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Teachers Perception of Leadership Styles, Institutional Factors and Principal Demographics Related to Teacher Attrition on Suburban Middle School Campuses

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP STYLES, INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS, AND PRINCIPAL DEMOGRAPHICS RELATED TO TEACHER ATTRITION ON SUBURBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUSES

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Texas Southern University, 2023

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The shortage of teachers in the country is staggering (Shuls & Flores, 2020). According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022), teacher shortages widen the equity gap in education; therefore, it is essential to assess and monitor teacher attrition. This study added to the body of knowledge relating to teacher attrition by exploring the predictive relationship between attrition and instructional factors, principal demographics, and leadership styles as perceived by teachers. The study focused on suburban middle school teachers and their perception of attrition which was the dependent variable. The three independent variable sets were: principal leadership styles (transactional, transformational, Laissez-faire, and authoritarian) and other leadership demographic factors, institutional factors (Title I versus Non-Title I campus) and classroom factors (class size, discipline, subject taught). This study will add to the body of knowledge and benefit principals, human resources (HR) staff, and teachers.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the three Land-Ladies in my life. First, I say “Thank you and I love you,” to my wife, my rib, my everything- Land Lady-1- LaTonya Land. Thank you to my two beautiful, patient, loving daughters Jessica Land- Lady-2 and Jordyn Land-Lady 3. Hopefully, I have set a standard and expectation that you can and will go further than your earthly father. Prayerfully you will find a love and purpose for life in Jesus and your calling in life. I also dedicate this dissertation to my siblings Deadrol Land, Dr. A’Lesia Land, and Mario Land. Love you all muchie much! Thanks for allowing me to be your baby brother who now leads like a CEO BOSS!

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Teacher attrition has become a major issue in the United States, causing one in three classrooms to go without a certified teacher (Shuls & Flores, 2020). Attrition is a problem not only in urban schools, but also in suburban school (Shuls & Flores, 2020). As indicated by Kraft and Hill (2020), the teacher supply crisis cannot be solved by recruitment alone. Retaining effective teachers and building a collaborative educational team is an arduous task for campus leaders. Addressing early attrition is critical in order to address the country's teacher shortage crisis (Nguyen & Springer, 2019). With ongoing teacher shortages and high turnover rates quickly becoming a hallmark of the teaching profession, schools must find new ways to attract and keep quality educators (Modan, 2019).

There has been a significant amount of research focused on understanding the factors and conditions that contribute to teacher attrition and focusing on the teachers' perspectives (Borman & Dawling, 2008; Hong, 2012; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). Within the previous mentioned studies, the researchers listed challenging organizational aspects such as heavy workloads, large classes, lack of autonomy, lack of opportunities, lack of collegiality and collaboration, and other determinants that motivate teachers to leave the teaching profession.

Ingersoll (2001) defined *attrition* by empirical research that emphasized only one component of the overall flow of teachers from schools; those who leave the occupation of teaching altogether are often referred to as *teacher attrition*. The action of turnover or

those who transfer or move to other teaching jobs in other schools constitute *teacher migration* (Ingersoll, 2001). Districts that suffer high turnover rates due to teachers' perceptions of their working environment and correlation with low scores would suggest the district needs to train their principals (Iasevoli, 2018). Iasevoli continued by saying that districts might consider creating principal training programs that train principals on how to effectively communicate or how to effectively provide useful feedback. Teacher attrition affects all schools, but more critically Title I schools (Opfer, 2011). According to the U.S. Department of Education, a Title I school is a school in which over 40% of its students come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Many post-hire reasons for attrition have been discovered; however, less research has investigated predicting which teachers will stay, move, and leave based on the type of teacher preparation model through which they were trained (Modan, 2019).

The profession has a national attrition rate of about 8% annually, and research shows that the number of teachers leaving each year accounts for close to 90% of annual teacher demand (Modan, 2019). A Gallup poll conducted in 2018 found more than half of superintendents (61%) chose teacher retention as the greatest struggle from a list of challenges facing school districts (Litton, 2018). Leadership factors shape and determine the outcome of teachers' decisions to stay or leave. Support from administrators is the main topic teachers cite when asked about their reason for leaving the profession (Modan, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Attrition rates continue to soar in the profession of education (Taylor & West, 2020). The National Center for Education Statistics (2007) estimated teacher attrition

costs over $7 billion each year in America's public schools. Special education as a field has historically suffered from high rates of attrition, especially in categories serving students with significant needs such as the emotionally disturbed (Taylor & West, 2020). Teacher attrition is a problem on a national level and factors affect many outcomes of education endeavors (Taylor & West, 2020). These outcomes range from student achievement, campus funding, to campus climate and student engagement (Taylor & West, 2020). Theobald (1990) documented possible predictors of attrition: teacher/student ratio, involvement in decision-making, support from administration, teaching level, student characteristics, and school location. Other reasons for teacher attrition include mobility, personal factors, and too much documentation. Allensworth et al. (2009) found that when teachers view their principals as strong instructional leaders, teachers tend to have better relationships with one another, and administrators report higher teacher stability. However, administrators reported having twice as many difficulties filling math and science positions than they had a year before (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond also mentioned that when filling critical needs areas such as math and science, they often rely on hiring unqualified and inexperienced teachers, which contributes to the ongoing turnover.

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) found that two primary arguments explain why math and science teachers have high turnover rates; one is based on opportunity for better compensation, and the other is based on lack of teacher preparation. The turnover rate in Title I schools is nearly 50% greater than that in non-Title I schools (16% versus 11%). Mathematics and science teacher turnover rates are nearly 70% greater in Title I schools than in non-Title I schools, and alternative

certification teacher turnover is more than 80% higher (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles, principal demographic factors, school related factors, and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition. Specifically, this study was concerned with the predictability of principals' leadership styles (authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional), principal demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and institutional factors (classroom size, classroom discipline, and type of campus) on the perception of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition.

The following questions guided this study:

1. Is there a significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
2. Is there a significant predictable relationship between principal demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
3. Is there a significant predictable relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and type of campus) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?

Significance of the Study

This study will add to the body of knowledge and benefit (a) principals, (b) human resources (HR) staff, and (c) teachers. This study can guide human resource

departments on developing principal leadership trainings and other cultural relevant leadership classes at the university level. Outcomes from this study can guide principals to better understand what not only middle school teachers seek in a principal, but the overall campus experience of teaching and learning. The shortage of teachers in the country is staggering (Shuls & Flores, 2020). One of the largest independent school districts in Texas was short 366 teachers at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, according to its superintendent. The U.S. Department of Education (2021) further warned that 33% of public-school children (1 in 3) began the 2021-2022 school year without a certified teacher in the classroom. This is a result of teachers, for various reasons, leaving the profession in droves (Denton et al., 2021). It is incumbent for educational researchers to find out why teachers are leaving the profession in order to make recommendations so that policy makers can formulate strategies to keep teachers in the profession. This study is significant because it may contribute to the effort of principals and HR staff to find out why teachers are leaving the profession and recommend how teachers' needs can be met so that they can aspire to a higher level of professionalism and meet the needs of students at the campus level in future generations.

Theoretical Framework

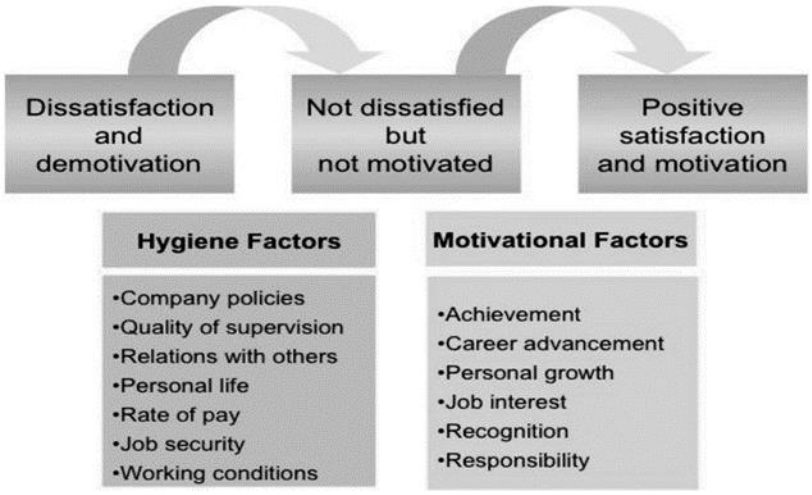
This study was grounded in Herzberg et al. (1954) theory of motivators and hygiene factors and Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs. These two theories are cited routinely among human resources professionals and organizational leaders to determine employee happiness and the factors that contribute to them resigning from their positions (Toytok & Acar, 2021). These two theories may shed light on the results of this study and

provide some context as to why participants responded the way they did to certain questions.

Herzberg et al. (1954) wrote the seminal study on the theory of motivators and hygiene factors (Figure 1). Herzberg et al. argued that individuals will not realize their potential unless certain needs are met, and these individuals will seek to fulfill these needs in ways that include changing their environments. The researchers explained that certain factors at work make a person unhappy; however, certain factors make an individual happy and able to reach a level of self-actualization.

Figure 1

Herzberg et al.'s (1954) Theory Of Motivators And Hygiene Factors



Note: Image adapted from Toytok & Acar (2021).

