

A Study Examining the Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on the
Factors of Teaching Efficacy, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment
as Perceived by Special Education Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine whether transformational leadership behaviors were significantly related to the variables of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment as perceived by special education teachers. One hundred twenty-one special education teachers from region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia completed surveys for this study. Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that administrative support was the transformational leadership behavior most frequently recognized by participants of this study. Pearson correlation analysis indicated that administrative support was significantly related to the factors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. However, administrative support was not significantly related to teachers' sense of teaching efficacy. Teaching efficacy did share a significant relationship with teachers' job satisfaction. This finding suggests that the higher teachers report their perceived their sense of teaching efficacy, the higher they report their level of job satisfaction. The highest correlation in this study was between the factors of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These findings suggest that as special education teachers' perceptions of administrative support increases, so do their levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment; thereby increasing the likelihood that special education teachers will remain in their current teaching positions.

DEDICATION

Although the completion of this dissertation moves me further into the journey of my life, I realize I could not have come this far without the love, support and encouragement of my family. It is with my sincerest appreciation and gratitude that I dedicate this dissertation to my family. First, to my husband Cecil, completion of this program and dissertation would not have happened without your sacrifices, continual encouragement, patience and understanding. I know you have spent many hours alone and have perfected your “domestic engineering skills” in order for me to complete this dissertation. It was your encouragement that I not settle for less than earning this degree. Your willingness to support me along the way and stand by my side made this accomplishment possible for me. For this, I am eternally grateful. To my parents, you instilled in me the importance of persistence and never giving up until I accomplish each and every goal I set for myself. The values you taught me, your continual encouragement and your emotional support gave me the inner strength to complete this dissertation. I can never thank you enough for being there for me. Finally to my sons, stepdaughter and grandchildren, the demands of completing this dissertation and program have at times required me to focus my attention and time away from you, but your understanding and encouragement has been unwavering. Your love, support, and abilities to interject humor into otherwise stressful situations have inspired me to go on when even I felt like giving up.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	4
SIGNIFICANCE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY	5
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	6
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	8
DEFINITION OF TERMS	9
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	10
DELIMITATIONS	10
SUMMARY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY	11
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	13
INTRODUCTION	13
LEADERSHIP AS A CONCEPT	13
Historical Evlvement of Leadership	14
Transformational Leadership	16
Individual consideration.....	16
Intellectual stimulation.....	16
Inspirational motivation.....	17
Idealized influence.....	17
Transformational Leadership in an Educational Context	17
Identifying and articulating a vision.	18
Fostering the acceptance of group goals.....	18
Providing individualized support.....	18
Intellectual stimulation.....	18
Providing an appropriate model.....	19
High-performance expectations.....	19
Strengthens school culture.....	19
Builds collaborative structures.....	19
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND SELF-EFFICACY	19
What is Self-Efficacy?	19
Self-Efficacy in an Educational Framework.....	20
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND JOB SATISFACTION.....	23
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT	26
Transformational Leadership and Commitment in Education.....	28

SUMMARY	30
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY	31
INTRODUCTION	31
SETTING AND SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS	31
INSTRUMENTATION	31
Development of the Special Education Survey	32
Section 1: Basic demographic data	32
Section 2: Transformational leadership	32
Section 3: Teaching efficacy	34
Section 4: Organizational commitment	35
Section 5: Job satisfaction	36
Additional Questions	36
Reliability of Survey Instrument	36
Validity of the Survey Instrument	37
Content validity	37
Construct validity	37
DATA COLLECTION	38
DATA ANALYSIS	39
SUMMARY	40
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS	41
SCHOOL DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	41
DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES	41
PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS	43
DATA ANALYSIS	46
Confirmatory Factor Analysis	47
Computing the Variables	49
ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	50
Correlation Analysis	50
Research Question One	51
Research Question Two	51
Research Question Three	52
Research Question Four	52
Research Question Five	52
Research Question Six	53
ADDITIONAL FINDINGS	53
SUMMARY	56
CHAPTER V SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	57
INTRODUCTION	57
SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	57
Demographic Findings	59
Confirmatory Factor Analysis	62
Findings	63
Research Question One	64
Findings	64

Research Question Two	64
Findings.....	65
Research Question Three	65
Findings.....	65
Research Question Four.....	66
Findings.....	66
Research Question Five	66
Findings.....	66
Research Question Six	67
Findings.....	67
Additional Findings	67
IMPLICATIONS FOR STUDY	68
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	70
REFERENCES.....	73
APPENDIX A SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY	80
APPENDIX B REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO USE NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE.....	85
APPENDIX C PERMISSION TO USE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE	86
APPENDIX D THE NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SURVEY	87
APPENDIX E REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO USE TEACHER EFFICACY SCALE- SHORT FORM	91
APPENDIX F PERMISSION GRANTED TO USE TEACHER EFFICACY SCALE- SHORT FORM	92
APPENDIX G TEACHERS' EFFICACY SCALE – SHORT FORM	93
APPENDIX H LICENSE AGREEMENT FOR TCM	94
APPENDIX I IRB APPROVAL	99
APPENDIX J LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT	100
APPENDIX K INFORMED CONSENT	101
APPENDIX L LETTER TO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS	105

LIST OF TABLES

**TABLE 1 SECTION 2 OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY—
TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS..... 33**

**TABLE 2 SECTION 3: TEACHING EFFICACY SURVEY ITEMS FROM THE SPECIAL
EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY 34**

**TABLE 3 SECTION 4: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ITEMS FROM THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY..... 36**

**TABLE 4 PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS, NUMBER OF SURVEYS MAILED,
COMPLETED SURVEYS RECEIVED, PERCENTAGE 42**

**TABLE 5 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS: GENDER, AGE,
TOTAL NUMBER YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE, TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS
EXPERIENCE TEACHING SPECIAL EDUCATION, TEACHING LEVEL ASSIGNMENT,
CURRENT LICENSURE, HIGHEST EARNED DEGREE, CURRENT SALARY RANGE,
AND PRIMARY ADMINISTRATOR WHO INFLUENCES CURRENT TEACHING
POSITION..... 44**

**TABLE 6 SCALE CONSTRUCTS, EIGENVALUES AND PERCENTAGE OF VARIANCE
..... 48**

TABLE 7 FINAL SCALE CONSTRUCTS, ITEMS AND RELIABILITIES 50

**TABLE 8 PEARSON CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS, LEVELS OF SIGNIFICANCE,
AND PEARSON R² VALUE 53**

**TABLE 9 REASONS SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS STATED THEY WERE
LEAVING OR CONSIDERING LEAVING THEIR CURRENT TEACHING POSITIONS . 55**

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1. ... CONCEPTUAL REPRESENTATION OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDY (HORN-TURPIN, 2008)8

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Special education teacher shortages have plagued the field of special education since the establishment of the Education for All Handicapped Children's Act in 1975 (Brownell, Sindelar, Bishop, Langley, & Seo, 2002). Characterized as severe and chronic, these shortages are widespread and affect school districts nationwide (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). This shortage of special education teachers creates vacancies that are often left unfilled or filled by uncertified personnel, negatively affecting the delivery of special education programming to students with disabilities (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004). Consequently, the student's free appropriate public education (FAPE) has been compromised, making their educational experiences less meaningful and beneficial. Darling-Hammond and Sclan (1996) state the negative consequences for students with disabilities include inadequate educational experiences, reduced student achievement, and insufficient competence of graduates in the workplace.

For decades, the calls for educational reform and the need to reduce teacher attrition rates have been the impetus for research. Much of this research has been dedicated to the identification of factors that influence teachers' career decisions. Through these research efforts, scholars have identified various variables that contribute to or significantly influence teachers' career decisions. Among these variables, administrative behaviors and leadership practices have been frequently and consistently linked to employee turnover in both general and special education. Lashley and Boscardin (2003) extensively reviewed literature regarding administrators' roles in supporting and developing a special education work force. They concluded that "administrative support is critical to retaining special educators and improving their abilities to have a positive effect on outcomes for students with disabilities" (p. 15). Adding further support to Lashley and Boscardin, Billingsley (2004) concluded that both building level and central office administrators affect teacher retention. Through their support and leadership behaviors, principals are associated with fewer role problems, greater job satisfaction and commitment, and less stress among special educators. Central office administrators affect teacher retention through local policies, regulating special education law, and in determining how special education services are implemented in the district.

