-Contained Teacher	Mean	3.7
		Std. Deviation	0.9
		Minimum	1.4
		Maximum	4.9
		Range	3.5
	Special Paraprofessional	Mean	4.1
		Std. Deviation	0.7
		Minimum	2.6
		Maximum	5.0
		Range	2.5

Descriptive statistics for research question 2 displayed self-contained teachers had a lower mean average of job satisfaction at $M = 129.0$ as compared to paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals had a higher than average job satisfaction mean score at $M = 154.7$. Standard deviations among both participants groups were similar for job satisfaction, displaying wider

disparity between participants for both educator roles with self-contained special education teachers at $SD = 23.6$ and paraprofessionals at $SD = 23.6$. There was a slightly wider range for self-contained special education teachers at 98 than paraprofessionals at 73. Furthermore, the lowest participant value for overall job satisfaction with self-contained teachers was dramatically lower at 83 than paraprofessionals at 110.

The covariate, sense of community scores were significantly different between self-contained teachers and paraprofessionals regarding mean as observed by the researcher. Self-contained special education teachers had a slightly above average sense of community mean at $M = 3.7$. Special paraprofessionals had a higher mean sense of community at $M = 4.1$ with five being the highest sense of community possible. Self-contained teachers had a larger disparity among participant scores as seen by the standard deviation value, $SD = 0.9$ compared to $SD = 0.7$ for paraprofessionals. Additionally, the range between lowest and highest sense of community scores on the SCSS was larger for self-contained teachers at 3.5 than paraprofessionals at 2.5.

Results

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to analyze job satisfaction scores between educator roles while controlling for perceived sense of community for each research question. Research question one examined differences between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers, where research question two studied differences between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals. Results below provide information regarding data screening, assumptions, and findings regarding null hypotheses for each research question.

Data Screening

Initial data screening was performed to examine job satisfaction scores and sense of community scores among participant groups. Box and whisker plots were created to visually scan and detect any extreme outliers among variables. Figure 1 represents data related to the dependent variable, job satisfaction, for inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers.

Figure 1

Box and Whisker Plot: JSS Inclusive and Collaborative Teachers
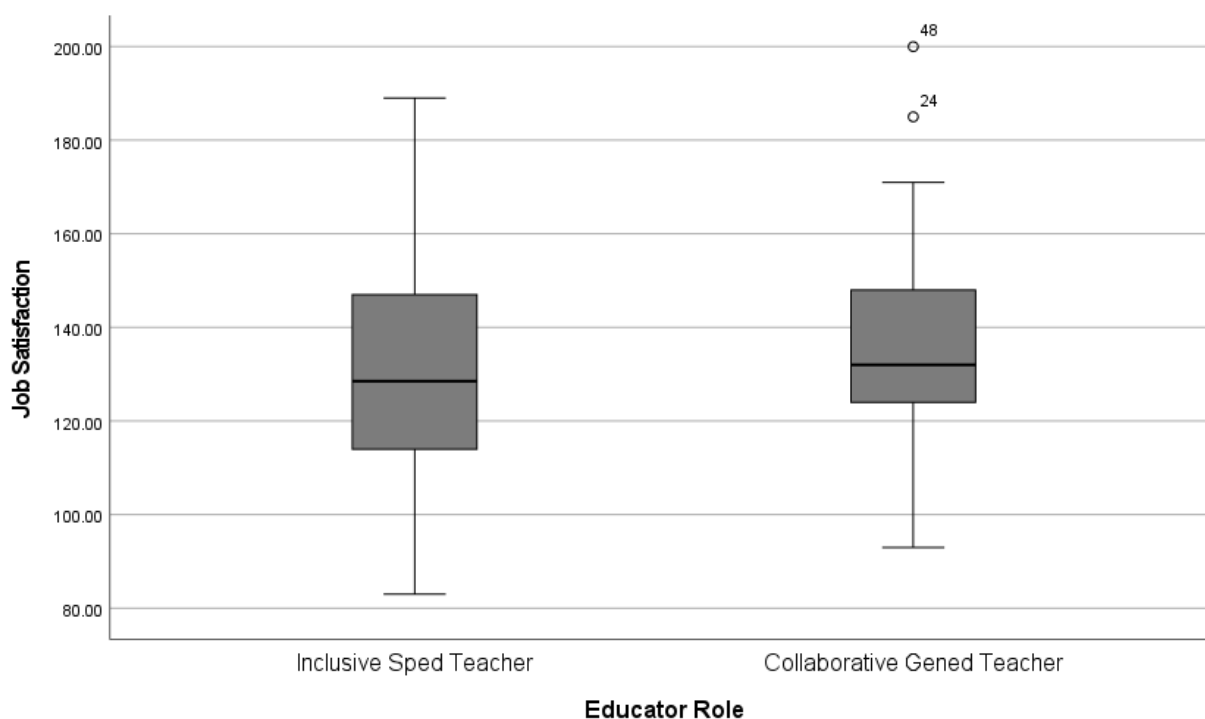

According to the figure no extreme outliers, data points represented by a star, were detected for inclusive special education teachers or collaborative general education teachers. Two participants were identified as outliers having higher scores for collaborative general education teachers. Figure 2 displays data to visually scan for extreme outliers regarding inclusive special education

teachers and collaborative general education teachers regarding the covariate variable, sense of community.