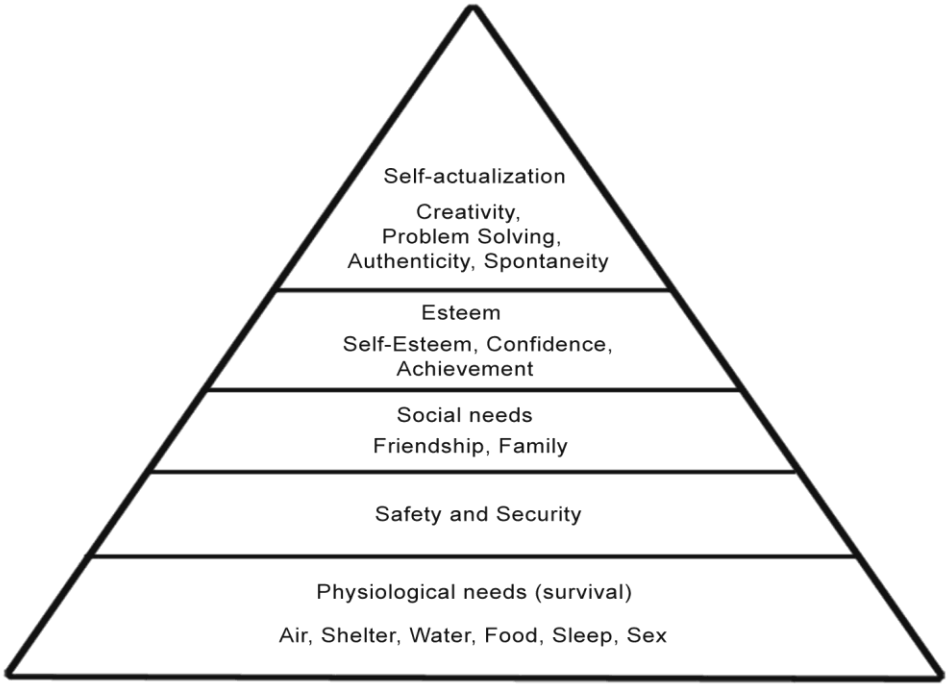
Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs is well known and written about over the years (Toytok & Acar, 2021). The theory included a leveled approach to human needs. Much like Herzberg et al. (1954), Maslow believed that before a human could go to the

next level of need, they must first satisfy the needs in the lower levels. If they failed to satisfy the lower-level needs, they would remain at that level and fail to reach the highest level, which was self-actualization (Maslow, 1954). Maslow posited that individuals need the following: physiological (food, clothing, housing, salary), safety (job security, administrator expectations, administrator style of leadership), love and belonging needs (friendship, having a mentor, peer support), esteem, and self-actualization (being effective in the classroom, doing a good job).

Herzberg et al. (1954) and Maslow's (1954) theories juxtaposed upon each other provide a lens through which the data that was collected in this study can be examined. It is incumbent for teachers to have their needs met both psychologically and environmentally for them to reach their potential and be happy. This may contribute to them staying in their positions. These factors or needs can be found in Maslow's (1954) theory on the hierarchy of needs (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs



Note: Adapted from McLeod (2018).

Statement of Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated from the purpose of the study:

H_1: There is a statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

H_2: There is a statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

H_3: There is a statistically significant predictable relationship between instructional factors (class size, classroom discipline and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in this study.

1. The researcher assumed that the instrument accurately measured the likelihood of teacher's decisions to leave or stay at the positions they held when they took the survey.
2. Participants were forthright in their responses on the survey.

   The teachers could accurately judge the principal's style of leadership.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations refer to possible flaws or problems that may impact quantitative research. (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The first limitation is that this study was conducted in one school district. Generalizations for the results of this study could be limited to similar school districts in the southern region of the United States. Likewise, another limitation may be that the data were collected at one point in time instead of over a period of time such as in a longitudinal study.

The delimitations in the current study were put in place to focus the scope of the study for the sake of time and developing a thorough understanding of a particular part of the problem under investigation. The principal researcher delimited this study to the

impact and relationship between the independent variables of principal's leadership styles, principal's demographic factors, and intuitional factors and their predictive relationship of teacher attrition. The sample was a cluster random sample of teachers from a suburban district in Texas, which is another delimitation. The study was further delimited to full-time middle school teachers in either a Title I school or non-Title I school.

Definitions of Variables/Terms

This study observed specifically suburban middle school teachers and their perception of attrition as the dependent variable. In addition, three sets of independent variables: principal leadership styles (transactional, transformational, Laissez-faire, and authoritarian) and principal demographic factors (gender and ethnicity), and institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and types of campuses). The following variables and terms were operationally defined in this study for clarification:

Gender. The term *gender* is defined as either of the two sexes; male and female. However, for the purposes of this study gender is related to the principal identifying as male or female.

*Ethnicity***.** The term ethnicity referred to whether a principal is African American, Anglo, Hispanic or Asian.

Attrition. This is a process in which the workforce dwindles at a company or organization, following a period in which a number of people retire or resign, and are not replaced. This was the dependent variable for this study.

Suburban. A suburban area is a cluster of properties, primarily residential, that are not densely compacted, yet located very near an urban area.

Secondary. United States: High school (North America) (usually grades 9–12 but sometimes 10–12; it is also called senior high school) is always considered secondary education, including junior high school or intermediate school or middle school.

Title I Campus. A Title I school is a school receiving federal funds for Title I students. The basic principle of Title I is that schools with large concentrations of low-income students receive supplemental funds to assist in meeting student's educational goals.

Non-Title I Campus. A campus that does not receive federal funds or the socio-economic population is above the national household economic indicator. There may be a relationship to the type of campus and teacher attrition.

Leadership Style. The perceived style of the principal's leadership by the teachers. Styles include Laissez-faire, transformational, transactional, and authoritarian. The different leadership styles may be tied into teacher attrition.

Discipline. The amount of student misbehavior encountered by the teacher in the classroom and how it is handled by administration. For this study discipline may be a factor in teacher attrition.

Class Sizes. The number of students teachers have in their classrooms on a daily basis during each instructional period. Class size may contribute to teacher attrition.

Subject Taught. The academic subject that a teacher is assigned to teach. This subject may or may not be the teacher's best subject.

Laissez-Faire. A style of leadership that is hands-off in approach; an absence of leadership.

Transformational. A style of leadership that inspires others by giving them ownership in decisions that directly impact them. The different leadership styles may be tied into teacher attrition.

Transactional. A style of leadership in which the leader provides benefits for doing a task or performing at a light level. The different leadership styles may be tied into teacher attrition.

Authoritarian. A style of leadership in which decisions are made by one person, the leader, or a few people. Compliance is mandatory in regard to decisions that are made. The different leadership styles may be tied into teacher attrition.

Organization of Study

Chapter 1 is the introduction of study, setting of the study, statement of the problem, theoretical framework, significance of the study, research questions, limitations, delimitations, assumptions, definition of terms, and the organization of the study. Chapter 2 consists of the literature review. Chapter 3 describes the design of the study relating to data collection, procedures, analysis, and findings in the study. Chapter 4 provides an analysis of the data. Lastly, Chapter 5 was comprised of the summary, results, and conclusions and any recommendations for further studies.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

This review of related literature is organized by the research questions that guided this study. First, studies that examined the leadership styles of administration were examined, followed by the demographics of the administration. This was followed by studies that focused on campus socioeconomic status and teacher attrition. Finally, studies that analyzed classroom factors and their contribution to teacher attrition are presented. The following questions guided this study:

1. Is there a significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (authoritarian, laissez fair, transformational, and transactional) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
2. Is there a predictable significant relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender, ethnicity) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
3. Is there a predicable significant relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and type of campus) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?

Teachers also cited that working conditions influenced by the principal include class size, climate, and autonomy in the classroom (Brown & Wynn, 2009). Teacher attrition affects underperforming students and heavy workloads of the teacher. Haynes (2014) found that novice teachers leave the profession at a more alarming rate. In fact, nationwide, approximately 13% of teachers transfer or give up the profession each year.

Burney and Beilke (2008) concluded that charter schools had the lowest rates of retention; the odds of retaining a teacher at a charter school were 41-46% lower than the odds of retaining a teacher at a traditional suburban school. Urban schools also had higher rates of turnover; the odds of retaining a teacher at an urban school were 12.9-15.8% lower than the odds of retaining a teacher at a suburban school. Schools in low socioeconomic areas have greater teacher attrition, and students that have depressed academic achievement are especially vulnerable to high teacher turnover. Students in Title I schools are less likely to participate in rigorous coursework due to inadequately prepared teachers and depressed academic achievement when compared with their peers at non-Title I schools (Burney and Beilke, 2008).

Attrition rates continue to soar in the profession of education (Taylor & West, 2019). The National Center for Education Statistics (2007) estimated teacher attrition costs over $7 billion each year in America's public schools. One study indicated special education as a field has historically suffered from high rates of attrition, especially in categories serving students with significant needs, such as the emotionally disturbed (Taylor & West, 2020).

Teacher attrition affects all schools, but more critically Title I schools (Opfer, 2011). Many post-hire reasons for attrition have been discovered; however, less research has looked into predicting which teachers will stay, move, and leave based on the type of teacher preparation model through which they were trained (Hamann et al., 2010). The shortage of teachers in the country is staggering according to some researchers (Shuls & Flores, 2020). During the 2021-2022 school year, the largest district in the state of Texas was short 366 teachers at the beginning of the year, according its superintendent. The

U.S. Department of Education (2021) further warned that 33% of public-school children (1 in 3) began the 2021-2022 school year without a certified teacher in the classroom. This is a result of teachers, for various reasons, leaving the profession in droves (Denton et al., 2021). This study is significant because it may contribute to the effort to find out why teachers are leaving the profession and recommend how teachers' needs can be met so that they can aspire to a higher level of professionalism and meet the needs of students in future generations.

Teacher attrition is a problem on a national level and factors affect many outcomes of education endeavors. These outcomes range from student achievement, campus funding, to campus climate and student engagement. Theobald (1990) documented possible predictors of attrition: teacher/student ratio, involvement in decision-making, support from administration, teaching level, student characteristics, and school location. Other reasons cited in the literature for teacher attrition are mobility, personal factors and too much documentation. Allensworth et al. (2009) cited schools where teachers view their principals as strong instructional leaders tend to have better relationships among teachers and higher teacher stability (Allensworth et al., 2009). Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond (2017) noted that administrators reported having twice as many difficulties filling math and science positions than the year before. Carver-Thomas & Darling Hammond mentioned that when filling critical needs areas such as math and science, principals often rely on hiring unqualified and inexperienced teachers, which contributes to the ongoing turnover.

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) suggested more than one set of arguments why math and science teachers have high turnover rates; one is based on

opportunity for better compensation, and the other is lack of teacher preparation. Math and science teachers have less teacher preparation because of their alternative pathway into the occupation. Within these two content areas, teachers leave Title I schools at a higher rate than they leave non-Title I schools. The turnover rate in Title I schools is nearly 50% greater than that in non-Title I schools (16% versus 11%). Mathematics and science teacher turnover rates are nearly 70% greater in Title I schools than in non-Title I schools, and alternative certification teacher turnover is more than 80% higher (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Leadership Style

The style of leadership may contribute to or be a solution to the problem of teachers leaving the profession. More specifically, Shuls and Flores (2020) found that the following factors contributed to an effective organization where teachers felt a sense of well-being:

- a supportive administration
- a culture of trust, openness, and academic freedom
- a personalized professional development program
- an induction program which includes mentorship for new and beginning teachers, and
- a leadership training program.