Boe, Barkanic and Leow (1999) found that teachers who stay in their current teaching positions are almost four times more likely to strongly perceive administrators' behavior as supportive and encouraging than those who leave. Miller, Brownwell and Smith (1999) concluded that teachers' perceived administrative support was significantly related to attrition. Billingsley and Cross (1992) found that teachers who report higher levels of administrative or principal support are more likely to be less stressed, more satisfied and committed to their jobs. Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff and Harniss (2001), completed a study that provided a better understanding of how administrative support influenced teachers' intent to leave through other variables, such as job satisfaction, stress, and commitment.

Clearly, these findings support the notion that administrative support is either directly or indirectly related to teachers' increased job satisfaction, lower levels of stress, and increased levels of commitment to their jobs or profession. However, defining administrative or principal support is difficult because it is a broad construct that has many dimensions (Billingsley, 2002). In order to measure the effects of principal support on factors affecting special education teachers' career decisions, Littrell, Billingsley and Cross (1994), provided a theoretical framework of principal support. These researchers' model of support proposes four dimensions of principal support: (1) Emotional Support, (2) Instrumental Support, (3) Informational Support, and (4) Appraisal Support.

According to Littrell, et al. (1994), principals who are deemed emotionally supportive show their teachers they are esteemed and trusted professionals, show appreciation, take an interest in teachers' work, maintain open communication, and consider their teachers' ideas. Instrumental support is shown when principals ensure teachers are provided necessary materials, space, and resources, help teachers with work-related tasks, and ensure adequate time to teaching and nonteaching duties. Principals who provide informational support provide teachers with useful information they can use to improve classroom practices, such as allowing them to attend professional development workshops and providing suggestions to improve instructional techniques and classroom management skills. Principals are considered to provide appraisal support when they provide teachers with frequent and constructive feedback about their work, information about clear effective teaching and guidance regarding job responsibilities.

These landmark studies demonstrate the importance of effective administrative leadership for employer-employee relationships, the retention of teachers, and the successful functioning

and overall success of the working and school environment. Administrators play critical roles in “cultivating and keeping special educators” (Billingsley, 2005 p. 3) thus, making them the most influential person in their school (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Supporting this notion, a 1977 U.S. Senate Committee Report on Equal Educational Opportunity (U.S. Congress, 1970) identified the principal as the single most influential person in a school by stating:

In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school. He or she is the person responsible for all activities that occur in and around the school building. It is the principal’s leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for teaching, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers, and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. The principal is the main link between the community and the school, and the way he or she performs in this capacity largely determines the attitudes of parents and students about the school. If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place, and if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching, if students are performing to the best of their ability, one can almost always point to the principal’s leadership as the key to success. (p. 56)

Given the perceived importance of leadership and the central role administrators play in the effectiveness of their schools, it is not surprising that researchers in the field have dedicated themselves to investigating various leadership theories and the theoretical basis on which educational leaders base their leadership style and practices. Many of these theories have been influential in guiding school leaders (Marzano, et al., 2005); however, *transformational leadership* is the favored style of leadership because it is assumed to be a leadership practice that produces results beyond expectations (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). According to Leithwood (1994), transformational forms of leadership have the potential for building high levels of commitment and fostering growth in school staffs.

Some have suggested that transformational leaders tend to have more committed and satisfied followers (Bass and Riggo, 2006). They have the ability to motivate followers to exceed expected or intended performance by setting more challenging expectations, empowering their followers, and paying attention to their individual needs and personal development. Through transformational leadership practices, leaders assist followers to develop their own leadership

potential by using leadership behaviors such as coaching, mentoring, challenge, and support. Thus, transformational leaders have the capability to inspire followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization, challenge them to be innovative problem solvers, and help followers to develop leadership capacities (Bass, 1985; & Bass & Riggo, 2006).

The study of transformational leadership in the context of school leadership is relatively new. Building upon the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1994), Kenneth Leithwood (1994) developed a transformational model of school leadership, which will be discussed more in depth in Chapter II. He states that transformational leadership skills are necessary skills for principals if they are to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Recent studies completed by various scholars in the field have indicated that administrators who demonstrate a transformational leadership style have teaching staffs with increased job satisfaction, a greater sense of teaching efficacy, demonstrate higher levels of organizational commitment, and have less staff turnover (Griffith, 2004; Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2002; & Ross & Gray, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

There is a continuing severe and chronic shortage of special educators in the United States (McLeskey et al., 2004). When compared to general education teachers, research has shown that special education teachers are at higher risk for attrition and choose to leave the field of special education at higher rates than do their general education colleagues (Boe, Bobbitt & Cook, 1997). Stempien and Loeb (2002) report that retention rates for special education teachers (89%) after the first year of teaching is significantly lower when compared to general education teachers (94%). Billingsley (1993) states that early career special education teachers with one to five years of teaching experience are at higher risk for attrition. Researchers (Dee, Henkin & Singleton, 2006; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; & Singer, 1992) indicate that nearly half of all new teachers leave within their first five years. Billingsley (2004) states, “many special education teachers do not survive the path from hopeful beginner to a highly qualified, experienced teacher” (p. 371).

A vast amount of research examining reasons for the special education teacher shortage has been conducted. Through these studies, researchers have shown that special education teachers abandon careers and their classrooms for a variety of reasons; however, administrative behaviors and leadership practices are frequently and consistently cited as being significantly

related to the career decisions of teachers' who leave the field. According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003), 29% of new teachers who indicate they are leaving the field attribute their decision to leave to job dissatisfaction, and approximately 26% of this 29% cited the lack of perceived administrative support as being the cause for their job dissatisfaction. Moreover, studies conducted among special educators have shown the amount of perceived administrative support available to special education teachers at the building and district levels is a strong indicator of teachers' commitment to teaching and their decision to remain in the field (Billingsley, 2002; Boe et al., 1999, Gersten, et al., 2001; Miller et al., 1999).

An extant body of empirical evidence exists that shows various relationships between administrative leadership behaviors to special education teachers' career decisions. In light of these large body of research, a study further examining teachers' the relationship between special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors and the factors of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment is warranted. Studies have shown these factors are positively influenced by leaders who demonstrate a transformational leadership style and are also correlated to teachers' decisions to leave or stay in the field. Information gained from this study will be useful to administrators in their attempts at reducing attrition rates in special education and the creation of a stable teaching force. Moreover, this study's results will be useful to university training and principal preparation programs as they develop novice administrators.

Significance and Purpose of the Study

The manner in which teachers perceive their leader's administrative style and behaviors greatly influences their psychological state and attitude toward their job. As such, it is important to study and identify, through empirical research, those leadership behaviors perceived by teachers as being essential for positively influencing their psychological states and attitudes. The purpose of this study was to add to current research data examining special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors as they relate to their sense of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Since Leithwood's (1994) introduction of transformational leadership theory into the context of school leadership, studies have been conducted that examine the relationship of this theoretical approach to leadership to factors such as job satisfaction, self-efficacy, organizational commitment, teacher attitudes, and student performance in various geographical regions such as

Canada, Hong Kong, Netherlands, Singapore, and Tanzania (Geijsel, Slegers, Leithwood & Jantzi, 2003; Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006; Ross & Gray, 2006; Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2002). However, no research studies specific to the field of special education were located during the literature review for this study.

Given the increase in special education teacher attrition rates, and the fact that administrative leadership practices are often cited as significant reasons contributing to teachers' decisions to leave the field, findings from this study will be useful in assisting administrators to develop and implement leadership practices that are conducive to increasing the likelihood of teachers staying in the field of special education. In addition, information gained from this study will be beneficial to the university community to incorporate into their administrative training programs for future school leaders. Developing school administrators and providing them with a knowledge base of administrative leadership skills that are most desired by teaching staffs will equip newly trained administrators with skills and leadership qualities they can employ into their leadership roles that will enable them to become more effective school leaders. As a result, school leaders, through their leadership practices, will be able to create more stable, satisfied, and committed teaching staffs.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was developed from an in depth review of literature examining the theoretical basis of transformational leadership theory as well as its involvement into the public education sector. Transformational leadership theory draws its strength in placing a greater value on the perceived needs of the follower, not the leader; thereby differing greatly from previous leadership theories. Furthermore, it places a high moral standing on the leader, and expects him or her to encourage followers to think for themselves and for all to work collaboratively. Through this innovative and collaborative process, followers theoretically develop a greater sense of self-efficacy; experience greater job satisfaction and have increased levels organizational commitment. These factors being present, employees are more likely to remain in their current jobs, thereby, decreasing staff turnover rates.