Figure 2

Box and Whisker Plot: SCSS Inclusive and Collaborative Teachers
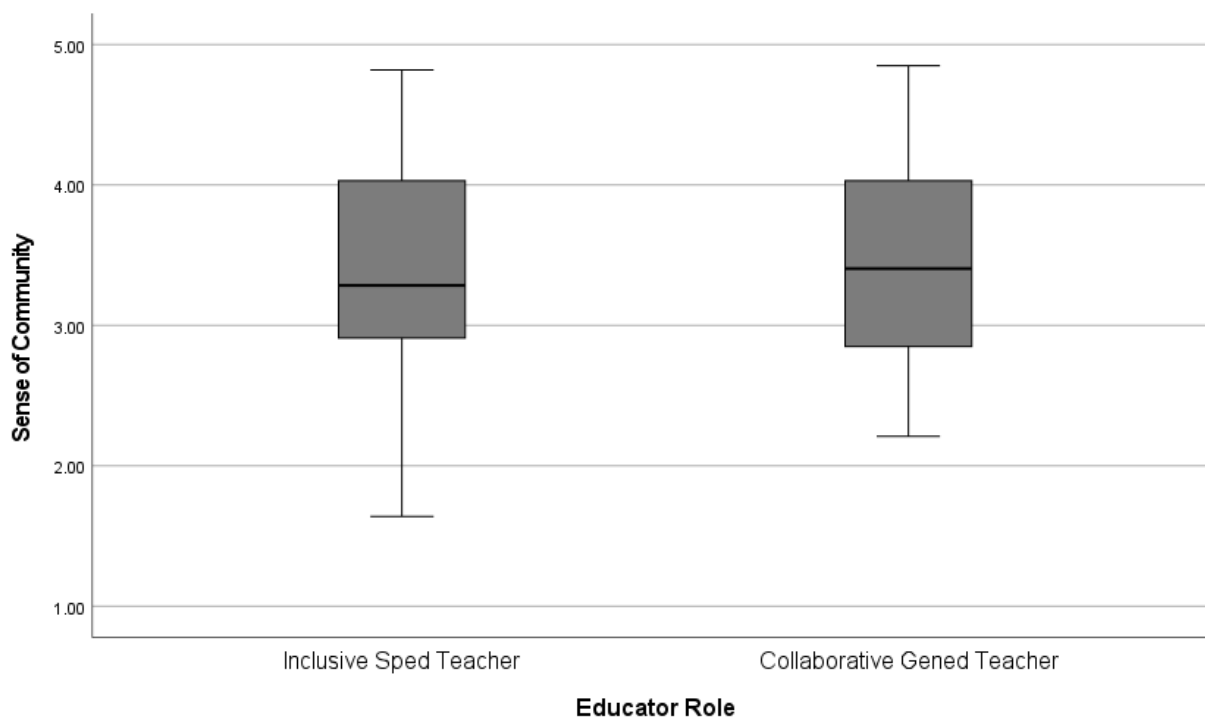
As seen in Figure 1, no extreme outliers were detected between educator roles and sense of community. Due to the lack of data errors, inconsistencies, and extreme outliers on Figure 1 and Figure 2 no participants were removed for research question one.

Figure 3 demonstrates data related to the dependent variable, job satisfaction, for research question two between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals. According to the figure, there was one participant with a high job satisfaction score for self-contained special education teachers, however, no extreme outliers were detected.

Figure 3

Box and Whisker Plot: JSS Self-Contained Teachers and Paraprofessionals
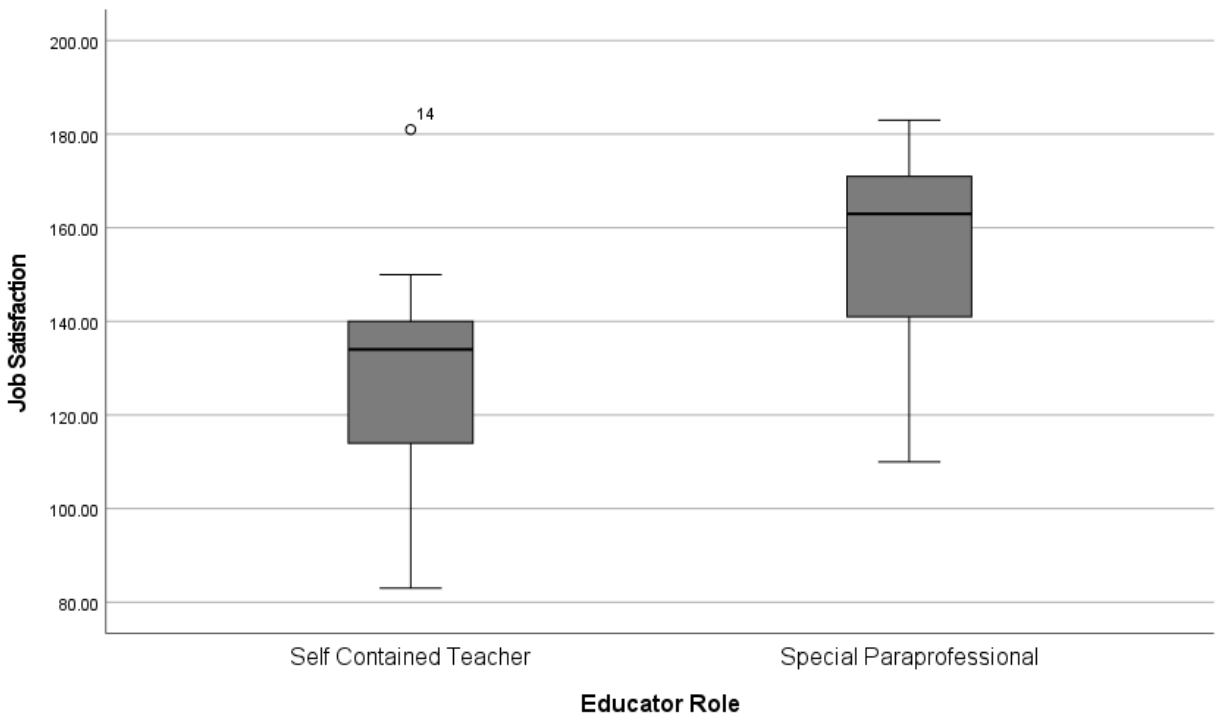
Furthermore, Figure 4 depicts data related to the covariate, sense of community, between self-contained teachers and paraprofessionals. According to the figure, there was one participant with a low sense of community value regarding self-contained special education teachers. No high or low outliers were detected concerning paraprofessionals. As depicted in both Figure 3 and Figure 4, no inconsistencies or extreme outliers were detected among participant groups in reference to job satisfaction and sense of community scores, therefore no participants were removed for research question 2.