If the new teacher had an administration that they perceived was supportive and perceived a culture of trust openness and academic freedom, they were less likely to leave the profession (Shuls & Flores, 2020). They went on to say that professional development programs needed to be personalized to the individual teachers, and there

should be an induction program that includes a mentor for new and beginning teachers. The researchers also recommended that there be a leadership training program (Shuls & Flores, 2020).

Shuls and Flores (2020) also noted that administrators set the tone for the culture of the campus. Many of the findings in their study are a direct result of the actions of administrators in nurturing a supportive culture on campus, particularly toward new teachers. In contrast, Elyashiv (2019) concluded that administrators welcomed teachers leaving the profession and favored freeing up positions in order to hire teachers they considered better and more experienced. However, the researchers reported no relationship between leadership style and the belief that some teachers need to go (Elyashiv, 2019).

Mentorship is not only good for first year novice teachers, but it is effective for veteran teachers as well. Elyashiv (2019) found that, since administrators have control over what professional development and induction programs include, the administrator is one of the most important factors that determines the level of attrition. Harris et al. (2019) added that increased expectations of teachers in regard to state testing as well as decreased support and respect for the teaching profession may contribute to teacher attrition. However, Harris et al. (2019) also found that if teachers felt that the administration facilitated a safe and supportive environment, teachers would likely stay in the profession longer. This was one of the single greatest factors that determined if teachers left at the end of the year.

According to Kaleem et al. (2021), "Leadership styles play a fundamental role to affect the school environment to achieve the educational goals" (p. 520). The leadership

style of the principal may also contribute to teacher attrition, according to Nguyen (2020). Budiawan et al. (2021) added, “Leadership style is a pattern of behavior applied by a leader, how to apply a leadership style by a different leader, how the overall pattern of a leader's actions, visible and invisible by his workers” (p. 800). Additionally, Kaleem et al. (2021) surmised:

> School principals play a significant role in overall school success. They are considered as academic leaders in modern perspective and lead the school to achieve the desired goals. The principals’ leadership styles change the whole school climate and performance of the students. (p. 525)

The different leadership styles asked about in this study are authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transactional, and transformational. These styles where chosen because they encompass the basic styles identified in the literature.

Authoritarian

A leadership style characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members is known as *authoritarian.* According to Budiawan et al. (2021), authoritarian leaders are “leaders who tend to concentrate power on themselves, dictate how tasks are to be completed, make decisions independently one-sided, and minimize employee’s participation” (p. 801). Authoritarian leaders often make decisions based on their own ideas and beliefs and rarely seek out the advice from people they oversee (Swanson et al., 2020). Democratic leadership is seen to be the direct opposite of authoritarian leadership (Budiawan et al., 2021; Caillier, 2020; Peker et al., 2018; Rahayu et al., 2021). However, the literature review for this study was not clear on how this leadership style impacted teacher attrition. On the one hand, studies concluded that

teachers perceived that they needed a strong leader to get a handle on discipline issues in the school. However, some teachers perceived that their own personal growth was stymied under this type of leadership. Teachers felt they were not listened to and that they were taken for granted. Authoritarian leadership has several drawbacks, according to Cherry-Paul et al. (2020):

- Allows little or no input from group members
- Requires leaders to make almost all the decisions
- Provides leaders with the ability to dictate work methods and processes
- Leaves group feeling like they aren't trusted with decisions or important tasks
- Tends to create highly structured and very rigid environments
- Discourages creativity and out-of-the box thinking
- Establishes rules and tends to be clearly outlined and communicated (p. 1)

However, Cherry-Paul et al. (2020) argued that "authoritarian leadership can be effective in small groups where leadership is lacking" (p. 2). This leadership style is also used well in instances where pressure or accountability is involved. Cherry-Paul et al. (2020) posited, "In situations that are particularly stressful, such as during military conflicts, group members may prefer an authoritarian style. This allows members of the group to focus on performing specific tasks without worrying about making complex decisions" (p. 2).

Laissez-Faire

A leadership style in which the leaders have an attitude of trust and reliance on their employees is known as Laissez-faire (Swanson et al., 2020). Leaders of this type

prefer not to micromanage or get too involved, but they don't give too much instruction or guidance, leaving their superordinate wondering what the leaders vision is. However, many Laissez-faire leaders give guidance and take responsibility where needed. This style of leadership often means that subordinates and team members must be the real leaders. Budiawan et al. (2021) explained that Laissez-faire leadership "describes a leader who as a whole gives its employees or groups the freedom to make decisions and complete work in a manner that is according to the most appropriate employees" (p. 801). Goktas (2021) found a negative correlation between Laissez-faire leadership and job satisfaction. Goktas stated that Laissez-faire leadership means no leadership or absence of leadership. Teachers are left to their own to do as they please and nothing is effective. Kaleem et al. (2021) also found a negative relationship between organization performance and a Laissez-faire leadership style. According to Cherry-Paul et al. (2020), Laissez-faire leadership is characterized by the following:

- Hands-off approach
- Leaders provide all training and support
- Decisions are left to employees
- Comfort with mistakes
- Accountability falls to the leader.

Cherry-Paul et al. (2020) argued that a Laissez-faire leadership style can be positive because "leaders are so hands-off in their approach, employees have a chance to be hands-on. This leadership style creates an environment that facilitates growth and development" (p. 1). Nonetheless, the researchers warned, "Because the Laissez-faire style depends so heavily on the abilities of the group, it is not very effective in situations

where team members lack the knowledge or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions. This can lead to poor job performance and less job satisfaction" (Cherry-Paul et al., 2020, p. 2).

Transformational

Burns (1978) introduced the concept of transformational leadership and defined *transformational leadership* as when leaders and their followers rise to the level of working together to achieve a common goal. According to James and Kitcharoen (2021), transformational leadership causes change in individuals and social systems. When enacted in its authentic form, it enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. A transformational leader is "a leader who exhibits transformational characteristics with the components of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration who create a vision for their followers and encourage the followers to achieve the goal of the organization" (James & Kitcharoen, 2021, p.31). Consequently, transformational school leadership correlated significantly with transformational classroom leadership. The researchers posited that teachers who practice transformative leadership start and implement change that motivates, inspires, and guides teachers to work toward a shared vision, which moves the organization forward. Cherry-Paul et al. (2020) identified four characteristics of transformational leadership:

- Intellectual Stimulation: Transformational leaders not only challenge the status quo; they also encourage creativity among followers. The leader encourages followers to explore new ways of doing things and new opportunities to learn.

- Individualized Consideration: Transformational leadership also involves offering support and encouragement to individual followers. In order to foster supportive relationships, transformational leaders keep lines of communication open so that followers feel free to share ideas and so that leaders can offer direct recognition of the unique contributions of each follower.
- Inspirational Motivation: Transformational leaders have a clear vision that they are able to articulate to followers. These leaders are also able to help followers experience the same passion and motivation to fulfill these goals.
- Idealized Influence: The transformational leader serves as a role model for followers. Because followers trust and respect the leader, they emulate this individual and internalize his or her ideals. (Cherry-Paul et al., 2020, p. 3)

Transformational leadership can inspire high-performance organizations because transformational leaders influence teachers by extending and raising the aims of followers to improve collaboration and organizational learning (Yulianeu et al., 2021). Organizational learning is constructed on collaborative decision-making, sharing experiences, and creating a shared value which leads to increased efficacy of the individuals who make up the organization. The higher the efficacy of the individual, the higher the performance of the organization (Yulianeu et al., 2021). Teacher efficacy is linked to the effectiveness of teaching and education as a whole (Menon & Lefteri, 2021). Moreover, teachers' efficacy may influence on their levels of stress and job satisfaction (Menon & Lefteri, 2021). This may intern influence their decision to leave or stay with an organization (Islam et al., 2021). Goktas (2021) found a positive correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Kaleem et al. (2021) found a positive

relationship between a transformational leadership style and organizational performance. Kaleem et al. concluded:

> Amongst three leadership styles, transformational leadership has greatest effect on schools' climate and students' academic achievement. The intention is that the principals take the teachers as associates who can work with them for common objectives. Teachers are influenced by each other and cooperate with each other. (p. 525)

Moreover, Iseri (2019) asserted, "Since schools adapt to an ever-changing environment and maintain its presence, school culture should be in a structure that can keep up with change and transformation" (p.147). Iseri went on to say that transformational leadership styles lead to a sense of well-being in the followers, which "provides the positive employee outcomes such as higher employee satisfaction, better performance, better relationships with teammates, less stress and more personal development" (p.148). However, some studies stated that teachers tended to misunderstand a transformational leader more often than the other styles of leadership. Teachers were not always sure of what the leader wanted out of them.

Transactional

In 1978 Burns also introduced the concept of transactional leadership to balance out transformational leadership. Burns defined transactional leadership in terms of the individual getting their needs met in lieu of the organization being advanced in lieu of the organization being advanced or benefited. More recently, transactional leadership has been defined as "exchanging of rewards for compliance, setting clear goals, and monitoring followers' performance" (Van Dijk et al., 2021, p. 635). Since transactional

behavior is rooted in expecting teachers to comply with the principal's demands, it discourages teachers from going beyond expectations, destabilizing the status quo. Under such leadership behavior, followers' performances are closely monitored based on rules and standards, blocking deviations that may lead to creativity in the classroom (Van Dijk et al., 2021). According to Cherry-Paul et al. (2020) transactional leadership operates under four assumptions:

- People perform their best when the chain of command is definite and clear.
- Rewards and punishments motivate workers.
- Obeying the instructions and commands of the leader is the primary goal of the followers.
- Subordinates need to be carefully monitored to ensure that expectations are met. (p.1)

Frangieh and Rusu (2021) argued that "transactional leadership style is described as a 'favor-for-favor' or a 'give and take' social interchange where managers rely on rewards or punishments in exchange for desirable or undesirable performances" (p. 244). However, with this style of leadership, the principal must exert more control over process and procedures. Oversight is very stringent and punitive in nature (Frangieh & Rusu, 2021; Van Dijk et al., 2021). Additionally, Erdel and Takkaç (2020) described transactional leadership in a school context as follows;

> Transactional leadership has three components: contingent reward, and active and passive management-by-exception. As the first component, contingent reward indicates how transactional leaders award the followers in return for the achievement of goals predetermined and announced by the leader. In classroom

> context, this might be exemplified with the bonus marks provided by teacher in exchange for completing assignments on time or for active participation in classroom activities. The second component, active management-by-exception, indicates the actions of a transactional leader monitoring the process of group work and providing corrective action in case of deviations from norms. As the last component, passive management-by-exception refers to the characteristics of passive leaders who wait until deviations from norms in follower behaviors occur before intervening. (p. 73)

Erdel and Takkaç (2020) concluded that contingent reward and management by exception correlated positively with effective classroom leadership. Nielsen et al. (2019) argued that "transformational and transactional leadership can and should be combined to obtain the benefits of both" (p. 412). In order to analyze how the combination of transformational and transactional leadership impacted employee motivation, Nielsen et al. (2019) focused on two motivating constructs: work engagement and intrinsic motivation, and determined:

> … Transformational leadership and contingent material rewards—in contradiction to the propositions of the full range leadership theory—are not compatible, but instead seem to undermine each other. When combined with moderate to high levels of contingent material rewards, the positive motivational effects of transformational leadership disappear. Leaders' efforts to promote an appealing vision for the organization thus appear to be undermined when leaders simultaneously employ contingent material rewards that primarily speak to the self-interests of employees. (p. 425)

The combining of the transformational leadership style and the transactional leadership style did not work to change the organization or provide any sense of well-being in the employees (Nielsen et al., 2019). In this study the different styles of leadership were surveyed, and the participats had to choose between one style or the other. No studies reviewed recommended combining the styles, and Nielsen et al. (2019) strongly recommends against it.