Within the context of education, transformational school leaders play critical roles in helping teachers develop an increased sense of teaching efficacy by helping them to understand and believe in their capacity to foster change as an individual as well as a collective group (DuFour & Berkey, 1995). Teachers who experience a greater sense of teaching efficacy are

more confident in their teaching abilities, persistent when learning is difficult, and are more willing to try new strategies in attempts to reach students who have more difficulty learning (Ross & Gray, 2006). As teachers begin to feel they make meaningful differences, they feel successful and empowered. Teachers who feel capable and confident in their teaching abilities experience increased job satisfaction and commitment (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003).

The confluence of transformational leadership behaviors on teachers' efficacy, and job satisfaction holds promise of developing a more satisfied and committed teaching staff. Research on the direct and indirect influence of these constructs will provide invaluable information to school leaders and those aspiring to become school leaders. Understanding leadership behaviors that are conducive to increasing teacher efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment will provide opportunities for school leaders to aid in the reduction of special education teacher attrition rates. Thus, the result will be a more stable, qualified and committed teaching work force.

The theoretical framework of this study is embedded in the transformational school leadership paradigm theory as conceptualized by Leithwood (1994). Based upon this model, this study sought to examine special education teachers' perceived relationships of transformational leadership behaviors to teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of special educators employed in the public school districts in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The hypothesis guiding this study is that special education teachers who perceive their school administrators' behavior and leadership style as transformational possess increased sense of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. As a result, these teachers are more likely to stay in the field of special education. A diagram of this framework is illustrated in a conceptual representation in Figure 1. This framework will guide an in depth review of literature to be presented in Chapter II.

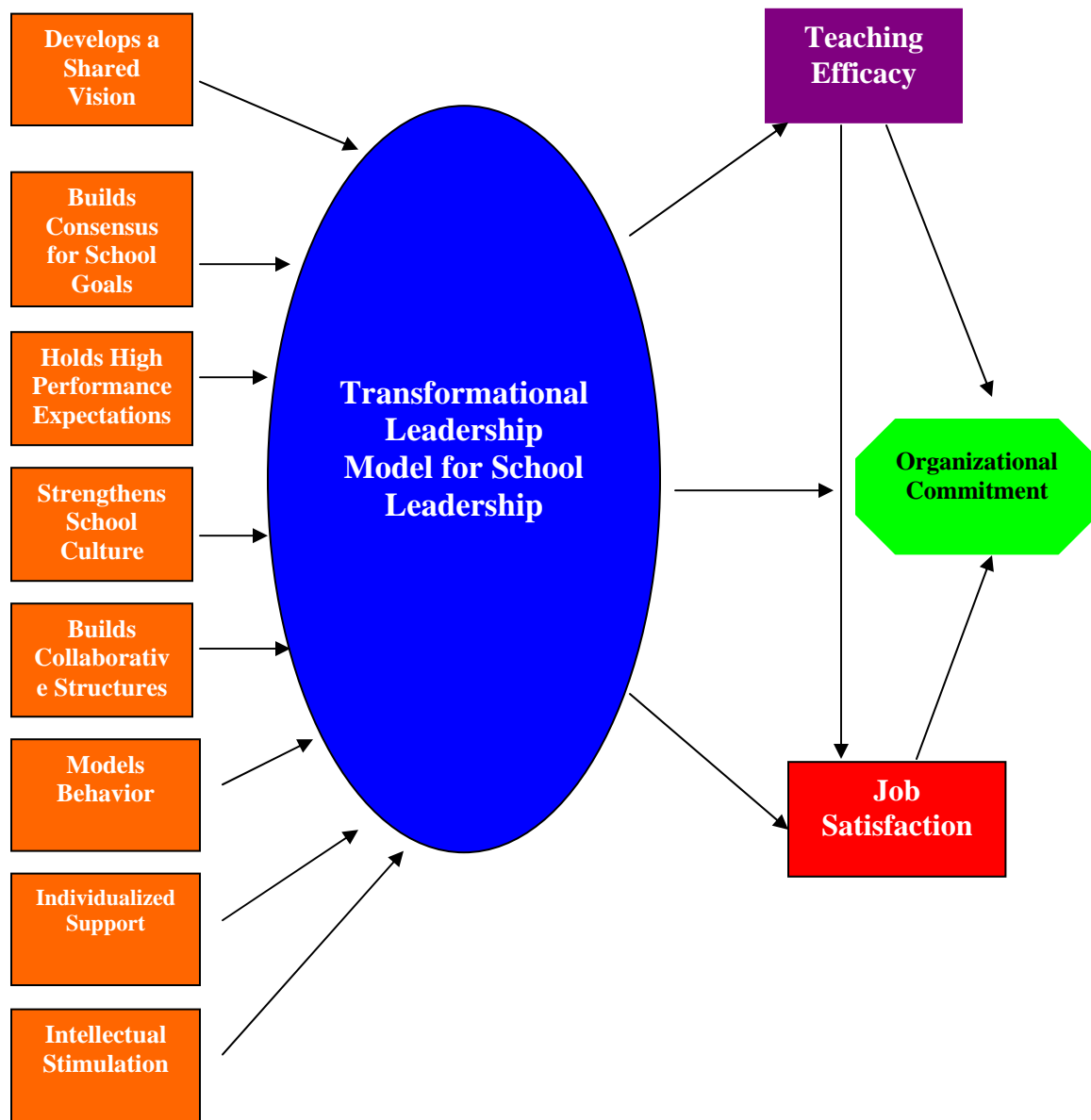


Figure 1. Conceptual representation of theoretical framework for study (Horn-Turpin, 2008).

Research Questions

The following questions guide and define the research for this study:

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy?

- 2) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction?
- 3) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment?
- 4) Does teaching efficacy significantly influence organizational commitment?
- 5) Does job satisfaction significantly influence organizational commitment?
- 6) Is job satisfaction significantly influenced by teacher efficacy?

Definition of Terms

In order to help clarify the readers' understanding and to avoid any unnecessary confusion, key vocabulary will be defined. Precise definitions for purposes of this paper are as follows:

Attrition. Educators exiting the field of special education by either transferring to general education or leaving the field of teaching altogether (Billingsley, 1993).

Early Career Special Educators. For the purposes of this study, early career special educators include those teachers who are currently employed as full-time special education teachers with one to five years of experience.

Job Satisfaction. An affective response as to how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs (Spector, 1997, p. 2).

Organizational Commitment. A strong belief in and accepting a profession's goals and values, a willingness to exert significant effort on behalf of the profession, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the profession (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

Self-Efficacy. Self efficacy is defined as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391).

Special Education. Special education is specially designed instruction designed to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities whereby the student will gain educational benefit as is defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997).

Teaching Efficacy. This term is defined as a "teacher's belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context" (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998, P. 232)

Transformational Leadership. A style of leadership that “involves inspiring followers to commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers’ leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support” (Bass & Riggo, 2006, p. 4).

Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations that must be discussed. The first limitation is that participants selected for this study were special education teachers employed in public school districts comprising region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This purposeful sampling may limit the generalizability of the study’s results. A second limitation is the method of survey distribution. Surveys were mailed to building principals. Each building principal was then asked to distribute surveys to the special education teachers in their respective buildings. Although several building principals indicated were willing to distribute the surveys, some stated concerns regarding the time of the school year for survey distribution as well as their perceived constraints on teachers’ time. This method of distribution limited the researcher’s ability to maintain control over (1) the principal’s influence upon the participants’ willingness to complete the surveys, (2) the timely distribution of surveys, and (3) ensuring all special education teachers in the buildings received the surveys.

A third limitation of this study is the time of the public school year in which the surveys were distributed. The surveys were delivered to principals during the month of May. Surveys were received and accepted through the end of June. During this time of the year, special education teachers are engaged in standardized testing and finalizing paperwork for the end of the school year. Due to these end of the year demands on teachers’ time, participant response may have been lower than it would have been had the surveys been delivered earlier in the school year. Because the surveys were delivered near the end of the school year, opportunities for follow-up with those respondents who did not complete the surveys were limited.