Figure 4

Box and Whisker Plot: SCSS Self-Contained Teachers and Paraprofessionals
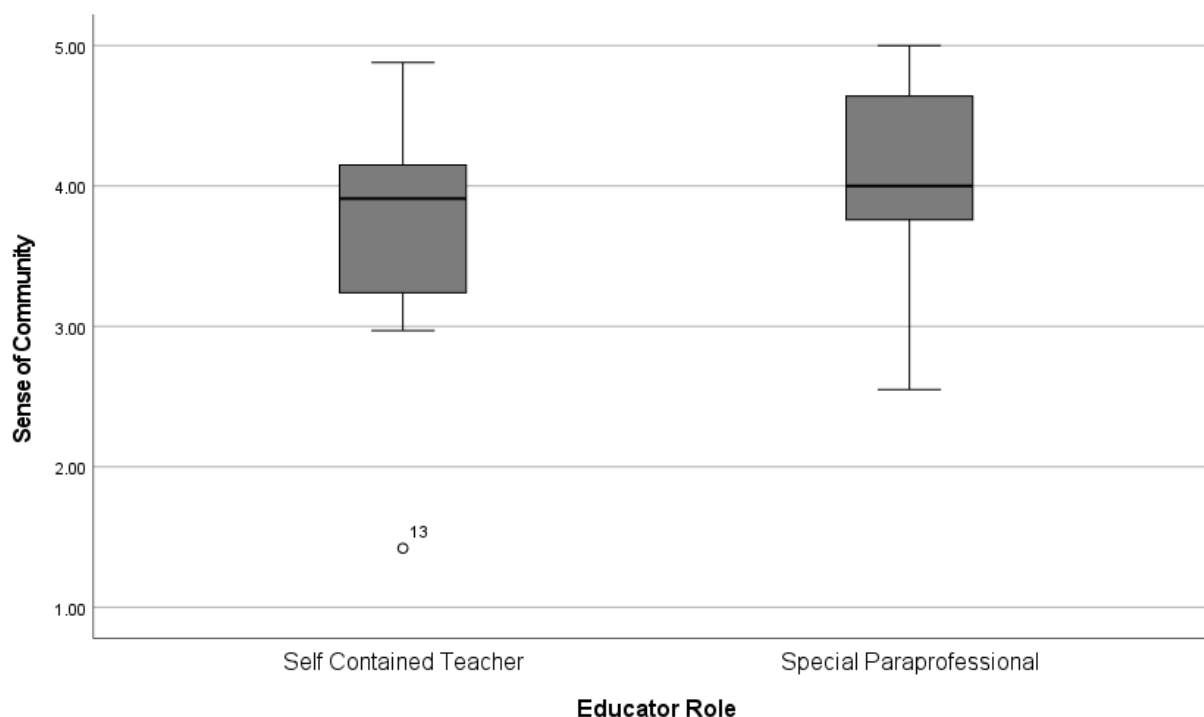
Assumption Tests

Due to a larger sample size (*N* >50) for the first research question a Kolmogorov-

Smirnov test of normality was conducted for educator roles with job satisfaction and sense of

community scores. Results of the normality test can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality Research Question 1

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Educator Role	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	Inclusive Sped Teacher	.076	30	.200[*]	.979	30	.792
	Collaborative Gen ed Teacher	.183	34	.006	.946	34	.095
Sense of Community	Inclusive Sped Teacher	.145	30	.107	.967	30	.471

Collaborative Gen ed Teacher	.094	34	.200*	.963	34	.300

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As depicted in Table 5, job satisfaction scores were found tenable for inclusive special education teachers at a significance value of 0.20, greater than the alpha 0.05. Furthermore, sense of community scores were found tenable regarding both inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers with significance values at 0.11 for inclusive teachers and 0.20 for collaborative teachers, greater than the alpha 0.05 for both educator roles. The assumption of normality was not normally distributed with collaborative general education teachers regarding job satisfaction at a significance level of 0.006. The assumption of normality was not met for job satisfaction of collaborative general education teachers. ANCOVA is robust to some violation of assumption of normality. Therefore, the researcher continued with the ANCOVA.

Originally, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was anticipated to be performed to test the assumption of normality for job satisfaction and sense of community scores with self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals with research question two. Due to a limited number of participants ($N = 29$) creating a small sample size, a Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was used in place of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. Table 6 represents data involving the Shapiro-Wilk assumption of normality test.

Table 6

Shapiro-Wilk Test of Normality Research Question 2

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
Educator Role	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.

Job Satisfaction	Self-Contained Teacher	.164	14	.200[*]	.953	14	.608
	Special Paraprofessional	.189	15	.154	.889	15	.064
Sense of Community	Self-Contained Teacher	.183	14	.200[*]	.906	14	.138
	Special Paraprofessional	.177	15	.200[*]	.937	15	.346

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

As seen in Table 6, job satisfaction scores were found tenable for both self-contained special education teachers at 0.61 and paraprofessionals at 0.06, greater than the alpha 0.05. Additionally, sense of community scores were normally distributed for self-contained special education teachers at a significance level of 0.14 and paraprofessionals with a significance level of 0.35, greater than the alpha 0.05.

Scatter plots were used for the assumption of linearity and assumption of bivariate normal distribution for both research questions as seen in Figures 5-8. Visual examination represented by line of fit demonstrated a linear relationship between the dependent variable (job satisfaction) and covariate (sense of community) for each educator role including inclusive special education teachers, collaborative general education teachers, self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals (Figures 5-8). Furthermore, scatter plots were used to test the assumption of bivariate normal distribution by visually scanning the shape of graphs as well as any extreme outliers. As seen in Figures 5, 6, & 7, there were some high and low outliers between job satisfaction and sense of community, however none of the outliers were extreme, therefore assumption of bivariate normal distribution was found tenable for each educator role.