Principal Demographics

According to Brezicha and Fuller (2019), "Despite the importance of trust within schools, much of the research proceeds as if educators check their identities at the schoolhouse doors. This gap in the trust research fails to acknowledge that our racial and gendered identities shape our relationships and whom we trust" (p.26). The demographics of the administration (i.e., male or female, Black, White, Hispanic, older or younger etc.) may contribute to teacher attrition. However, the literature is relatively silent on this issue. But Brezicha and Fuller (2019) posited that building relationships is key to all aspects of school life. These researchers sought to answer three main questions:

1. Is there a relationship between the racial/ethnic match between a teacher and a principal and the teacher's perceptions of trust in the principal?
2. Is there a relationship between the gender match between a teacher and a principal and the teacher's perceptions of trust in the principal?
3. Is there a relationship between the racial/ethnic and gender match between a teacher and a principal and the teacher's perceptions of trust in the principal? (Brezicha and Fuller, 2019, p. 27)

The researchers concluded that these relationships are the foundation of trust between the teachers and the principal (Brezicha & Fuller, 2019). They also found that race matters in establishing trust. The researchers did not, however, examine if the teachers chose to leave or stay based on race. But, when this study is viewed within the lenses of other studies that have been mentioned (Bailey et al., 2020; Denton et al., 2021; Ellison & Woods, 2020; Taylor & West, 2020), it is clear that race may play some role in a teachers decision to stay or leave a school. Moreover, gender racism may exist in schools and other organizations (Cyr et al., 2021). These researchers examined the experiences of a Black female principal in a suburban area and found that the Black female principal experienced aggressive and outward racism in relation to community members, parents, and teachers (Cyr et al., 2021).

Murakami et al. (2018) determined that the style of the administrator is greatly influenced by their experiences in school. These researchers examined Hispanic principals and how race and class influenced their work. They found that these individuals experienced racism and resistance from staff (Murakami et al., 2018). However, they did not go as far to make a claim about teachers leaving their positions. In both the Murakami study and the Cyr et al. studies, the administrators that left their positions rather than the teachers.

Nguyen (2020) found that differing races make an impact of teacher attrition. African American teachers experienced mistrust of their White principals particularly in regard to handling racial issues. The African American teachers reported that their principal was naive and did not fully address issues regarding race with the staff or parents. However, Nguyen found no relationship between gender and trust between

administration and teachers. The researcher also stopped short of reporting how teacher attrition was affected by the mistrust of African American teachers and their White administers; only that it did (Nguyen, 2020).

Institutional Factors

Title I schools are notoriously hard to staff. A school is designed as Title I when 40% or more of the student population is identified as low socioeconomic (Opfer, 2011; Tran & Smith, 2020) Title I is a designation that comes from the federal government, and more funds are provided to these schools to provide more resources for teachers. Schools that are Title I are typically located in the inner cities and have a high percentage of minority students, and in rural areas that are typically not as diverse (Opfer, 2011; Tran & Smith, 2020). These schools have higher rates of turnover and fewer applicants than non-Title I schools. Elyashiv and Navon (2021) concluded that teachers leaving the profession would make room for better teachers; however, these administrators were not at inner city or rural school districts.

Title I Schools

One strategy that has been suggested has been to focus on retaining teachers of color in the profession in order to staff inner city Title I schools (Achinstein et al., 2010; Brantlinger, 2020). Teachers of color are more likely to leave the profession than White teachers; however, teachers of color are less likely to leave inner city schools than White teachers, particularly when they are serving students of the same race as they are (Achinstein et al., 2010).

Brantlinger (2020) added that community teachers should be used to serving students in the inner city, but the best and the brightest outsiders are leaving after one

year. The researcher stated that no matter the race, if the teacher was high performing in college, they were more likely to leave Title I schools. The argument for community-based, grown-your-own teacher programs to address teacher attrition is that the people in the community are from the same place as the kids and have a vested interest in the success of the students in the community (Brantlinger, 2020). Finally, Berry (2004) surmised:

> Teachers will teach and stay in the hardest-to-staff schools if they are recruited from a larger pool of traditional and nontraditional candidates and if they are paid well. Furthermore, they will stay if they are sufficiently prepared to teach in these schools and if their working conditions include a supportive principal, opportunities for teacher leadership, influence in key decision making, more time to learn from colleagues, and the chance to work more closely with fewer numbers of students and their families. All of these factors make a difference. (p. 21)

Non-Title I Schools

One reason teachers leave Title I schools is the perceived incompetence of other teachers not being addressed by administration (Brantlinger, 2020; Elyashiv & Navon, 2021). Any type of grow-your-own, community-based program would need to sufficiently prepare teachers for instruction and professionalism (Brantlinger, 2020). These nontraditional candidates need to be compensated well and given the resources that are needed to do the job (Berry, 2004; Brantlinger, 2020; Elyashiv & Navon 2021). This strategy may not work for rural schools or suburban schools, according to Nguyen (2020), because the labor markets are different. Nguyen concluded that efforts should be

made to staff schools in rural areas instead of applying urban staffing strategies as a solution.

Classroom and Work Environment

Tran and Smith (2020) posited that there are several reasons teachers may choose to leave their jobs. For example:

> Teachers can turnover from schools involuntarily (e.g., terminated or laid off) or voluntarily (e.g., resignation or retirement). Even among those who voluntarily leave their schools, they can do so for a variety of reasons, including attrition, meaning they left the teaching profession entirely (i.e., the leavers) or migration, meaning they left their position to teach at another school. (p.86)

The reasons can vary, but the reason most teachers list is dissatisfaction with work conditions (Tran & Smith, 2020). This is characterized by low pay, noncollegial environment, large class sizes, and unsafe working conditions (Tran & Smith, 2020).

Elyashiv and Navon (2021) argued that salary was the single greatest factor that determined if teachers stayed or left the profession. Further, teachers who grew up in relatively wealthy families were more likely to leave the profession after a short time in the classroom. In addition, if teachers perceived that they had the resources in the classroom, they were also more likely to stay in the profession (Elyashiv & Navon, 2021). Support from colleges was also a big factor with regard to teacher attrition (Buchanan et al., 2013). When college instructors share their experiences and strategies with other teachers, it boosts morale and facilitates a nurturing culture (Shuls & Flores, 2020).

Support and targeted professional development were the solutions to teacher attrition posed by multiple studies in the literature (Denton et al., 2021; Elyashiv, 2019; Nguyen, 2020; Shuls & Flores, 2020). Many teachers felt isolated and detached from their peers (Denton et al., 2021; Shuls & Flores, 2020). Consequently, teacher induction programs needed to include a mentor (Denton et al., 2021; Elyashiv, 2019; Nguyen, 2020; Shuls & Flores, 2020).

Denton et al. (2021) suggested that teacher attrition has little to do with the environment and more to do with the individual when examining the shortage of math and science teachers in the U.S. and Canada. They recommended that more focus be put on developing more math and science teachers rather than concentrating energy on why teachers leave the profession. However, the researchers asserted that understanding why teachers leave the profession should be considered in preparation programs (Denton et al., 2021).

Classroom Discipline

The amount of student misbehavior encountered by the teacher in the classroom and how it is handled by administration may be a factor in teacher attrition. Classroom discipline is connected to the teacher's perception of school safety and whether it is a safe place to learn and work (Tran & Smith, 2020). Feeling safe satisfies a basic need in order to achieve growth (Maslow, 1954). The teacher may leave an environment that is perceived as unsafe. According to Sinclair et al. (2021) "Disruptive behavior problems among students in classrooms present a significant challenge for teachers and schools" (p. 1). Many middle school teachers struggle with implementing research-based classroom behavior management strategies, particularly teachers who are new to the

profession. Middle school students have their own specific challenges regarding behavior (Sinclair et al., 2021).

According to Madigan and Kim (2021), dealing with these behaviors could lead to teacher burnout. For example, if the teacher perceives that student misbehaver is being overlooked by administration, burnout could be the outcome, leading to teacher attrition. Cosequently, the researchers concluded, "Burnout is associated with numerous negative experiences and outcomes for teachers" (Madigan & Kim, 2021, p.4).

Class Sizes

The number of students teachers have in their classrooms on a daily basis during each instructional period may also contribute to teacher attrition. Title I schools tend to have fewer resources and higher student-to-teacher ratios compared to non-Title I schools (Brantlinger, 2020; Elyashiv & Navon, 2021). The higher the student teacher ratio, the greater the work load for each individual teacher. This means there is a greater number of assignments to grade and a greater number of students to manage per class (Brantlinger, 2020; Elyashiv & Navon, 2021).

Summary

In this chapter the literature related to teacher attrition was presented and organized by research questions that guided this study. The literature indicated that the following factors lead to teacher attrition: Mistrust of administration, lack of support from administration, low salary, Title I school, lack of resources, high expectations, lack of a mentor, nonspecific professional development, rural school, and attitude (Denton et al., 2021; Elyashiv, 2019; Nguyen, 2020; Shuls & Flores, 2020). Constant teacher attrition is detrimental to the educational continuity. More specifically, teacher attrition

"depletes institutional memory, diminishes trust within schools, can negatively influence school culture, and is costly and often detrimental to student achievement" (Tran & Smith, 2020, p. 86). Maslow (1954) and Herzberg et al.'s (1954) theories provided the basis for this study. Herzberg et al. (1954) claimed that factors at work can impact the happiness of an individual, and Maslow (1954) listed the factors beginning with the basic needs such as food and shelter and ending with self-actualization. Happy teachers will stay in their positions (Elyashiv, 2019). In the next chapter, the methods through which the research questions were answered have been delineated.