Delimitations

Delimitations for this study include: (1) a purposeful sample of special education teachers, (2) the geographical location, which is public school districts located in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia, (3) the decision to use surveys as the method of data collection, and (4) to ask building principals to distribute the surveys to their special education teachers.

This study did not attempt to provide a comprehensive assessment of all variables that have been shown through research as being significant contributors to attrition patterns of special educators. The emphasis of this study was to examine special education teachers' perceived influence of transformational leadership practices upon the specific factors of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Summary and Organization of the Study

Teaching shortages continue to plague the field of special education in nearly every school district in the country. A major fueling agent to the shortage problem is teacher attrition. For decades, researchers have conducted many research studies that examine and investigate various factors that have been linked to teacher attrition. Many factors have been identified through these research studies as being significantly linked to teacher attrition; however, the factor of administrative leadership behaviors is one of the most frequently contributors to teacher attrition. In addition, this factor has been shown to influence teacher morale and teachers' affective responses to their job (e.g. self-efficacy, job satisfaction and commitment), all of which have been strongly linked to their career decisions.

Given the significant influence of administrative leadership in the working environment, it is not surprising that many researchers have focused their research interests to investigating various leadership theories and styles that employees desire in their leader. From this plethora of research, transformational leadership theory has quickly become the choice of many scholars in which to focus their research interests. Relatively new to the field of education, transformational leadership theory offers a promising and more desirable approach to administrative leadership styles and practices. This is because transformational leadership theory focuses on the needs of the followers rather than the needs of the leader. Transformational leaders inspire their staff to achieve goals beyond expectations. As was previously shown through a discussion of related literature for the background of this study, educational research documents the influence of transformational leadership style to increased levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and a greater sense of teaching efficacy.

Transformational leadership theory has mainly been studied in the political, business, and military fields; however, within the last decade or so, this theory has been introduced as a viable leadership theory to be implemented and studied in the field of education. During the review of literature for this study, no empirical data were located that investigated transformational

leadership behaviors exclusively to the field of special education. This study sought to investigate whether special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors significantly influence the factors of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

This study's theoretical framework and research questions guided the review of literature presented in Chapter II. These questions are as follows: (1) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy? (2) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction? (3) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment? (4) Does teaching efficacy significantly influence organizational commitment? (5) Does job satisfaction significantly influence organizational commitment? (6) Is job satisfaction significantly influenced by teacher efficacy?

My research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter I includes the introduction and background of the study, a statement of the problem, the significance and purpose of the study, the theoretical framework in which this study is embedded, the research questions, definition of terms, this study's limitations, delimitations, and summary.

Chapter II presents an in depth review of literature as it relates to the concept of leadership, the evolution of leadership from traditional to the modern theory of transformational leadership, and transformational leadership theory applied in a school leadership model. Finally, a discussion of transformational leadership theory as it relates to teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment will be provided.

Chapter III provides a description of the methodology used for this research study. It includes an introduction, the setting and selection of participants, a description of the survey and its development, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures. Chapter IV presents this study's findings, which includes a demographic description of the setting in which the study was conducted, data collection procedures, a profile of the participants, and data analysis procedures and results.

Chapter V provides an introduction and a discussion of the entire study's results and findings. Additionally, implications for this study and recommendations for future research are provided.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of literature pertinent to this study. More specifically, this chapter begins with a discussion of the literature of leadership as a concept, followed by a discussion of the literature as it describes the evolution of leadership theories from traditional to the more modern theoretical paradigm of transformational leadership. Transformational leadership theory will then be discussed in terms of a conceptual model as well as its evolution into the educational field. Finally, an in depth discussion of supporting literature and research studies will be provided that illustrate the influences of transformational leadership behavior on teacher efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Leadership as a Concept

The theoretical concepts of leadership have been studied since the antiquated times of Plato, Caesar, and Plutarch (Bass, 1981). Over the years, researchers have yielded a plethora of works and data that proliferates the field of leadership research. Although leadership is a term that is frequently used in conversations and is often described by various adjectives such as *effective, good, bad* and *poor*, most authors have failed to provide an actual definition of leadership in their works (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). Most scholars agree that the concept of leadership does not ascribe to one specific definition. James Burns (1978), however, provided the following definition of leadership in his landmark publication, *Leadership*:

Leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations—the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations—of both leaders and followers. And the genius of leadership lies in the manner in which leaders see and act on their own and their followers' values and motivations. (p. 9)

Although a lack of consensus continues to exist about an exact meaning for leadership, most researchers agree that a central element of *intentional influence* is present in leadership and is exerted by one person or a group of individuals over other people (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999).

This is reflected throughout history as the evolution of many leaders has left lasting marks and impressions upon the world. Whether their time in power is considered to be constructive or destructive, well-known leaders such as Julius Caesar, Napoleon Bonaparte, Winston Churchill, Adolph Hitler, Josef Stalin, Mahatma Ghandi, and Martin Luther King, Jr. endowed superior qualities that differentiated them from followers. The leadership traits possessed by these leaders inspired others to become devoted followers who were committed to their cause. Leadership in this sense is an aspect of power, but unlike power, leadership is inseparable from followers' needs and goals (Burns, 1978). In his discussion of power, Burns states the following:

Power is exercised when potential power wielders, motivated to achieve certain goals of their own, marshal in their power base resources (economic, military, institutional, or skill) that enable them to influence the behavior of respondents by activating motives or respondents relevant to those resources and to those goals.
(p.18)

As one begins to consider the extent to which leaders influence others, the question must be asked, *What are the leadership characteristics individuals possess that enable them to influence others to unite for a common purpose?* This question can best be answered by gaining a better understanding of the historical evolution of leadership and the theoretical paradigms in which leadership has been studied. For the purposes of this study, a discussion of these paradigms will be provided as they originate from traditional leadership theories of the mid 1800s to the more modern paradigm of transformational leadership theory.

Historical Evolution of Leadership

During the early 1800s, to the early 20th century, the concept of leadership was studied in terms of leadership characteristics or *traits* (Creighton, 2005). This approach was based on the premise that people were born with certain characteristics or traits, such as extreme intelligence, a good memory, persuasiveness, and unlimited amounts of energy (Steers, Porter, & Bigley, as cited by Amoroso, 2002). The presence of these traits, or characteristics presumably led individuals to leadership positions; however, by the mid 20th century, the *trait theory* was disputed by researchers due to the lack of predictability (Amoroso, 2002). Realizing the

unreliability of the *trait theory*, researchers began to focus on the observable leadership behaviors, known as behavioral leadership theory.

The mid 1900s were dominated with behavioral leadership theories. During this era, two major research studies were conducted by researchers from the University of Michigan and Ohio State which focused on observable leadership behaviors. Both studies yielded similar results. The Ohio State study asked employees to report how often their leader exhibited certain behaviors, of which two central leadership behaviors were identified: (1) behavior centered on structure and (2) behavior based on consideration. When these leadership behaviors were present, it was premised the leader provides structure for his or her employees, and the leaders *consider or care about* their followers.

Yielding similar results, the University of Michigan Study identified two specific leadership behaviors that corresponded to the two behaviors identified in the Ohio State study: (1) production oriented and (2) employee oriented. Production oriented behaviors, which corresponded to the structure behavior in the Ohio State study, involved completion of tasks. The second behavior, employee oriented, corresponded to the consideration based behavior in the Ohio State study. Leaders who demonstrated the employee orientation behavior also exhibited human-relation oriented skills and relationships with their employees. These studies supported the notion that effective leaders had to be cognizant of both task and relationship orientation. Additionally, these studies suggest that some organizations may need leaders who are more focused on tasks while others require a leadership perspective with strong human-relations skills (Creighton 2005).

In the mid 1970s, a new leadership paradigm began to capture the attention of many. James MacGregor Burns (1978), who is generally considered to be the founder of modern leadership theory (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005), first conceptualized leadership in his seminal book *Leadership* as either transactional or transformational. In transactional leadership, leaders lead through social exchange (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Burns (1978) states that leaders approach their followers with the intent of “exchanging one thing for another: jobs for votes, or subsidies for campaign contributions” (p.4). In the business world, transactional business leaders offer rewards for productivity (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Transactions, or social exchanges, comprise the bulk of the relationships among leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). In transformational leadership however, the leader strives to understand followers’ motives and

needs. The focus shifts from the need of the leader to the followers' needs. By gaining an understanding of their followers' needs, the transformational leader can potentially convert followers into leaders.