Figure 5

Scatter Plot for Inclusive Special Education Teachers

Educator Role: Inclusive Sped Teacher
R² Linear = 0.390
y=58.96+20.43*x
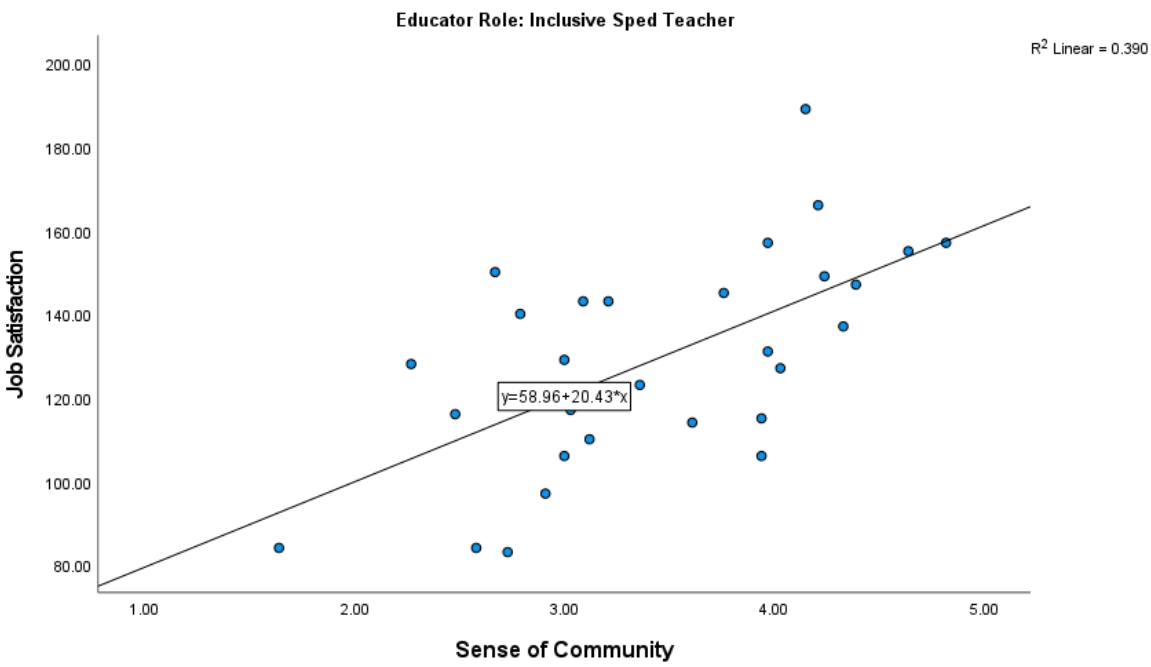
Figure 6

Scatter Plot for Collaborative General Education Teachers

Educator Role: Collaborative Gened Teacher
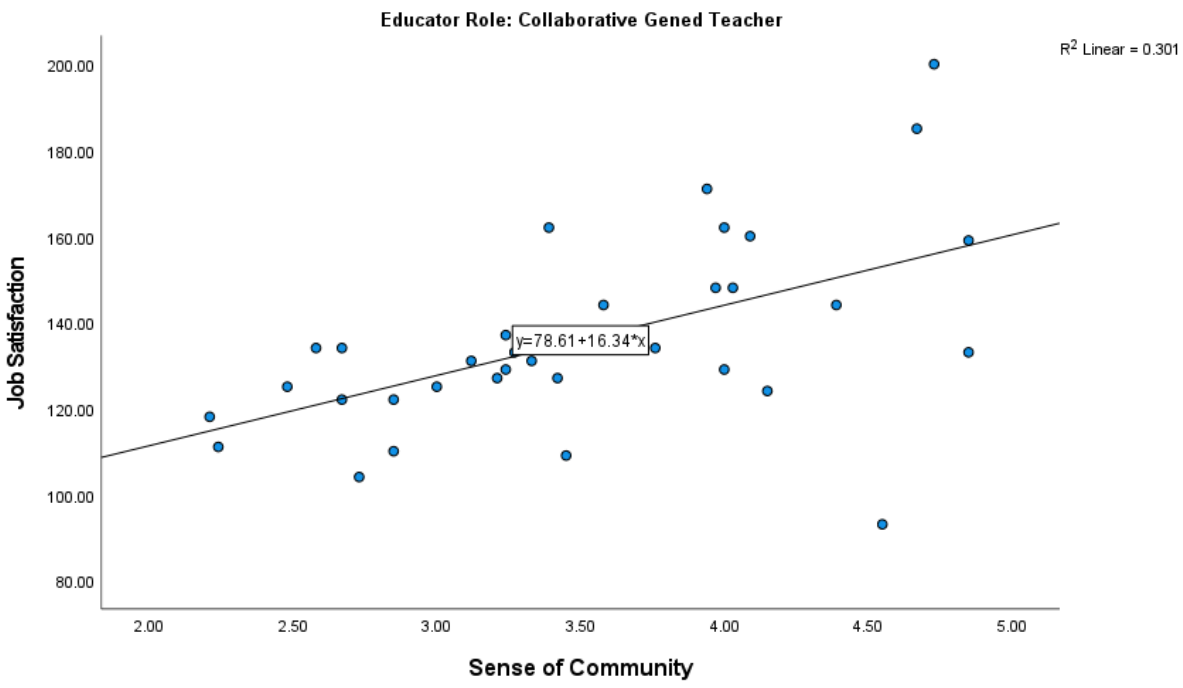R² Linear = 0.301
y=78.61+16.34*x