Much of teacher retention begins with defined and effective principal leadership (Elyashiv, 2019). Modan (2019) stated "You have to give them flexibility and training." Previous research noted that approximately one-third of exiting teachers noted lack of support from their school administrators as a reason for leaving. Teachers also cited that working conditions influenced by the principal included class size, climate, and autonomy in the classroom (Brown & Wynn, 2009). Teacher attrition also has an effect on underperforming students and heavy workloads of the teacher. Novice teachers are professionals who leave the profession at an alarming rate. Haynes (2014) indicated that, nationwide, approximately 13% of teachers transfer or give up the profession each year. Charter schools had the lowest rates of retention; the odds of retaining a teacher at a charter school were 41-46% lower than the odds of retaining a teacher at a traditional suburban school. Urban schools also had higher rates of turnover; the odds of retaining a teacher at an urban school were 12.9-15.8% lower than the odds of retaining a teacher at a suburban school. Schools in low socioeconomic areas have greater teacher attrition, and students that have depressed academic achievement are especially vulnerable to high

teacher turn-over. Students in Title I schools are less likely to participate in rigorous coursework due to inadequately prepared teachers and depressed academic achievement when compared with their peers at non-Title I schools (Burney & Beilke, 2008). Good news for education stakeholders to be cognizant of is that not all teacher attrition is related to teachers leaving the field; some were being promoted or obtaining education jobs outside of the classroom. Title I dollars are funneled into these schools for special programs; but, ultimately, any meaningful long-term changes will result from a more stable teaching staff (Jimenez-Castellanos, 2010).

This bottom-up approach, where teachers feel empowered to collaborate with one another, can lend itself to improved working conditions and, ultimately, lower teacher turnover rates (Modan, 2019). In Texas, the annual turnover rate of teachers is 16%, including a 40% attrition rate for teachers in their first three years, which costs the state approximately $329 million annually for recruitment and training. This amounts to at least $8,000 per candidate who leaves in the first several years of teaching (Benner, 2000). Specific characteristics of teachers, such as the subject they teach, and their educational background also predict retention rates. Teachers of specific subjects such as mathematics, science, and special education have been found to have lower retention levels (Modan, 2019). Additionally, Modan (2019) found that teaching outside of certified subject area increases the probability of the teacher leaving. Higher ability teachers are more likely to transfer and quit teaching (Modan, 2019). Feng (2005) addressed a positive school environment with clear systems and expectations for students and structured support for teachers naturally boost teacher retention especially novice teachers. The researcher's sole purpose for this study is to analyze if teachers' perception

of the leadership factors, campus factors, and classroom factors has any relationship to teacher attrition on middle school suburban campuses.

The leadership style of the principal may also contribute to teacher attrition (Nguyen, 2020). The different leadership styles asked about in this study are authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional. Murakami et al. (2018) claimed that the style of the administrator is greatly influenced by their experiences in school. These styles where chosen because they encompass the basic styles identified in the literature. A leadership style characterized by individual control over all decisions and little input from group members is known as authoritarian. Style in which the leaders have an attitude of trust and reliance on their employees is known as Laissez-faire (Swanson et al., 2020). According to James and Kitcharoen (2021), a transformational leader is "a leader who exhibits transformational characteristics with the components of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration who create a vision for their followers and encourage the followers to achieve the goal of the organization" (p. 31).Transformational leadership can inspire high-performance organizations because transformational leaders influence teachers by extending and raising the aims of followers to improve collaboration and organizational learning (Yulianeu et al., 2021).

Transactional leadership is defined as "exchanging of rewards for compliance, setting clear goals, and monitoring followers' performance" (Van Dijk et al., 2021, p. 635). Since transactional behavior is rooted in expecting teachers to comply with the principals' demands, it discourages teachers from going beyond expectations, destabilizing the status quo. Under such leadership behavior, followers' performances are

closely monitored based on rules and standards, blocking deviations that may lead to creativity in the classroom (Van Dijk et al., 2021). Frangieh and Rusu (2021) argued, "Transactional leadership style is described as a 'favor-for-favor' or a 'give and take' social interchange where managers rely on rewards or punishments in exchange for desirable or undesirable performances" (p. 244).

Shuls and Flores (2020) found that a supportive administration; a culture of trust, openness, and academic freedom; a personalized professional development program; an induction program which includes mentorship for new and beginning teachers; and a leadership training program contributed to an effective organization where teachers felt a sense of well-being. Mentorship is not only good for first year novice teachers, but it was effective for veteran teachers as well (Elyashiv, 2019). According to Brezicha and Fuller (2019), "Despite the importance of trust within schools, much of the research proceeds as if educators check their identities at the schoolhouse doors. This gap in the trust research fails to acknowledge that our racial and gendered identities shape our relationships and whom we trust" (p. 26).

Title I schools are notoriously hard to staff. A school is designed as Title I when 40% or more of the student population is identified as low socioeconomic (Opfer, 2011; Tran & Smith, 2020). Title I is a designation that comes from the federal government and more funds are provided to these schools to provide more resources for teachers. Schools that are Title I are typically located in the inner cities and have a high percentage of minority students, and they are in rural areas that are typically not as diverse (Opfer, 2011; Tran & Smith, 2020). One reason teachers leave Title I schools is the perceived incompetence of other teachers not being addressed by administration (Brantlinger, 2020;

Elyashiv & Navon, 2021). Tran and Smith (2020) posited that there are several reasons teachers may choose to leave their jobs. More specifically, they stated:

> Teachers can turnover from schools involuntarily (e.g., terminated or laid off) or voluntarily (e.g., resignation or retirement). Even among those who voluntarily leave their schools, they can do so for a variety of reasons, including attrition, meaning they left the teaching profession entirely (i.e., the leavers) or migration, meaning they left their position to teach at another school. (p. 86)

The reasons can vary, but the reason most teachers listed is dissatisfaction with work conditions (Tran & Smith, 2020). Elyashiv and Navon (2021) argued that salary is the single greatest factor that determined if teachers stayed or left the profession. Further, teachers who grew up in relatively wealthy families were more likely to leave the profession after a short time in the classroom (Elyashiv & Navon, 2021).

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship and predictability of principals' leadership factors, principal demographic factors, and institutional factors on the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition. Specifically, this study was concerned with the impact of principal leadership styles (transactional, transformational, Laissez-faire, and authoritarian) and other principal demographic factors (ethnicity, gender), and institutional factors (types of campus, class size, and classroom discipline) on the perception of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition.

This chapter was divided into the following 12 sections: (a) type of research design, (b) population and research setting, (c) sampling procedure, (d) instrumentation, (e) reliability of the instrument, (f) validity of the instrument, (g) pilot study, (h) data collection procedures, (i) identification of variables, (j) null hypotheses, (k) statistical analysis, and (l) evaluation of the statistical assumptions.

Type of Research Design

Predictive correlational design was employed in this study. This type of research framework allowed the researcher to examine the relationship and predictability between a dependent variable and multiple independent variables (Keith, 2019). Predictive correlational research can provide insights into complex relationships. This design has four benefits, including:

1. The design dentifies variables that are significent for the purpose of determining statistical and theoretical connections to the purpose of this study.
2. It reveals estimates of how variables are related.

3. It provides information as to indicate how well the empirical data are consistent with the hypothesized model.
4. It also explains the statistical significance of the independent variables on the dependent variable. (Keith, 2019)

The goal of predictive correlational design is to see what variables have statistical links to the outcome variable. Thus, the predictive correlational design was found to be most appropriate method of examining the predictable relationship between two or more predictor variables and a criterion variable.

Population and Research Setting

The target population for this study was middle school classroom teachers employed at a suburban school district during the 2020-2021 school year. A sample of 159 middle school teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. The target suburban school district was located in the southwest part of a major city. The district has more than 78,000 students and is one of the most diverse in the United States. The district's student population is comprised of 27.5% African American, 26% Hispanic, 14.8% White, 27% Asian, 4.5% other races. The students from economically disadvantaged homes are 42%. Under 11% of the students receive special education services and 17% are English language learners.

The district is competitively large with 82 campuses, which include 11 high schools, 15 middle schools, 51 elementary campuses and five specialty schools to address the academic and vocational interests of students. The district has 11,000 full-time employees and substitutes and is the largest employer in area. It received a B rating from the state education agency. The average class size per teacher was 15 students, and just

over 5,000 teachers are employed. The district is very competitive in regard to recruiting new teachers and pays a salary that is even higher than other areas' school districts. The average salary for teachers was $61,000 per year. Housing has grown dramatically in the district within the past 20 years as well. The county is number one in the United States in minority home ownership and has added five new schools in the past five years to keep pace with the rate of growth.

Administrators are fairly diverse in regard to race and gender. The student population is also diverse in regard to race and socioeconomic background with some schools being non-Title I schools and others being close to 90% low socioeconomic. The district is also diverse in regard to student achievement. Some schools lead the area in scores on standardized testing while others are average and still others perform lower on standardized testing. The district began the 2021-2022 school year with a teacher shortage like many other school districts in the U.S. Uncertified long-term substitutes were tapped to fill these vacancies as well as alternatively certified individuals with college degrees. Despite all this, the district has experienced relatively low turnover compared to other districts in the area.

Sampling Procedure

A cluster random sample was used for this study. Ten middle school campuses in a large suburban school district were randomly selected to participate from a list of middle school campuses in the district. To conduct the sampling procedure each middle school selected has an average size of 50 teachers. Each campus was assigned a number or sample code by the researcher. Once this process was done, the researcher employed a computerized random sampling procedure to select the campuses. The ten campuses

comprise a total of over 500 teacher participants. All the middle school teachers in the randomly selected middle schools were chosen to participate in the study. Finally, 159 of the 500 teachers responded to the investigative instrument.

Instrumentation

The teacher attrition survey was the instrument chosen by the researcher to collect the data. The survey was developed by Coleman (2017) and modified for the current study. Permission was granted by Coleman to use the instrument. Questions relating to the leadership style of the principal and principal's demographics was added to the survey.