Transformational Leadership

The transformational leadership paradigm has rapidly become the choice for current research and application of leadership theory (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Transformational leadership focuses more on change, and inspires followers to “commit to a shared vision and goals for an organization or unit, challenging them to be innovative problem solvers, and developing followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring, and provision of both challenge and support” (Bass & Riggo, 2006, p. 4).

Historians have long recognized that the concept of leadership exceeds a mere social exchange between leader and followers. Supporting this notion, Bass and Riggo (2006) state “leadership must also address the follower's sense of self-worth to engage the follower in true commitment and involvement in the effort at hand” (p.4). Transformational leaders accomplish this by employing the four behavioral components synonymous with transformational leadership practices. These components, often referred to the *Four I's* by Leithwood (1994), are as follows: (a) individual consideration, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) idealized influence.

Individual consideration. By acting as a coach or mentor, transformational leaders pay special attention to each follower's needs for achievement and growth. Individualized consideration occurs when new learning opportunities are created in conjunction with a supportive climate. In their demonstration of individual consideration, the transformational leader is an effective listener, and recognizes and is accepting of employee's individual differences. Two-way communication is encouraged, and interactions with followers are personalized. An individually considerate leader will delegate tasks as a means of developing followers. Delegated tasks are monitored to determine whether the followers need additional direction or support and to assess progress; however, the followers do not feel they are being checked on or monitored (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

Intellectual stimulation. Transformational leaders encourage innovation and creativity by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. In addition, leaders who practice a transformational leadership style solicit new ideas and creative

solutions to problems from followers, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. When individual members make mistakes, the transformational leader does not publicly criticize them nor are their ideas criticized because they differ from the leaders' ideas (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

Inspirational motivation. Transformational leaders demonstrate behaviors that inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. They also arouse team spirit, enthusiasm and optimism. Transformational leaders involve their followers by clearly communicating stated expectations they followers to meet and also demonstrate commitment to goals and a shared vision. These leaders articulate a compelling vision of the future (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

Idealized influence. Transformational leaders demonstrate behaviors that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. In addition to admiring, respecting, and trusting them, followers tend to identify with the leaders and want to emulate them. Followers view their leaders as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. In addition, leaders who exhibit idealized influence are willing to take risks and are consistent. They can be counted on to do the right thing as they demonstrate high standards of ethical and moral conduct (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

As has been shown through the discussion of literature thus far, transformational leadership has been recognized as a powerful model of leadership in the military, political, and industrial organizational environments (Bass, 1985, Bass & Riggo, 2006). However, evidence from compelling research shows that transformational leadership is important and is a powerful tool for fostering group goals and evoking positive changes in the educational field.

Transformational Leadership in an Educational Context

Various approaches to school leadership have been tried. Some have been more popular and widely accepted than others. During the 1980s and early 1990s, the instructional leadership paradigm was thought to serve schools well (Leithwood, 1992) and was considered to be the most popular model of educational leadership (Marzano, et al., 2005). Leithwood, Jantzi, and Steinbach (1999) note that the concept of instructional leadership is one of the most frequently mentioned educational leadership models, yet lacks clear definition. Leithwood, Jantzi, et al., (1999) cite various models of instructional leadership in which leadership is defined along

multiple dimensions, each of which incorporate a variety of practices. The effects of these practices are then evaluated on important outcomes.

Although this model served the educational field for the past two decades, the current demands for educational reform have forced many school leaders to reevaluate and adapt their leadership style to meet current demands. Many educational leaders are beginning to embrace and put into practice a school model of transformational leadership. This leadership model is espoused by school leaders because it “aspires, more generally, to increase members’ efforts on behalf of the organization, as well as to develop more skilled practice” (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999 p. 20).

Building on the work of Burns (1978), Bass (1985), and Bass and Avolio (1994), Leithwood (1994) introduced an eight dimension paradigm of transformational leadership as a model for school leadership. To date, this model has been described as the most fully developed transformational leadership model for school leaders (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999). This paradigm incorporates the following dimensions: (1) identifying and articulating a vision, (2) fostering the acceptance of group goals, (3) providing individualized support, (4) intellectual stimulation, (5) providing an appropriate model, (6) high performance expectations, (7) strengthens school culture and (8) builds collaborative relationships. Each of these dimensions are further described as follows:

Identifying and articulating a vision. Behavior on the part of the leader aimed at identifying new opportunities for their school, and developing, articulating, and inspiring others with a vision of the future (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

Fostering the acceptance of group goals. Behavior on the part of the leader aimed at promoting cooperation among staff and assisting them to work together toward common goals (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

Providing individualized support. Behavior on the part of the leader that indicates respect for individual members of staff and concern about their personal feelings and needs (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

Intellectual stimulation. Behavior on the part of the leader that challenges the staff to reexamine some of the assumptions about their work and to rethink how it can be performed (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

Providing an appropriate model. Behavior on the part of the leader that sets an example for staff members to follow consistent with the values the leader espouses (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

High-performance expectations. Behavior that demonstrates the leader's expectations for excellence, quality, and high performance on the part of staff (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996 p. 515).

Strengthens school culture. Behavior that demonstrates' the leaders expectations for staff participation, the sharing of power and responsibility of others, promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff, frequent and direct communication, clarification for school's vision and norms of excellence (Leithwood, 1994).

Builds collaborative structures. Leadership behavior that demonstrates the willingness of the leader to share in responsibility, power, and decision making, which includes staff's opinions when making decisions. In addition, the leader ensures effective group problem-solving, provides autonomy for teachers in their decisions, and alters working conditions to ensure that staff have collaborative planning times (Leithwood, 1994).

There is compelling evidence that transformational leadership behaviors, significantly affect teachers' psychological states, such as, teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Bass & Riggo, 2006; Leithwood, Jantzi, et al., 1999). In the next sections of this chapter, relevant literature and research based studies will be provided that show the effects of transformational leadership behaviors on the constructs of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

Transformational Leadership Practices and Self-Efficacy

It has been suggested by researchers (House & Shamir, as cited by Pillai & Williams, 2004) the primary means whereby transformational leaders influence their followers is by increasing their self-efficacy or self-worth. To better understand this statement, one must first gain an understanding of the concept of self-efficacy.

What is Self-Efficacy?

Self-efficacy is a fundamental element in Bandura's social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). He defined self-efficacy as "a judgment of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations" (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). Perceived self-efficacy is

defined as “people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1994 p. 71).

Self-efficacy beliefs are responsible for how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy experience enhanced human accomplishments and well-being (Bandura, 1994). They tend to be highly assured in their capabilities and approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered. They set for themselves challenging goals and quickly recover their sense of efficacy after failures or setbacks. When they experience failure, individuals with a strong sense of self-efficacy attribute the failure to insufficient effort or deficiencies in their knowledge about the subject, but are assured the skills to master the tasks are acquirable. Individuals with high sense of self-efficacy approach perceived threatening situations with confidence and are assured they can exercise control over them. Individuals with this outlook are better able to produce personal accomplishment, reduce stress and are less vulnerable to depression (Bandura, 1994).

In contrast, individuals who experience lesser levels of self-efficacy doubt their capabilities, tend to shy away from difficult tasks, and perceive difficult tasks as personal threats. They tend to have weakened commitments to the goals they choose to pursue, and when faced with difficult tasks, dwell on their personal deficiencies. Their efforts are minimal, and they tend to give up quickly in the face of challenges. They are slow to recover after failures or setbacks and easily fall victim to stress and depression (Bandura, 1994).

Self-Efficacy in an Educational Framework

Bandura’s theory of perceived self-efficacy can be applied as the theoretical framework in which teachers judge their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. In the educational field, research is rich with literature supporting the notion that teachers’ sense of efficacy is significantly related to student achievement and changes in teacher behavior (Ross, 1993). Teacher efficacy is defined by Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, and Hoy (1998) as the “teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 232). Teacher efficacy is of interest to researchers who continually investigate school improvement because the concept of teacher efficacy consistently predicts the willingness of teachers to try out new teaching ideas (Ross & Gray, 2006).