Figure 7

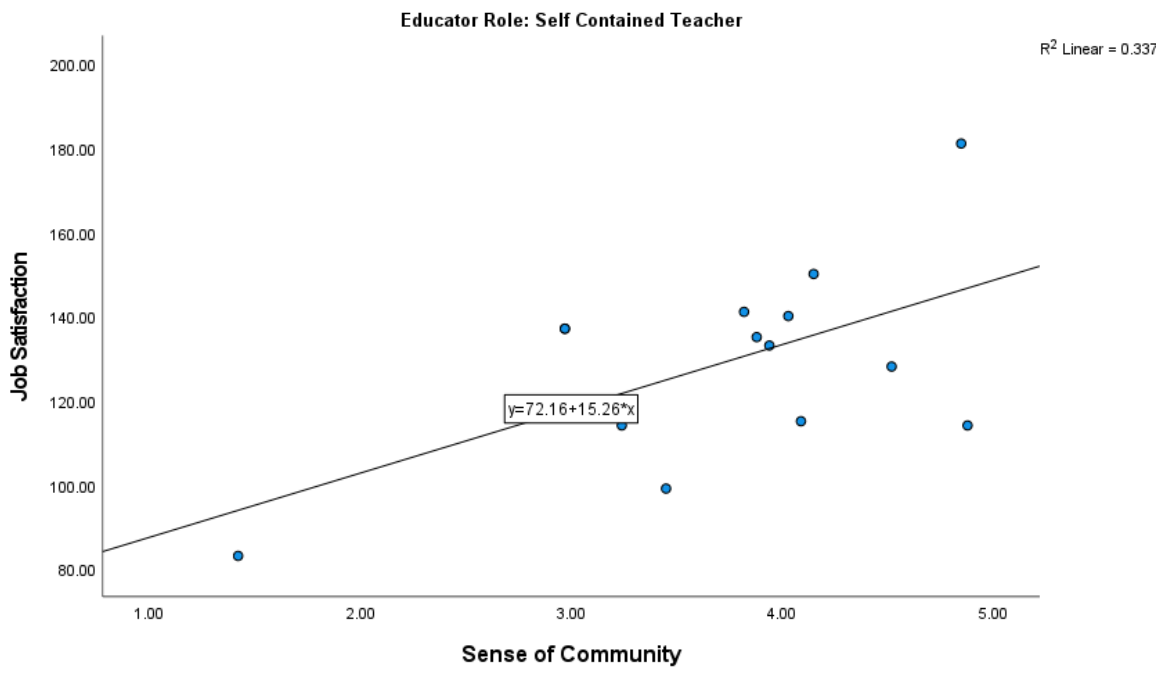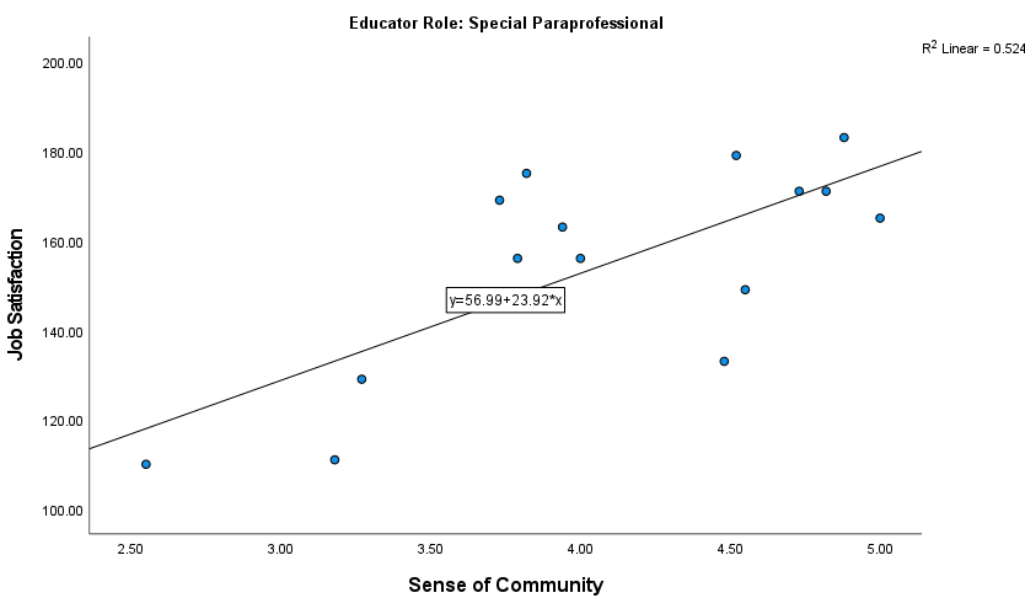*Scatter Plot Self-Contained Special Education Teachers*

Figure 8

Scatter Plot Paraprofessionals

The homogeneity of slopes assumption was examined to identify if there was a significant interaction between the covariate sense of community and dependent variable job satisfaction. Results of the analysis depicted there was not a significant interaction, $F(1,60) = .40$, $p = .53$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$ (Table 7). Additionally, the homogeneity of slopes assumption was reviewed to determine if the was significant interaction between sense of community and job satisfaction in research question 2. As depicted in Table 8, a significant interaction was not found, $F(1, 25) = .93$, $p = .34$, partial $\eta^2 = .01$. In conclusion, the homogeneity of slopes assumption was found tenable for research question 1 and research question 2, satisfying the requirements for an ANCOVA (Warner, 2013).

Table 7

Assumption of Homogeneity of Slopes Research Question 1

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	13170.766[a]	3	4390.255	11.351	<.001	.362
Intercept	13689.411	1	13689.411	35.395	<.001	.371
Ed_Role	279.201	1	279.201	.722	.399	.012
Comm	12330.419	1	12330.419	31.881	<.001	.347
Ed_Role * Comm	152.862	1	152.862	.395	.532	.007
Error	23205.718	60	386.762			
Total	1163955.000	64				
Corrected Total	36376.484	63				

a. R Squared = .362 (Adjusted R Squared = .330)

Table 8

Assumption of Homogeneity of Slopes Research Question 2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	11267.985[a]	3	3755.995	11.023	<.001	.569
Intercept	4387.530	1	4387.530	12.877	.001	.340
Ed_Role	60.555	1	60.555	.178	.677	.007
Comm	6517.457	1	6517.457	19.128	<.001	.433
Ed_Role * Comm	318.221	1	318.221	.934	.343	.036
Error	8518.222	25	340.729			
Total	607101.000	29				
Corrected Total	19786.207	28				
a. R Squared = .569 (Adjusted R Squared = .518)						

The last assumption test conducted was Levene's test of equality of error variances for both research questions. As seen in Tables 9 and 10, the assumption of equal variance was met for research question 1 and 2. Research question 1 had a significance value of $p = 0.37$ over the alpha 0.05, meeting the assumption of equality. Additionally, research question 2 had a significance value of $p = 0.69$ larger than the alpha 0.05, meeting the assumption of equality.