Part One of the modified teacher attrition survey was in a Likert format. A Likert scale is a rating scale used to assess opinions, attitudes, or behaviors from individuals about a certain phenomenon. The five items on the teacher attrition scale were coded so that a low score (1) indicated their intention to possibly leave the teaching profession, whereas the higher number (4) indicated they would likely stay. The survey was on a 4-point Likert Scale. The participants were asked to respond to questions where they were asked to assign a numerical value ranging from 1 to 4. The following scale was used to rate each question: 4=strongly agree, 3= agree, 2= disagree, 1= strongly disagree. The responses were tabulated to obtain teacher mean scores. The higher the mean score, the more the participants agreed with the statement. The lower the mean score, the more the participants disagreed with the statement. The higher the total mean score for each item, the more likely the teachers were to stay. The lower the total mean score for each item, the less likely the teacher was the stay. Part Two consisted of multiple-choice questions to gather demographic information about the participants.

Validity of the Instrument

To establish validity of the teacher survey regarding attrition in the present study, content validity was conducted by the researcher. Content-related validity is defined as the degree to which the instrument represents the content standard being measured (Popham, 2010). Content validity was established in this study by having three professional educators who hold degrees on the doctoral level examine each individual question in the survey to determine if the questions related to the variables are present on the survey and are related to teacher attrition. All the experts agreed that the items on the survey measured teacher attrition.

Reliability of the Instrument

Popham (2010) defined *reliability* as the consistency with which an instrument measures whatever it is intended to measure. In the current study, internal consistency reliability was established. This type of reliability allowed the researcher to examine relationships between the items on the instrument as a whole. An alpha reliability of .735 was computed on the investigative instrument.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to ensure reliability and validity of the instrument. Ten teachers participated in the pilot study. The instrument selected was based on literature regarding teacher attrition and was used in the pilot study to compare an estimate of reliability. The field-tested instrument revealed an estimate of reliability of 0.712. Also, all comments regarding the items on the instrument were taken into consideration by the researcher. All necessary revisions and changes were implemented.

Data Collection

Upon written approval from the identified school district's Research and Accountability Department, the ten suburban middle school teacher sample populations were e-mailed a teacher consent form and the electronic survey. These campuses were randomly selected. The survey was entered into the electronic platform Survey Monkey and password protected for security measures. The survey was e-mailed to teachers' district e-mail addresses. The researcher obtained teachers' e-mail addresses from the districts Outlook electronic mail database. Teachers who were randomly selected were teaching in a full-time teaching capacity at one of the ten campuses, and they were e-mailed the survey. Each campus had a specific identification code to identify the respective campus. The survey consisted of two parts; one part contained a 4-Point Likert Scale format, and the second part that was provided to all full-time teachers related to principal demographics. A link was provided in the email from the researcher to each participant. A reminder email was sent out to each participant two weeks after distribution. The survey data was contained in the Survey Monkey database for retrieval. There were no names recorded on the survey to ensure anonymity. At the conclusion of the data collection, a detailed analysis summary was completed for review and the collected data was re-coded and input into a SPSS electronic data software package for analysis purposes. Results of the research were shared with district's Research and Accountability Department.

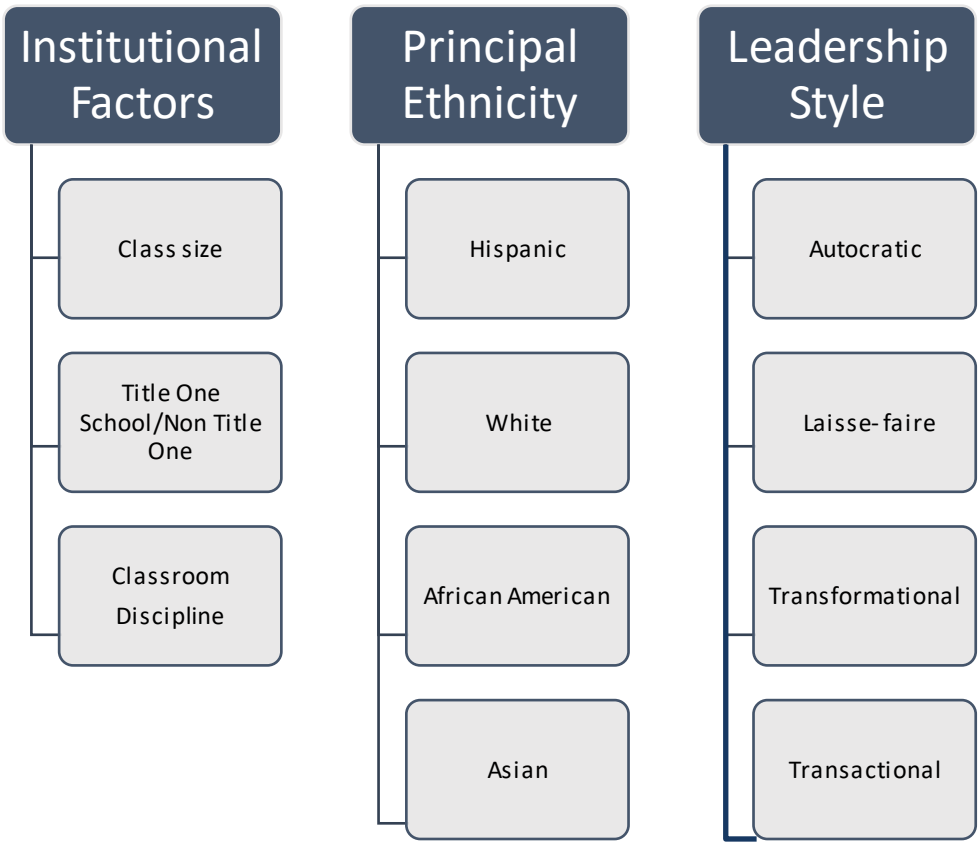
Identification of the Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study was teacher attrition. The independent variables for this study were divided into three sets. Institutional-related factors were the

first set, which was divided into class size, Title I school and non-Title I school, and classroom discipline. The second set of independent variables included the principals' demographic factors: ethnicity which was categorized into four groups (Hispanic, White, African American, Asian), and principal's gender (male or female). The third set of independent variables consisted of principals' leadership styles, which were categorized into authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional. These independent variables are identified in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Independent Variables



Note: This figure provides a visual of the independent variables applied to this study.

Null Hypothesis

The current study tested the following Null Hypotheses:

H_{O_1}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

H_{O_2}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

H_{O_3}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between institutional factors (classroom size, classroom discipline and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Statistical Analysis

The Standard Multiple Regression procedure was employed in the study. Standard multiple regression analysis is a statistical procedure to analyze quantitative data to determine if there is a relationship between variables (Pederson, 2017). In this procedure each of the independent variables are evaluated in terms of its power to predict teachers' perception regarding attrition. This approach would also reveal how much unique variance in the dependent variable is explained by each of the independent variables. The objective of OLS regression analysis is to use the independent variables whose values are known to predict the value of the single dependent value. All of the hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance or better.

Statistical Assumptions

Before analysis, certain assumptions were tested to ensure data integrity. Data was tested to see if it was linear. To get a sense for the linearity and homoscedasticity of the data, a plot of the standardized predicted values of the dependent variable was compared against the standardized residuals. Examining the histogram of the standardized residuals allowed the researcher to check for normally distributed errors. A Durbin-Watson test was run to check the residuals in the model for independence. Finally, a test was run to determine if two or more independent variables are highly correlated. If this was the case, the regression analysis would have trouble determining the unique contributions of each independent variable thereby making the *b* values less stable and reducing the predictive ability of the model (Pederson, 2017). Once all the assumptions were satisfied, a predictive correlational analysis was conducted, and tables were generated and explained in Chapter 4.

Linear Relationship

Linear regression requires the relationship between the independent and dependent variables to be linear. It is also important to check for outliers since linear regression is sensitive to outlier effects. The linearity assumption can best be tested with scatter plots. Only one outlier was identified.

Multivariate Normality

Secondly, the linear regression analysis requires all variables to be multivariate normal. This assumption can best be checked with a histogram or a P-P-Plot. Normality can be checked with a goodness of fit test. The data collected for this study lies in a

reasonable straight diagonal line. There were no major deviations form normality in the data that was collected.

Multicollinearity

Linear regression analysis assumes that there is little or no multicollinearity in the data. Multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables are too highly correlated with each other. All the independent variables show at least some relationship with the dependent variable (teacher attrition). The correlation between independent variables is within tolerance.

No Auto-Correlation

Linear regression analysis requires that there is little or no autocorrelation in the data. Autocorrelation occurs when the residuals are not independent from each other. The amount of autocorrelation for the data in the current study was within acceptable limits.

Homoscedasticity

The last assumption of the linear regression analysis is homoscedasticity. This is an assumption of equal or similar variances in the different groups of variables being compared. A scatter plot was constructed from the data collected in this study. The amount of variance was found to be in acceptable limits.

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Data

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship and predictability of principals' leadership factors, principals' demographic factors, and institutional factors on the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition. Answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Is there a significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
2. Is there a significant predictable relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?
3. Is there a significant relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and types of campus) and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition?

A sample of 159 middle school teachers was involved in the current investigation. The analysis section of this study was accomplished under four major areas. Section I presented the demographic characteristics of the middle school teachers who participated in this study. Section 2 provided the mean and standard deviation results associated with the independent and dependent variables. Section 3 dealt with the intercorrelation analyses with regard to the independent and dependent variables. The fourth and final section of this chapter tested the three null hypotheses formulated for the study using the standard multiple regression technique. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation and

Point Biserial procedures were utilized to analyze the data. All three null hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance or better.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

There were 159 middle school teachers who participated in the study. The middle school teachers were demographically analyzed by type of school, class size, and principals' leadership size.

Type of School

The variable *Type of School* was categorized into two groups. These were 93 or 58.5% of the middle school teachers who were employed at a Title I school. In contrast, there were 66 or 41.5% of the middle school teachers who were employed at a non-Title I school. See Table 1 for these findings.