In addition to being more willing to incorporate new teaching methods, Nir and Kranot (2006) cite studies that show teachers with high self-efficacy are better able to cope with stress, have a higher commitment to teaching, and cooperate with parents. Teachers who experience a strong sense of teaching efficacy have expectations of success and are able to achieve the benefits of innovation and overcome obstacles in which they encounter. Teachers with high efficacy try harder and implement differentiated and individualized strategies designed to stimulate student learning regardless of their ability levels (Ross & Gray, 2006).

Empirical studies examining teacher perceptions of school leadership have yielded invaluable data documenting the effects of principals' behaviors on conditions within schools in which teaching and learning take place (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1995). These studies confirm the need for principals to be persuaded to act and focus on conditions that help teachers acquire and sustain feelings of perceived efficacy, competence and worth (Rossmiller, 1992, as cited by Hipp, 1997).

Further support for these findings was yielded in a study completed by Hoy and Woolfolk (1993), in which they examined the relationship between teacher efficacy and aspects of a healthy school climate. This study involved 179 teachers randomly selected from 37 elementary schools in New Jersey. Results from this study indicated that teachers' sense of efficacy was related to administrators' responsiveness to their needs. Additionally, teachers' sense of efficacy was conducive to development when they perceived their principal as someone who had influence with superiors, and who helped them solve instructional and class management problems.

In a qualitative study completed by Hipp (1997), specific leadership behaviors were investigated that affected teacher efficacy. From a sample of 10 schools, Hipp purposefully selected three schools for case study that were selected based on aggregated levels of teacher efficacy by building. Data were gathered through structured interviews, observation, and field notes. A total sample of 34 teacher volunteers representing varied grade levels and teaching assignments were interviewed. Results of this study revealed a direct relationship between five dimensions of principals' transformational behaviors that directly influenced teachers' work and its outcomes. The leadership behaviors of (1) models behavior, (2) provides contingent rewards and (3) inspires group purpose, were significantly related to teachers' general teaching efficacy.

The leadership behaviors of *models behavior* and *provides contingent rewards* were significantly related to teachers' personal teaching efficacy.

In another study, Ross and Gray (2006) examined the effects of transformational leadership through teacher efficacy, as it contributes to teacher commitment and organizational values. These researchers found that transformational leadership had a positive effect on the collective teacher efficacy of the school. Collective teacher efficacy differs from individual teaching efficacy in that the researchers defined collective teacher efficacy as the perceptions of teachers in a school as a whole. Additionally, the researcher connected collective teacher efficacy to expectations of the effectiveness of the staff to which one belongs.

Several studies have examined relationships between principal behavior and teacher efficacy and have shown that principals' leadership behaviors and style influence teacher's sense of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Teachers who perceived their principals as influential with district superiors, used their leadership to provide resources to them, buffered them from disruptive factors, modeled appropriate behavior, provided rewards contingent on performance, and allowed them to participate in the decision making process, reported higher levels of personal teaching efficacy (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

In additional studies examining principal leadership practices, principals who practice transformational leadership behaviors were more likely to have higher teacher efficacy in their schools (Hipp, 1996; Hipp & Bredeson, 1995; Mascall, 2003). Nir and Kranot's (2006) study echoed these findings by identifying a strong and significant relationship between transformational leadership style and personal teaching efficacy. In this study, teachers reported higher levels of personal teaching efficacy in those schools in which higher means of transformational leadership were reported. These results coincided with previous research that indicated transformational leaders are more likely to promote personal teaching efficacy (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995). Moreover, further analysis in this study showed that transformational leadership was mediated by teachers' positive experiences received on the job, such as their job satisfaction. This finding suggests that transformational leadership may indirectly contribute to one's personal teaching efficacy.

Additional empirical evidence from other studies indicates that principals' behavior significantly influences teachers' experiences in many realms, including their on the job experiences, efforts, and commitment to change (Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2002). In addition,

principals' leadership style has been shown to be strongly correlated with teachers' autonomy, support, professional growth, role conflict and overall satisfaction, all of which have been strongly linked to personal teaching efficacy (Nir & Kranot, 2006).

As has been shown through the presentation of literature thus far, teaching efficacy is an important and mediating factor that shares either a direct or indirect relationship with other factors. In an educational context, teaching efficacy has been shown to affect one's sense of self-worth, motivation, attitude, capabilities, commitment, and overall satisfaction.

The presentation of literature supports the theory that transformational leadership behaviors positively influence ones' sense of self or teaching efficacy; thereby, indirectly influencing other factors, such as job satisfaction and commitment to one's profession. In the next section of this paper, a discussion of relevant literature relating to the relationships between transformational leadership practices and job satisfaction will be provided.

Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

To begin a discussion of job satisfaction, one would logically begin with a definition. A review of relevant literature reveals various definitions theorists have generated from their own investigations of job satisfaction. Locke (1969) defined job satisfaction as a positive or pleasurable reaction resulting from the appraisal of one's job, job achievement or job expenses. Vroom (1982) simply states that job satisfaction is an emotional orientation toward one's current job roles. Lofquist and Dawis (1991) offer this definition of job satisfaction, "an individual's positive affective reaction of the target environment...as a result of the individual's positive appraisal of the extent to which his or her needs are fulfilled by the environment" (p. 27). Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as people's affective response to how individuals feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. Although these definitions vary somewhat in content, most agree that job satisfaction is an affective response to one's job as a whole or to particular facets of the job.

Empirical studies across most every occupational field, including the field of education, have shown that leadership behavior consistently and profoundly influences employees' job satisfaction (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). Moreover, studies examining leadership behaviors show that transformational leadership is positively correlated with employees' job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Griffith 2004). Leaders who practice transformational leadership

reportedly have more satisfied and committed followers than do leaders who practice a nontransformational style of leadership (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

The field of educational research is abounding with empirical studies that heavily document various factors affecting job satisfaction. Among these studies, the factor of supervisory and/or principal leadership behaviors is consistently documented as a significant determinant of teachers' job satisfaction and teacher retention (Betancourt-Smith, Inman, & Marlow, 1994; Billingsley, 2005; Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Bogler, 2001; Gersten, et al., 2001; Griffith, 2003; Heller, Clay & Perkins, 1993; Littrell & Billingsley, 1994; & McLeskey, et al., 2004). Furthermore, a review of school leadership research reveals that school leaders who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors have staffs who report higher levels of job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Griffith, 2004), which is consistent with Bass and Riggo's (2006) claim.

The study of transformational leadership in the educational field is relatively new. There are increasing levels of evidence that support the assertion that teacher job satisfaction is positively correlated to transformational leadership behaviors (Griffith, 2004; Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). In a later study, which added support to his previous study, Bogler (2001) found that principals' transformational leadership behaviors affected teachers' satisfaction both directly and indirectly through their occupation perceptions. Indirect effects occurred through teachers' perceptions of occupational prestige, self-esteem, autonomy at work, and professional self-development. All of these behaviors were influenced by individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation, which are two dimensions in the transformational leadership model for educational leadership as developed by Leithwood (1994).

In a study involving 117 elementary schools in a large metropolitan area, Griffith (2004) sought to examine the direct effects of principal transformational leadership to school staff turnover and school performance, as well as the indirect effect of transformational leadership to school staff job satisfaction. To complete his study, Griffith chose three components of transformational leadership as predictor variables of staff job satisfaction organizational performance: (a) charisma or inspiration, (b) individualized consideration, and (c) intellectual stimulation.

Results of Griffith's study adds to the existing evidence that principal transformational leadership behaviors affects school performance and staff turnover indirectly through staff job

satisfaction. In other words, the higher staff job satisfaction, the lower the staff turnover rate. The higher the staff job satisfaction, school performance increased; thereby narrowing achievement gaps. In this particular study, the researcher concluded that transformational leadership behaviors were more directly related to “organizational processes that are directly associated with employee behaviors, morale, and satisfaction, which in turn are related to the quality of service delivery and organizational performance” (Griffith, 2004 p. 350).

In a doctoral study, Martino (2003) examined the leadership style of public elementary school principals, as perceived by the teachers and principals, to determine whether a significant relationship existed between leadership style and job satisfaction. Martino surveyed 500 teachers and 50 principals. Based on the findings of this study, a significant relationship was found to exist between transformational leadership style and teacher job satisfaction. Additionally, teacher job satisfaction was also found to be affected by teachers’ self-efficacy, which supports research findings presented in the previous section of this paper.