Table 9

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances Research Question 1

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.822	1	62	.368
Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.			

a. Design: Intercept + Comm + Ed_Role

Table 10

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances Research Question 2

Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances[a]

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

F	df1	df2	Sig.
.160	1	27	.692

Tests the null hypothesis that the error variance of the dependent variable is equal across groups.

a. Design: Intercept + Comm + Ed_Role

Hypotheses

An ANCOVA was performed for the first research question to determine if there was a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers, while controlling for the covariate, sense of community. According to the collected data job satisfaction was not found to be statistically significant between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers $F_{(1, 60)} = 1.23$, $p = 0.27$ (Table 11). Failure to reject the null hypothesis occurred due to a significance value ($p = 0.27$) larger than the alpha of 0.05. Furthermore, there was a small-medium effect size as demonstrated in the partial eta squared, $\eta^2 = 0.20$ (Warner, 2013).

Table 11

ANCOVA Results Research Question 1

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared

Corrected Model	13017.904[a]	2	6508.952	16.998	<.001	.358
Intercept	13799.008	1	13799.008	36.036	<.001	.371
Comm	12230.390	1	12230.390	31.939	<.001	.344
Ed_Role	470.878	1	470.878	1.230	.272	.020
Error	23358.580	61	382.928			
Total	1163955.000	64				
Corrected Total	36376.484	63				
a. R Squared = .358 (Adjusted R Squared = .337)						

Data was analyzed for the second research question using an ANCOVA procedure to determine if there were differences in job satisfaction between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals. According to the results of the collected data, there was a significant difference between job satisfaction among self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals, $F (1, 26) = 7.27$, $p = 0.02$ (Table 12). Due to the significant value of $p = 0.02$ smaller than the alpha 0.05, the hypothesis for research question two was rejected. Additionally, there was a medium effect size of $\eta^2 = 0.22$ (Warner, 2013).

Table 12

ANCOVA Results Research Question 2

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	10949.763[a]	2	5474.882	16.109	<.001	.553
Intercept	5217.318	1	5217.318	15.351	<.001	.371
Comm	6205.818	1	6205.818	18.260	<.001	.413
Ed_Role	2469.457	1	2469.457	7.266	.012	.218
Error	8836.444	26	339.863			
Total	607101.000	29				

Corrected Total	19786.207	28
a. R Squared = .553 (Adjusted R Squared = .519)		

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

Overview

The intent of this study was to determine if there were significant differences between collaborative special educator roles regarding job satisfaction while controlling for sense of community, a potential influencing variable. The final chapter discusses findings for both research questions. The chapter compares and contrasts study results with previous literature. Furthermore, implications and limitations of this study are examined. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes with recommendations for future research.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were significant differences in job satisfaction between educator roles while controlling for sense of community. Job satisfaction of educators is an important factor related to education. Job satisfaction has been connected to educator attrition and burnout (Ford et al., 2018; Geiger, T., & Pivovarova, M. 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). Furthermore, critical teacher shortages in the area of special education are connected to negative impacts related to both students and school districts (Hester et al., 2020). Associations have been made relating factors connected with sense of community to feelings of job satisfaction among educators such as effects of relationships among school staff (Ansley et al., 2019; Hester et al., 2020). Additionally, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory and Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs provide a foundation in respect to behaviors of social learning and self-esteem that connect to job satisfaction and sense of community experienced by collaborative educators.

The first research question of this study asks:

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers when controlling for sense of school community scores?

According to the results, there was no significant difference found between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers while controlling for sense of community. Thus, demonstrating similar job satisfaction scores between the educator roles of collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers.

This finding corresponds to previous research by demonstrating the potential impact sense of community has with job satisfaction for teachers. For instance, Reeves et al., (2017) found associations between collaborative experiences among teachers and job satisfaction regarding teachers in the United States. Donohoo (2018) represented positive connections between collective teacher efficacy, individual teacher efficacy, and job satisfaction. Factors related to sense of community, among teachers, including team efficacy, coworker support, and administrative relationships have been associated to job satisfaction (Conley & You, 2017; Billingsley, B., & Bettini, E., 2019). Furthermore, Ansley et al. (2019) found strongest relationships of positive job satisfaction with factors involving sense of community including supportive relationships with leadership and coworkers.

There is a connection between sense of community and job satisfaction as demonstrated by these previous studies. The lack of significance for this study, strictly between teacher roles while controlling for sense of community supports previous findings regarding the significance of sense of community with job satisfaction. Sense of community failing to reject null hypotheses one demonstrates similarities between co-educators regarding job satisfaction for inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers. Therefore,

sense of community may have a corresponding role to job satisfaction between these two educator roles as found in earlier research.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943, 1954) reveals the concept that for people to reach fulfillment, needs must be met in the form of a hierarchical progression. The original theory consists of five tiers or steps including physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). Although needs may not need to be completely fulfilled to move to the next tier, Maslow's theory demonstrates the importance concerning each tier before an individual is able to accomplish the next step (Maslow, 1987). Likewise, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory encompasses the significance of Maslow's tiers love and belonging and esteem to replicate behaviors associated with both sense of community and job satisfaction.

The second tier, safety, is not limited to but includes the need for employment. Additionally, tiers 3 (love and belonging) and 4 (esteem) consist of components involving sense of community such as connectedness, friendship, status, and recognition (Maslow, 1954). Maslow's theory frames the findings of this study by showing needs met in the form of employment for both educator roles, collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers. In addition, Maslow's theory supports the similar findings regarding job satisfaction between teacher roles while controlling for sense of community. Furthermore, Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory enhances components related to sense of community in terms of motivation. The majority of needs incorporated with the sense of community survey involve factors related to Maslow's (1943, 1954) tiers love and belonging and esteem as well as components of motivation addressed by Bandura (1977). Given that sense of community was

controlled during this study, both theories coincide with the results found between these two educator roles.

The second question of this research study questions:

RQ2: Is there a difference in job satisfaction between self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals when controlling for sense of school community scores?

Results of this question depicted a significant difference in job satisfaction between self-contained teachers and special paraprofessionals while controlling for sense of community. Hence, the portrayal of differences in job satisfaction based upon educator roles including self-contained special education teachers and paraprofessionals.