Table 1

Frequency Distribution of Middle School Teachers by Type of School

Type of School	Number	Percent
Title I	93	58.5
Non-Title I	66	41.5
Total	159	100.0

Class Size

The variable class size was classified into three groups. There were 36 or 22.6% of middle school teachers whose class enrollment was 15 students or less, and 85 or

53.5% of them had a class enrollment of 16 to 25. Likewise, 38 or 23.9% of middle school teachers' class enrollment was 26 or more. See Table 2 for these findings.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution of Middle School Teachers by Type of School

Class Size	Number	Percent
15 or less	36	22.6
16 -25	85	53.5
26 and above	38	23.9
Total	159	100.0

Principals' Leadership Style

Regarding the variable principals' leadership style, there were 100 or 62.9% of middle school teachers who identified their principal leadership style as transformational, and 30 or 18.9% of them indicated their principal leadership style as Laissez-faire. On the other hand, 15 or 9.4% of the middle school teachers acknowledged their principal leadership style as transactional, and 14 or 8.8% of them expressed their principal leadership style as authoritarian. See Table 3 for these findings.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of Middle School Teachers by Principals' Leadership Style

Leadership Style	Number	Percent
Transformational	100	62.9
Laissez-faire	30	18.9
Transactional	15	9.4
Authoritarian	14	8.8
Total	159	100.0

Mean and Standard Deviation Results Pertaining to Independent and Dependent Variables

The mean and standard deviation (See Table 4) pertaining to the independent and dependent variables utilized in the multiple regression model were observed for this study. The mean perceived attrition score for middle school teachers was 14.09 (SD = 3.08). Based on the above mean result, the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition were favorable.

Furthermore, on the average, middle school teachers' class size was 21.38 (SD = 7.69). Also, regarding the degree of classroom discipline, middle school teachers as a group, perceived that discipline was an issue on their campus.

Additionally, the variables principals' gender, ethnicity, and leadership style were dummy coded for this study. Regarding the variable gender, male was coded "1" and female "0." The variable principals' ethnicity was recategorized into four variables for

this study. The variables Black ethnic was coded "1" for Black and "0" for Non-Black. The variable Anglo ethnic was coded "1" for White and "0" for non-White. The variable Hispanic ethnic was coded "1" for Hispanic and "0" for non-Hispanic. In addition, the variable Asian ethnic was coded "1" for Asian and "0" for non-Asian.

Finally, the variable principals' leadership style was recategorized into four distinct factors. The variable transformational was coded "1" for transformational and "0" for non-transformational. The variable transactional was coded "1" for transactional and "0" for non-transactional. The variable Laissez-faire was coded "1" for Laissez-faire and "0" for non-Laissez-faire. Also, the variable authoritarian was coded "1" for authoritarian and "0" for non-authoritarian.

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation Results Regarding Independent and Dependent Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Transformational	.616	.488
Laissez-Faire	.159	.392
Transactional	.094	.293
Authoritarian	.088	.284
Black Ethnic	.390	.489
Anglo Ethnic	.333	.472
Hispanic Ethnic	.214	.411
Asian Ethnic	.013	.112
Gender	.113	.318
Class Size	21.384	7.690
Discipline	5.805	1.516
Type of Campus	.585	.494
Attrition	14.088	3.078

Intercorrelations Results Regarding the Independent and Dependent Variables

Intercorrelations (See Table 5) were computed among the nine independent variables and the dependent variable associated with middle school teachers. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the Point Biserial Correlation Coefficients were

employed to assess the relationship among continuous and binary variables used in the study.

The intercorrelation results between leadership factors and perceptions toward attrition, revealed no statistically significant relationship between these variables. Likewise, the correlational analyses indicated that no significant relationship was found between principals' demographic factors and perceptions toward attrition among middle school teachers.

Moreover, a statistically significant relationship was found between the institutional factor of degree of classroom discipline and perceptions toward attrition. To be sure, a positive relationship was found to exist between discipline and middle school teachers' perceptions toward attrition.

Table 5

Intercorrelations Results Regarding Independent and Dependent Variables

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables Perceived Attrition
Transformational	.069
Laissez-Faire	-.040
Transactional	-.065
Authoritarian	-.031
African American	-.061
Anglo Ethnic	.045
Hispanic Ethnic	-.010
Asian Ethnic	-.003
Gender	-.075
Class Size	-.021
Discipline	.298***
Type of Campus	-.063

*** Significant at the .001 level

Testing of Null Hypotheses

H_{O_1}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Illustrated in Table 6 were the standard multiple regression analyses regarding the relationship between principals' leadership factors and the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition. The multiple regression model resulted in a multiple correlation coefficient R of .084. The four principals' leadership factors (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) combined were found to explain .7% (Adjusted = .1%) of the variance in perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

A statistically significant relationship was not found to exist between principals' leadership factors (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition ($F(93, 155) = .365$, $p > .05$). In addition, neither one of the four independent leadership variables was found to be an independent predictor of the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition. Therefore, Hypothesis One was not rejected.

Table 6

Standard Multiple Regression Results Regarding the Relationship Between Principals' Leadership Factors and Perceived Attrition

Model	B	SE	Beta	T	P
Constant	14.125	.774			
Transformational	.130	.835	.021	.156	.876
Laissez-Faire	-.292	.959	-.037	-.304	.761
Transactional	-.658	1.113	-.063	-.592	.555

Note: R = .084; R^2= .007; Adjusted R^2 = .001

F = .365; df = 3, 155; p=.778

*Authoritarian was the excluded reference/comparison group

H_{O_2}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

The Standard Multiple Regression procedure was calculated to assess the predictable relationship between the principals' demographic factors of gender, ethnicity, and the perceptions of middle school teachers. As revealed in Table 7, the multiple regression model yielded a multiple correlation R of .131. The principals' demographic factors (gender, African American, Anglo and Hispanic) collectively accounted for 1.7%

(Adjusted = .8) of the variance in the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

A significant linear relationship was not found to exist between principals' demographic factors (gender, African American, Anglo and Hispanic) and the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition ($F(4, 154) = .671$, $p > .05$). Neither one of the demographic factors was found to contribute significantly to middle school teachers toward attrition. Thus, null Hypothesis Two was not rejected.

Table 7

Standard Multiple Regression Results Regarding the Relationship Between Principals' Demographic Factors and Perceived Attrition

Model	B	SE	Beta	T	P
(Constant)	15.366	1.102			
Gender	-1.109	.847	-.115	-1.310	.192
African American	-1.403	1.136	-.223	-1.235	.219
Anglo	-.978	1.148	-.150	-.851	.396
Hispanic	-1.304	1.212	-.174	-1.075	.284

Note: R = .131; R^2= .017; Adjusted R^2 = .008

F = .671; df = 4, 154; p=.613

*Asian was the excluded reference/comparison group

H_{O_3}: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Reported in Table 8 were the Standard Multiple Regression findings concerning the predictable relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition. The Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model yielded a multiple correlation coefficient of $\underline{R} = .312$. The institutional factors of class size, classroom discipline and type of campus together accounted for 9.7% (adjusted = 8%) of the variance in the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition.

A statistically significant relationship was found to exist between the institutional factors class size, classroom discipline, and type of campus and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition ($F(3,155) = 5.567$, $p < .001$). When the variables class size and type of campus were controlled, classroom discipline was found to contribute significantly ($t, (155) = 3.988$, $p < .001$) to the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition. Consequently, Hypothesis Three was rejected.

Table 8

Standard Multiple Regression Results Regarding the Relationship Between Institutional Factors and Perceived Attrition

Model	B	SE	Beta	T	P
(Constant)	11.022	1.168			
Class size	-.037	.031	-.093	-1.184	.238
Discipline	-.656	.164	.323	3.988	.000***
Type of Campus	-.091	.492	.015	.1894	.854

Note: R = .312; R^2= .097; Adjusted R^2 = .080

F = 5.567; df = 3, 155; p=.001***

***Significant at the .001 level

Summary of Hypotheses Tested

Three null hypotheses were tested in this study to examine the relationship and predictability of principals' leadership styles, principals' demographic factors, and institutional factors on the perceived attrition scores of middle school teachers. One of the three null hypotheses was found to be significant.

Regarding Hypothesis One, a significant predictable relationship was not found between principals' leadership factors and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition. In addition, neither one of the leadership factors was found to be an independent predictor of the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition.

Additionally, with respect to Hypothesis Two, a significant predictable relationship was not found to exist between principals' demographic factors and the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition. Also, neither one of the demographic factors was found to be an independent predictor of the perception of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Finally, pertaining to Hypothesis Three, a statistically significant predictable relationship was found between the institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition. Specifically, the variable classroom discipline was found to be an independent predictor of the perceptions of middle school principals toward attrition.

Table 9

Summary of All Null Hypotheses Tested

Hypotheses	R	$\mathbf{R^2}$	F	df	Conclusion
$\mathbf{H_1}$	.084	.007	.365	3,155	Non-Significant
$\mathbf{H_{O_2}}$	.131	.017	.671	4,154	Non-Significant
$\mathbf{H_{O_3}}$	.312	.097	5.567	3,155	Significant

***Significant at the .001 level

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Findings, Discussion, Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles, principal demographic factors, intuitional factors, and the perceptions of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition. Specifically, this study was concerned with the predictability of principals' leadership styles (authoritarian, Laissez-faire, transformational, and transactional), principal demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and intuitional factors (classroom size, classroom discipline, and type of campus) on the perception of suburban middle school teachers regarding attrition.

A predictive correlational design is a research framework allowing the researcher to examine the relationship and predictability between a dependent variable and multiple independent variables. The results of the teacher attrition survey were analyzed using multiple regression statistical paradigm as a correlational framework. The target population for this study was 159 middle school classroom teachers employed in a suburban school district during the 2020-2021 school year.

The following null hypotheses were tested using regression analysis:

Ho_1: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' leadership styles (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Ho_2: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Ho_3: There is no statistically significant predictable relationship between institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and type of campus) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.

Findings

The following findings were observed in this study:

1. A significant linear relationship was not found to exist between principals' demographic factors (gender and ethnicity) and the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition.
2. The variables gender and ethnicity did not produce a significant impact on the perceptions of middle school teachers towards attrition.
3. A statistically significant relationship was not found to exist between principals' leadership factors (transformational, Laissez-faire, transactional, and authoritarian) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.
4. Neither one of the principal leadership factors produced a significant independent impact on the perception of middle school teachers towards attrition.
5. A statistically significant predictable relationship was found between the institutional factors (class size, classroom discipline, and types of schools) and the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding attrition.
6. The variable classroom discipline was an independent predictor of the perceptions of middle school teachers towards attrition.

Discussion

The variables with the greatest significance were institutional factors such as class size, type of campus, and classroom discipline. However, the demographics of the administration was not a significant variable. This finding is confirmed by Brantlinger (2020) and Elyashiv and Navon (2021), who found that one reason teachers leave Title I schools is the perceived incompetence of other teachers not being addressed by administration. Tran and Smith (2020) further confirmed the importance of institutional factors citing low pay, noncollegial environment, large class sizes, and unsafe working conditions as reasons for teacher attrition. Teachers perceiving that the working conditions are unsafe may be the reason classroom discipline was a significant factor in predicting teacher attrition.