As was shown through supporting research literature in the previous section of this paper, teachers’ sense of efficacy has also been investigated as a determinant of their job satisfaction. In a study completed by Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, and Steca (2003), the role of self- and collective-efficacy as a main determinant of teacher’s job satisfaction among teachers in Italian junior high schools was investigated. These researchers were interested in determining how teachers’ perceived self- and collective-efficacy beliefs operated in concert as determinants of their job satisfaction. Additionally, these researchers examined the extent to which teachers’ perceptions of others’ behavior, such as the principal, students and families, staff, and colleagues, mediated the link between perceived self-efficacy and the perceived collective efficacy.

Results of this study yielded strong supporting evidence for previous studies investigating the concepts of self and collective efficacy on job satisfaction. The findings clearly showed a direct and an indirect influence on teacher job satisfaction. Self-efficacy directly influenced job satisfaction and teachers’ perceptions of families, and students’ behaviors. Moreover, teacher perceptions of other school constituencies had a positive influence on the perceived collective efficacy which, in turn, influenced teachers’ job satisfaction.

In many studies, researchers have investigated job satisfaction as a precursor to organizational commitment while others study organizational commitment as an antecedent to

job satisfaction (Nguni et al., 2006). Bogler (2001) states that job satisfaction is a determinant of commitment, and that an individual must be satisfied with their job before developing a sense of organizational commitment. Regardless of the manner in which one studies job satisfaction or dissatisfaction to organizational commitment, research based evidence links satisfaction to employees' career decisions in most every occupational sector, including the field of special education (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Brownell et al., 1997; Gersten et al., 2001, Singh & Billingsley, 1996; Whitaker, 2000).

Findings from these studies support the notion that teachers who are satisfied with their jobs, report higher levels of perceived administrative support, are more likely to stay in their teaching positions, and have less absenteeism and illness; thereby assuring continuous and high quality services to students. In contrast, teachers who indicate an intention to leave express less commitment and job satisfaction, as well as, more negative attitudes toward teaching as a career and toward school administration (Hall, Pearson, & Carroll, 1992).

Transformational Leadership and Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is a concept that has long been studied by researchers of various disciplines as well as most every occupational sector. This expansive body of research has resulted in significant contributions to the study of employees' commitment to their organizations. However, in efforts to study commitment, many researchers have ascribed their own definitions to organizational commitment, resulting in little consensus on a universally or "correct" definition of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Allen and Meyer (1996) defined organizational commitment as "a psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organization." (p. 252) Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) defined organizational commitment as an attitude which includes: (a) strong belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals and values, (b) willingness to exert significant effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Angle & Perry (as cited by Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006) defined and measured organizational commitment as a broad concept which includes the distinct components of value commitment and commitment to stay with the organization. Although each of these definitions may vary slightly, the central theme to each is that committed employees are more likely to remain in the organization than are uncommitted employees. In all definitions, researchers agree that

commitment is a psychological state; however, the distinguishing factor is the nature of the psychological state being described (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

In their efforts to define and study commitment, Meyer and Allen (1991) proposed a three-component conceptualization model that helps to further define individuals' commitment to an organization or entity (Meyer and Allen, 1997). The three components comprising this model are affective, continuance, and normative. These researchers define the components of their model as follows:

Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with the organization because they *want* to do so. Continuance commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so. Finally, normative commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization. (p.67)

When considering the concept of commitment, Meyer and Allen (1997) argue that it is more appropriate to consider affective, continuance and normative as three components of commitment rather than types of commitment because the relationship an employee shares with an organization may be reflective of varying degrees of all three components.

Antecedents, such as supervisors' leadership styles and behaviors have been shown to affect employees' levels of organizational commitment. Transformational leadership behaviors show the strongest positive effects on followers' attitudes and their commitment to the leader, and the organization (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Each component of this leadership paradigm builds follower commitment differently. Leaders use idealized influence to increase commitment by encouraging followers to develop a sense of identification with and an adherence to the goals, interests, and values of the leader. Inspirational motivation is used by leaders to build emotional commitment to a mission or goal by moving followers to consider the moral values involved in their duties as members of the organization or profession. Leaders increase commitment through intellectual stimulation by encouraging and empowering followers to be innovative. Individualized consideration increases commitment at all levels when leaders provide their

followers with a sense of increased competence to carry out directives and meeting their followers' personal and career needs (Bass & Riggo, 2006).

Transformational Leadership and Commitment in Education

Since the mid 1990s, the influence of transformational leadership in the educational sector has been the focal point of many research studies. This leadership paradigm has quickly become the most prevalent and widely accepted model of school leadership because of its emphasis on the fostering and development of organizational members (Marzano, et al., 2005). According to Ross and Gray (2006), the “essence of transformational leadership is dedication to fostering the growth of organizational members and enhancing their commitment by elevating their goals” (p. 180).

Mounting evidence links transformational leadership practices to individuals' organizational commitment. Koh, Steers and Terborg (1995) completed a study involving 846 teachers in 89 schools in Singapore that supports this assertion. In their study, the researchers investigated the influence of transformational leader behavior by school principals as it relates to organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, teacher satisfaction with the leader and student academic performance. Results of the Koh et al. (1995) study revealed that transformational leadership did have a significant effect on organizational commitment and teacher satisfaction with their leader. Commitment to the organization, related organizational citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction were significantly greater when the principals were described by the teachers as more transformational. The findings of the Koh et al. (1995) study provide credibility to the argument that transformational leadership may be effective in enhancing attitudes and behaviors among employees of other geographical regions as it has for employees in firms in the United States, thus, suggesting the generalizability of this theory across geographical regions.

In a more recent study, which involved 3,074 teachers from 218 elementary schools in Canada, Ross and Gray (2006) sought to examine the effects of collective teacher efficacy upon the constructs of teacher commitment, as well as the effects of transformational leadership upon teacher commitment through collective teacher efficacy. These researchers found that transformational leadership had direct effects on teacher commitment and the collective teacher efficacy of the school. In addition, commitment to school mission was influenced the strongest, which is especially important in that it is a strong predictor of group effectiveness. Results of this

study are considered important by the researchers because this particular study not only identified a significant relationship of transformational leadership to commitment and organizational values, but it also identified the mechanism (collective teacher efficacy); whereby these influences occurred.

Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen (2006) completed a study in which they examined the effects of transformational and transactional leadership behaviors on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. In their study, the researchers surveyed 560 primary school teachers in 70 schools in Tanzania. Through path analysis, these researchers found that transformational leadership behaviors had strong to moderate positive effects on each of the three variables.

Additionally, Nguni and his colleagues examined the effects of individual behavioral constructs of transformational leadership upon organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior. Results showed varying degrees of influence. Charismatic leadership had the greatest effect and accounted for the largest proportion of variation on the three variables, whereas, individualized consideration had a very weak and insignificant effect. Intellectual stimulation had a weak influence on job satisfaction, but active management had a moderate positive influence on commitment to stay.

In a doctoral study, Amoroso (2002) found supporting evidence for the positive effects of transformational leadership behaviors on commitment. In his study, Amoroso found that principals' behaviors of actively leading staff, supporting staff, and challenging staff were significantly correlated to commitment. As was evidenced in the Nguni et al. (2006) study, the construct of challenging the staff, which falls within the dimension of intellectual stimulation and setting high performance expectations, yielded the strongest correlation to commitment.

In a study examining the effects of transformational school leadership on the commitment of teachers to school reform, Geijsel, Slegers, Leithwood, and Jantzi (2003) surveyed 1347 teachers from 45 schools in the Netherlands and Canada. Results of this study show that transformational leadership behaviors affect both teachers' commitment and extra effort. Moreover, teacher commitment was more significantly affected by the leadership behaviors of vision building and intellectual stimulation.

Clearly, results of these studies show supporting evidence for the notion that transformational leadership behaviors are strongly correlated to employees' sense of

organizational commitment. As previously discussed, commitment has been linked with employees' decisions to either leave or stay in their careers. Given the presence of this strong supporting empirical evidence, it is logical to assume that the practice of transformational leadership behaviors by school leaders would enhance the organizational commitment of special education teachers. As stated in previous sections of this paper, no study has been conducted examining the effects of transformational leadership behaviors exclusively to the field of special education. A study such as this would be viable and an area ripe for inquiry.