This finding corresponds to differences found in previous research between teachers and paraprofessionals. Many previous studies have identified connections between teacher job satisfaction and working conditions associated with stress (Ansley et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2018; Price & Weatherby, 2018; Veldman et al., 2016). Although, teacher attrition has been related to workplace stress including factors associated with job satisfaction and sense of community (Billingsley, B., & Bettini, 2019; Conley & You, 2017; Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Teacher stress has also been referenced to factors outside of community such as workload, evaluation, and pressure associated with student achievement as well as behavior expectations (Cancio et al., 2018; Ford et al., 2018).

As seen with teachers, job satisfaction of paraprofessionals has been related to aspects involving sense of community such as teacher relationships (Biggs et al., 2019; Brown & Stanton-Chapman, 2017; Fisher & Pleasants, 2012). In comparison, research has also presented information regarding job satisfaction of paraprofessionals to other aspects such as proper training and communication of job responsibilities (Biggs et al., 2019; Brown & Stanton-

Chapman, 2017; Giangreco et al., 2010). Brown and Stanton-Chapman (2017) found challenges

for special paraprofessionals in three primary areas including uncertainty of work

responsibilities, teacher relationships, and monetary compensation. Additionally, Giangreco et al.

(2010) found training and roles and responsibilities to be two significant categories associated as

issues regarding paraprofessionals.

As summarized, these previous findings depict differences between teacher and

paraprofessional roles, outside of sense of community, relating to job satisfaction. Accordingly,

these positions correspond to results depicted in the current study by demonstrating significant

differences between teachers and paraprofessionals while controlling for sense of community.

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs and Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory

frame the findings associated with this research question by providing rationale regarding

differences seen among educator roles of teachers and paraprofessionals. Maslow's (1954), love

and belonging (tier 3), esteem (tier 4), and self-actualization (tier 5) connect to components

associated with work responsibilities and job satisfaction for special education teachers and

paraprofessionals. With differences in responsibilities between educator roles, it is believed

paraprofessionals and teachers may utilize motivation and replication associated with Bandura's

(1977) Social Learning Theory in varying ways. As a result of limited training and confusion of

responsibilities, it goes to reason Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory may support

paraprofessionals with work related tasks. Furthermore, this connects to tiers including esteem

and self-actualization seen in Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs.

Implications

Implications of this study identified similarities and differences among collaborative

educator roles involving special education. Since the study controlled sense of community

scores, it is believed this provided valuable information regarding educator roles and job satisfaction. There was not a significant difference in job satisfaction between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers. This finding suggests there are comparable views between inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers regarding factors associated with job satisfaction. Furthermore, insights were identified including average scores regarding overall job satisfaction for both inclusive and special education teachers. Recognizing this implication is valuable in the field of education by identifying a need to increase job satisfaction with these educator roles. Additionally, this study demonstrates the potential effects of sense of community on job satisfaction. This knowledge may be applied to school practices to help increase job satisfaction among collaborative educators.

In comparison, the second research question did find a significant difference between job satisfaction of self-contained teachers and paraprofessionals. Looking at descriptive statistics, paraprofessionals had a higher overall job satisfaction score as compared to self-contained teachers. Furthermore, self-contained teachers had an extremely similar mean job satisfaction score to inclusive special education teachers as well as comparable mean job satisfaction score to collaborative general education teachers. These findings can provide insight regarding job satisfaction with components outside of sense of community such as work responsibilities. Additionally, the study demonstrated lowest satisfaction scores connected to special education teachers providing valuable knowledge to educational leaders.

Limitations

Several limitations took place throughout the duration of this study. A significant limitation of this study included limited participation rate. The study did not meet the minimum

sample size required for an ANCOVA. Reduced participation rate is believed to be a potential

result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many participation refusals during this study involved

references to staff feeling overwhelmed and school systems being unable to place any additional

requests on staff at the time. The study solely focused on participants in public schools located in

the state of Virginia, limiting the population to one state and type of school system. Expanding

the study beyond the state of Virginia or including both private and public school systems may

have increased the participation rate for the study. Another limitation included accuracy of

educator responses during the survey. As previously stated, many educators have been faced

with additional stressors resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional stress may have

impacted responses of participants during this study. Finally, this study specifically looked at

differences in job satisfaction between identified roles of special educators. A limitation with

performing a nonexperimental causal-comparative research design is although differences were

able to be determined, actual causes relating to differences between educator roles were unable

to be explicitly identified.

Recommendations for Future Research

Job satisfaction and sense of community are important factors in the field of education.

This study found similarities and differences among educator roles regarding job satisfaction

while controlling for sense of community. Recommendations for further research include:

1. A study looking at the effects of sense of community on job satisfaction between

   inclusive special education teachers and collaborative general education teachers.

   This could provide further insight on job satisfaction and potential differences

   between inclusive special education teachers and general education teachers.

2. A comparison of sense of community between special educator roles while controlling for job satisfaction.

3. Expanding the current study to include and compare private and public schools.

4. Expanding the current study to include more than one state.

5. A qualitative study on job satisfaction between collaborative educators to provide additional insight to findings reported during this study.

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APPENDIX A

Dear Educator:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) Degree. The purpose of my research is to determine if there are significant differences in job satisfaction between different types of special educators including collaborative general education teachers and inclusive special education teachers, and self-contained special education teachers and special paraprofessionals, when controlling for perceived sense of community. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be full-time employees with one of the following roles:
- **Inclusive special education teachers** - must have a teacher role and work collaboratively with general education teachers in a general education setting.
- **Collaborative general education teachers** - must have a teacher role and coteach with special education teachers.
- **Self-contained special education teachers** - must have a teacher role and work in a more restrictive setting (i.e. separate classroom) designed to meet the needs for students with disabilities.
- **Special paraprofessionals** - must assist teachers to help meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete two surveys in one document on Survey Monkey. It should take approximately 15-25 minutes to complete both surveys. Names will not be requested during this study keeping participants anonymous. Educator roles and an optional demographic survey will be requested as a part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please click here [survey link] and follow prompts until you reach the end.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the "accept/next" button to proceed to the surveys. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you very much
Sincerely,

Jennifer Cooke
Doctoral Student Liberty University

APPENDIX B

[External] RE: Permission Request for SCSS

Admiraal, W.F. ████████████████████████████

Mon 8/30/2021 1:05 AM

To: Cooke, Jennifer Casi ████████████████

Dear Jennifer,

Thanks for your interest. Yes of course, you can use the SCSS for this purpose. You can find a full version of it with the key on my google website (see below).