Teacher attrition affects all schools, but more critically Title I Schools (Opfer, 2011). Many post-hire reasons for attrition have been discovered, however less research has looked into predicting which teachers will stay, move, and leave based on the type of teacher preparation model through which they were trained (Hamann et al., 2010). Brantlinger (2020) argued that teachers will teach and stay in the hardest-to-staff schools if they are recruited from a larger pool of traditional and nontraditional candidates and if they are paid well. Theobald (1990) documented possible predictors of attrition: teacher/student ratio, involvement in decision-making, support from administration, teaching level, student characteristics, and school location. The current study found the results of the Brantlinger (2020), Hamann et al. (2010), and Theobald (1990) studies to be partially true within the context the study was conducted. Discipline was a moderately significant factor with class size close to being significant. However, other factors such as

decision making (leadership style) and being Title I was not significant. This may be because of the current climate in which schools operate.

The survey was written at a time when a global pandemic was not on the minds of researchers. It was found that only one of the hypotheses tested in this study was significant. Transformational leadership can inspire high-performance organizations because transformational leaders influence teachers by extending and raising the aims of followers to improve collaboration and organizational learning (Yulianeu et al., 2021). However, this study found transformational leadership had no positive or negative effect with regard to teacher attrition. The same is true for authoritarian leadership.

Shuls and Flores (2020) found that a supportive administration that includes a culture of trust, openness, and academic freedom; a personalized professional development program; an induction program which includes mentorship for new and beginning teachers; and a leadership training program contributed to an effective organization where teachers felt a sense of well-being. In relationship to the styles of leadership, these traits describe a transformational leader (James & Kitcharoen, 2021). A leader that is perceived as Laissez-faire is hands off and would appear to be non-supportive in many cases (Swanson et al., 2020). But, Laissez-faire leadership is thought to foster a culture of openness and academic freedom (Swanson et al., 2020). Authoritarian leadership is more directive and does little to foster a culture of trust among teachers (Budiawan et al., 2021). Transactional leadership was considered to the opposite of transformational leadership. However, leadership style was found not to be significant.

As well, the demographics of the administration (i.e., male or female, Black, White, Hispanic, older or younger etc.) was found not to contribute to teacher attrition, which is in contrast to a study conducted by Brezicha and Fuller (2019). According to Brezicha and Fuller, relationships are the foundation of trust between the teachers and the principal. The researchers found that race matters in establishing trust (Brezicha and Fuller, 2019). Gender was not a significant factor in the current study; however, gender bias may exist in schools and other organizations (Cyr et al., 2021). These researchers examined the experiences of a Black female principal in a suburban area. They found that the Black female principals experienced aggressive and outward racism in relation to community members, parents, and teachers (Cyr et al., 2021). These factors were found to be significant in prior studies, but they were not significant in the current study.

Implications

The following implications were drawn from the findings of this study.

1. Institutional factors had a significant impact on teacher attrition. The implications of this are that schools who level or balance classes and ensure that the student-to-teacher ratio is as small as possible will experience less turnover. Administrators who address classroom discipline and ensure a safe environment for teachers to work in will also experience less turnover. This may also impact Title I campuses by ensuring that teachers are not overworked in an unsafe environment. This implication can be view through the lends of Maslow (1954). Maslow believed that before a human could go to the next level of need, they must first satisfy the needs in the lower levels. If they failed to satisfy the lower-level needs, they would just remain at that

particular level and fail to reach the highest level, which was self-actualization. Educational policy makers will need to revisit the work of Maslow in order to inform them on ways that intuitional factors can be changed to mitigate the impact teacher attrition has on students and the community.

2. Demographic factors had little significance on teacher attrition. The implications of this finding are that few teachers are resigning because of the race of their principal. A diverse teaching force can be effectively overseen by a diverse core of principals. The implication of little significance in the race of the principal is diversity in leadership is not an impediment to school effectiveness in the context in which this study was conducted.
3. Leadership styles had little to no significance on teacher attrition. From this finding, it is apparent that the leadership styles of principals is of little concern to the teaching force. There are benefits and drawbacks of every leadership style. One implication of this finding is local education agencies and human resources specialists should create a leadership profile for principals and match them with teachers who thrive under a particular style.
4. The final implication of the finding in the current study are for the selection of leadership and the focus on support from human resources. School leaders should become more diverse, not just in race, but in gender and style of leadership. Individual teachers need support from a campus mentor and from administration. Administration should support the teacher in matters of

discipline and class size. Mitigating these factors will lower the rate of teacher attrition.

Recommendations for Further Study

A list of recommendations for future research are listed below:

1. It is recommended that the current study be applied to multiple school districts over a larger area. More schools and more participants would be beneficial to fully understanding the problem of teacher attrition going forward.
2. It is recommended that this study be replicated in a different area of the United States or other countries internationally.
3. It is recommended that this study be replicated in a high school and elementary school to fully understand the problem of teacher attrition K-12.
4. It is recommended that this study be replicated in a charter school to find out how the environment of a charter school impacts teacher attrition.
5. A mixed-method study would give a more developed picture of why teachers choose to leave. This would allow themes to be identified between chosen participants and trends in the data collected in the quantitative data could be better understood.
6. Finally, the survey should be modified to include the factors that reflect the effects of the pandemic and safety issues. Factors raised by the pandemic such and the recession and affordable health care should be included. Questions related to school safety should be included in light of school shootings that occurred after the pandemic as well.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached as a result of the analysis of data for this study. A multiple regression model was developed to predict middle school teachers' perceptions regarding attrition. Leadership factors had no predictive power regarding the perceptions of middle school teachers toward attrition. Factors not included were demographic factors such as gender and ethnicity of the principals. It appeared that institutional factors did have some predictive power regarding middle school teachers' perception towards attrition. When one point increased in classroom discipline relating to the perception of middle school teachers regarding attrition decreased .656 points indicating there was some significance.

APPENDIX A

Modified Coleman Teacher Attrition Survey

The purpose of this survey is to examine public school educators' perceptions of variables studying correlation to teacher attrition issues with implications for retention. Your contribution to this study will provide invaluable beneficial information to school leaders. Your identity as a participant will remain anonymous.

Directions: Answer the following questions by selecting the response that best answers the question.

Leadership Styles

1. My administrator encourages and promotes creativity with instructional strategies to be used with students in my class (Transformational).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

2. My administrator has created systems and structure on our campus that teachers must follow (Transactional).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

3. I feel that my administrator doesn't concern him/herself with their subordinates opinions relating to things on campus (Authoritarian).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

4. My principal encourages risk taking and thinking outside of the box to get the job done (Transformational).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

5. The administrative team is very motivating and encouraging when conducting observations and providing feedback (Transformational).

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

6. My principal allows all employees the autonomy to make decisions and delegates all task to the employee (Laissez-Faire).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

7. My principal creates a vision that makes others want to follow and has a personality that is contagious (Transformational).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

8. I am only acknowledged when I do something good or bad (Transactional)

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

9. My administrator's disposition is intimidating during observations and evaluations (Authoritarian).

   a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

Classroom Factors

10. Classroom discipline is a challenge and makes it hard to teach most days.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

11. The level of discipline issues in this school interferes with the effectiveness of my teaching.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

12. My regular day-to-day classroom period attendance size is ideal for teaching.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

13. I am effective in the content area I requested to teach when applying for my position.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

Campus factors

14. I often feel tired and burnt out from the workload of being a teacher.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

15. My administrator consistently implements school rules for student conduct.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

16. Classes in my school are challenging because of behavior.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

17. My school has cultivated a positive environment to teach.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

18. Teachers who are in my school work collaboratively to assure student success.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

19. My campus has adequate resources for me to complete my teaching assignment (i.e. paper, computer, technology).

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

20. The school has a safe and secure environment for students to learn and teachers to teach.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

21. The school is kept clean, and repairs are done in a timely manner.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

Teacher Attrition

22. I often contemplate staying home to avoid coming to work.

    a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

23. I seek other positions outside of teaching.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

24. The stress associated with teaching at this school is not worth it.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

25. Working at this school gives me a sense of self satisfaction.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

26. I like the way this school is operated.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

27. I feel there is more work at a Title I school versus a non-Title I school.

a. Strongly Agree b. Agree c. Disagree d. Strongly Disagree

Principal Leadership Demographic

33. Which one describes your principal's leadership style?

a.Transactional b. Transformational c. Laissez-Faire d. Authoritarian

34. My principal's gender is?

a. Male b. Female

35. My principal's age group?

a. 25-39 b. 40-52 c. 53-65

36. Principal's ethnicity

a. White b. African American c. Hispanic d. Asian e. Other

Teacher Classroom Demographics

37. I typically write ___ discipline referrals in a year?

a. 1-2 b. 3-5 c. 6-10 d. 11 or more

38. My average class size number of students?

a. 25-30 b. 24-19 c. 28-12 d. 11 or less

APPENDIX B

Research Instrument Permission Letter

Research Instrument Permission Letter

I, Dr. Shawonna Coleman, the creator and owner of the Teacher Attrition survey instrument provided to Mr. Land grants full permission for usage of my research instrument for the completion of his dissertation in the Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Administration in the areas of Educational Administration (K-12). I am granting permission for the usage of this instrument within his study, TEACHER PERCEPTION OF LEADERSHIP FACTORS, CAMPUS RELATED FACTORS, AND CLASSROOM FACTORS REGARDING TEACHER ATTRITION ON SUBURBAN MIDDLE SCHOOL CAMPUSES, supervised by Interim- Dean of the College of Education and Professor Dr. Bernell Peltier-Glaze.

Mr. Land has permission to use the provided copies, and supplemental material that will help him administer the test and analyze the results; for example, (1) the test questionnaire, (2) the standard instructions for administering the test, and (3) scoring procedures.

In addition to using the instrument, he has permission to use and reproduce it in his dissertation appendix under the following conditions:

- Usage of the attrition questionnaire only for his research study and will not sell or use it for any other purposes
- Inclusion of a statement of attribution and copyright on all copies of the instrument under the name of Shawonna S. Coleman, Ed.D.
- Provide a copy of the completed research study upon completion of the study and/or provide a hyperlink to the final manuscript

Warm regards,

Shawonna S. Coleman

Shawonna S. Coleman, Ed.D.

1

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