Good luck with your project!
Wilfried

APPENDIX C

[External] RE: Permission: Job Satisfaction Survey

Paul Spector ███████████████████

Mon 8/30/2021 6:25 AM

To: Cooke, Jennifer Casi ████████████

Dear Jennifer:

You have my permission to use the original JSS in your research. You can find copies of the scale in the original English and several other languages, as well as details about the scale's development and norms, in the ████████████████████ of my website: █████████████████ I allow free use for noncommercial research and teaching purposes in return for sharing of results. This includes student theses and dissertations, as well as other student research projects. Copies of the scale can be reproduced in a thesis or dissertation as long as the copyright notice is included, "Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved." Results can be shared by providing an e-copy of a published or unpublished research report (e.g., a dissertation). You also have permission to translate the JSS into another language under the same conditions in addition to sharing a copy of the translation with me. Be sure to include the copyright statement, as well as credit the person who did the translation with the year.

The JSS-2 is an improved commercial version for which there is a fee.

For additional assessment resources including an archive of measures developed by others, check out the assessment section of my website for organizational measures ████████████████████████ and my companion site for general and mental health measures: ████████████████████████

Thank you for your interest in the JSS, and good luck with your research.

Best,

Paul Spector, PhD
████████████████████████

APPENDIX D

Good [insert time],

My name is Jennifer Cooke, I am a doctoral student at Liberty University. I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctorate in Education (Ed.D) in Educational Leadership degree. I am reaching out to request permission to complete research in your school district. The purpose of my research is to determine if there are mean differences in job satisfaction based upon sense of community between special educators and special paraprofessionals . My research consists of a two-part survey that would be completed by willing participants of specified roles. Please let me know if you are willing to have me complete research in your school district.

Thank you so much for your consideration, I look forward to hearing from you!
Jennifer Cooke Ed.S. (Doctoral Student/Teacher)

APPENDIX E

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

October 11, 2022

Jennifer Cooke

█████████████

Re: Modification - IRB-FY20-21-1023 DIFFERENCES IN JOB SATISFACTION OF SPECIAL
EDUCATORS BASED UPON PERCEIVED SENSE OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Dear Jennifer Cooke, █████████

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has rendered the decision below
for IRB-FY20-21-1023 DIFFERENCES IN JOB SATISFACTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS BASED
UPON PERCEIVED SENSE OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY.

Decision: Exempt

Your request to increase the number of school districts from which you plan to recruit
participants has been approved.

Thank you for complying with the IRB's requirements for making changes to your approved
study. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

We wish you well as you continue with your research.

Sincerely,

████████████████████████

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office

APPENDIX F

Consent

Title of the Project: Differences in Job Satisfaction of Special Educators Based Upon Perceived Sense of School Community
Principal Investigator: Jennifer Cooke, Doctoral Student – Ed.D. Educational Leadership, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be a full-time employee, at a public school in Virginia, with one of the following roles:
- **Inclusive special education teachers** - must have a teacher role and work collaboratively with general education teachers in a general education setting.
- **Collaborative general education teachers** - must have a teacher role and coteach with special education teachers.
- **Self-contained special education teachers** - must have a teacher role and work in a more restrictive setting (i.e. separate classroom) designed to meet the needs for students with disabilities.
- **Special paraprofessionals** - must assist teachers to help meet the needs of students with disabilities.
Taking part in this research project is voluntary.
Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to determine if there are significant differences in job satisfaction and educator roles while controlling for perceived sense of community. This information is valuable in terms of gaining more knowledge associated with increasing job satisfaction among collaborative educators.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:
1. Complete an OPTIONAL demographic questionnaire (less than 1 minute)
2. Complete two attached surveys within the same document (total 15-25 minutes)
    a. Job Satisfaction Survey
    b. Sense of Community Survey

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Benefits to society include further understanding of relationships between job satisfaction and educator roles. Further recognition of needs among co-educators in the field of special education.

In addition, this type of knowledge could result in increased student achievement, a creation of more positive learning environments in classrooms, and reduction of attrition rates among special educators.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be anonymous. Any other identifying characteristics such as educator role and demographic data will remain confidential.
- Data will be stored on a private password-locked computer with facial recognition and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Any information shared by participants outside of surveys regarding participation or content cannot be controlled by the researcher.

Does the researcher have any conflicts of interest?

The researcher serves as a teacher at ████████████████████ The researcher does not hold an authoritative position over any potential participants. To limit potential or perceived conflicts the study will be anonymous, so the researcher will not know who participated. This disclosure is made so that you can decide if this relationship will affect your willingness to participate in this study. No action will be taken against an individual based on his or her decision to participate or not participate in this study.

Is study participation voluntary?

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

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser, responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Jennifer Cooke. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at ████████████████
You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, ████████████ at
████████████████

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the ███████████████████████ ███████████████████████████████████████

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

APPENDIX G

Dear Educators:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) Degree. Last week an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow up email is being sent to remind you to complete the survey below if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is **[end date]**.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete two surveys in one document on Survey Monkey. It should take approximately 15-25 minutes to complete both surveys. Names will not be requested during this study keeping participants anonymous. Educator roles and an optional demographic survey will be requested as a part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please click here [survey link] and follow prompts until you reach the end.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the "accept/next" button to proceed to the surveys. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you very much
Sincerely,

Jennifer Cooke
Doctoral Student Liberty University

APPENDIX H

Dear Educators:

As a graduate student in the School of Education at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) Degree. Three weeks ago, an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This **final email** is being sent to remind you to complete the survey below if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is **[end date]**.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to complete two surveys in one document on Survey Monkey. It should take approximately 15-25 minutes to complete both surveys. Names will not be requested during this study keeping participants anonymous. Educator roles and an optional demographic survey will be requested as a part of this study, but the information will remain confidential.

In order to participate, please click here [survey link] and follow prompts until you reach the end.

A consent document is provided as the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research. After you have read the consent form, please click the "accept/next" button to proceed to the surveys. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the survey.

Thank you very much
Sincerely,

Jennifer Cooke
Doctoral Student Liberty University