Summary

In this chapter, a review of literature pertinent to general leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, self and teacher efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment has been presented. Literature documenting the influences of transformational leadership behaviors on self and teacher efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment has been emphasized as this literature is relevant to this study. In Chapter III, the purposed methodology for completing this study will be presented.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The primary goal of this study was to explore research questions that examine the relationships between transformational leadership, teaching efficacy, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction from special education teachers' perspectives. Research questions guiding this study are as follows: (1) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy? (2) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction? (3) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment? (4) Does teaching efficacy significantly influence organizational commitment? (5) Does job satisfaction significantly influence organizational commitment? (6) Is job satisfaction significantly influenced by teacher efficacy? The remainder of this chapter will describe the selection of participants, the instrument used in this study, the data collection procedures, and a description of the quantitative analysis procedures employed to analyze the data.

Setting and Selection of Participants

This study was conducted in public school districts that comprise region seven in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This region is mostly rural and lies in the southwestern part of the Commonwealth. A total of 18 public school districts comprise this region. Participants selected for this study were special education teachers who were currently employed as full time special educators. Eleven of the 18 school districts comprising this region participated in this study.

Instrumentation

The *Special Education Teacher Survey* (see Appendix A) was used to collect data for this study. This survey instrument was divided into five separate sections and had a total of 78 items for respondents to answer. Section one (items 1 through 10) asked the respondents to provide basic demographic data about themselves and their current job. Sections two, three, four and five (items 11 through 75) asked respondents to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements regarding leadership behaviors, teaching efficacy, commitment and job satisfaction. These survey items were Likert-type items that had the following values: 1 = Strongly Disagree,

2 = Moderately Disagree, 3 = Disagree Slightly More Than Agree, 4 = Agree Slightly More Than Agree, 5 = Moderately Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Three additional items (76 through 78) were added to gain additional information about teachers' career intentions for the next five years. Item 76 asked respondents to rate their overall level of satisfaction with their current teaching position by selecting one of four response choices--Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, or Very Dissatisfied. Item 77 asked participants to indicate whether they intended to leave their current teaching position within the next five years by selecting Yes, No, or Not Sure. If respondents selected "Yes" or "Not Sure," they were asked to provide a reason for their decision in item 78. Further discussion about the construction of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* is provided in the next section.

Development of the Special Education Survey

Section 1: Basic demographic data. Section one of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was designed to gather basic demographic data that would provide a profile of the teachers participating in this study. Section one consisted of ten questions that asked participants to provide the following information: gender, age, indicate whether they were currently employed as a special education teacher, provide total number of years teaching experience, provide total number of years experience teaching special education, indicate whether they are currently teaching in elementary, middle or high school, indicate their current licensure status, indicate their highest degree earned, state their current salary range and indicate the title of the administrator who primarily influences their teaching job the most.

Section 2: Transformational leadership. Section two of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was designed to measure teachers' perceptions of their administrators' behaviors, based on the transformational leadership paradigm as proposed by Leithwood (1994). Leithwood conducted a four year study of transformational forms of leadership for school restructuring, which resulted in the development of the questionnaire by Jantzi and Leithwood (1995) entitled, *The Nature of School Leadership Survey*. The researchers designed this survey to measure the eight dimensions of leadership behaviors that are synonymous with transformational school leadership. These behaviors are as follows: (1) Develops a widely shared vision for the school, (2) builds consensus about school goals and priorities, (3) holds high performance expectations, (4) models behavior, (5) provides individualized support, (6) provides intellectual stimulation, (7) strengthens school culture, and (8) builds collaborative structures. This instrument has a high

overall reliability coefficient of .967 for measuring the various aspects of transformational leadership.

After receiving written permission from the developers to use this questionnaire as part of this research project (see Appendices B and C), survey items were selected and adapted according to the needs of this study. Section two of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was constructed by selecting 34 of the original 50-Likert type questions from *The Nature of School Leadership Survey* (see Appendix D). Table 1 shows the 34 items and their corresponding dimension of leadership behavior.

Table 1

Section 2 of the Special Education Teacher Survey—Transformational Leadership Dimensions

Leadership Dimension	N (Items)
Develops a widely shared vision for the school (Items: 11, 20, 29, 38)	4
Builds consensus about school goals and priorities (Items: 12, 18, 30, 43,)	4
Holds high performance expectations (Items: 17, 19, 31, 33)	4
Models Behavior (Items: 13, 25, 34)	3
Provides individualized support (Items: 14, 21, 35, 41)	4
Provides intellectual stimulation (Items: 15, 23, 27, 32, 37, 39)	6
Strengthens School Culture (Items: 16, 22, 26, 28, 36, 42)	6
Builds Collaborative Structures (Items: 24, 40, 44)	3

Section 3: Teaching efficacy. As previously stated in chapter two, Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998) defined teaching efficacy as the “teacher’s belief in his or her capability to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplish a specific teaching task in a particular context” (p. 232). Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) further defined teaching efficacy by identifying this concepts by two dimensions: (1) general teaching efficacy (GTE) and (2) personal teaching efficacy (PTE). The first dimension, GTE, reflects the teacher’s general belief about the power of teaching to reach difficult children and their general attitude toward teaching. The second dimension, PTE refers to teachers’ personal sense of efficacy. From these findings, Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) developed the *Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form)* (see Appendix G). Validity of the *Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form)* was determined by Gibson and Dembo (1984) when they performed a “multitrait-multimethod analysis that supported both convergent and discriminant validity of the scale” (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993 p. 289)

After receiving permission from the developers (see Appendices E and F) to use the *Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form)* in this study, section three of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was constructed by including the ten Likert type questions from Hoy and Woolfolk’s instrument. Table 2 shows the survey items and their corresponding scales. The Likert scale had the following values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Moderately Disagree, 3 = Disagree Slightly More Than Agree, 4 = Agree Slightly More Than Disagree, 5 = Moderately Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Items with an asterisk were reverse coded because negative wording.

Table 2

Section 3: Teaching Efficacy Survey Items from the Special Education Teacher Survey

Dimension	N (Items)
Personal Teaching Efficacy (Items: 47, 50, 51, 52, 53)	5
General Teaching Efficacy (Items: 45r*, 46r*, 48r*, 49r*, 54r*)	5

Note. * Denotes reverse coded items because of negative wording

Section 4: Organizational commitment. Section four (items 55 through 71) of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was designed to measure teachers' level of commitment to their organization. According to Allen and Meyer (1996) organizational commitment can be defined as "a psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that makes it less likely that the employee will voluntarily leave the organization" (p. 252). Based on their work, Meyer and Allen (1991; 1997) proposed that organizational commitment can be conceptualized in three forms: desire (affective commitment), obligation (normative commitment) and cost (continuance commitment).

From this conceptualization, they developed a survey designed to measure each of these forms—the *TCM Employee Commitment Survey*. The internal consistency for the *TCM Employee Commitment Survey*, as indicated by coefficient alpha, was acceptable and consistent across both versions. The median reliabilities were .85 on the Affective Commitment Scale, .73 on the Normative Commitment Scale, and .79 on the Continuance Commitment Scale. The test-retest reliability was within acceptable and consistent ranges for comparable measures. Factor analytic evidence was confirmed through exploratory and confirmatory analyses in which three measures, distinguishable from each other, were identified (Allen and Meyer, 1996).

Section four of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* is comprised of 17-Likert type questions from the *Revised TCM Employee Commitment Survey* that have been adapted according to the needs of this study. The Likert scale had the following values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Moderately Disagree, 3 = Disagree Slightly More Than Agree, 4 = Agree Slightly More Than Disagree, 5 = Moderately Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree. Table 3 shows the survey item numbers and their corresponding scales. Appendix H shows the License Agreement purchased by this researcher in order to use the *Revised TCM Employee Commitment* survey as an instrument to gather data in this study.

Table 3

Section 4: Organizational Commitment Items from the Special Education Teacher Survey

Dimension	N (Items)
Affective Commitment Scale (Items: 55, 56, 57, 58, 59)	5
Continuance Commitment Scale (Items: 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66)	6
Normative Commitment Scale (Items: 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71)	6

Section 5: Job satisfaction. Section five (items 72-75) of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* is comprised of five Likert type items that asked teachers to answer questions about their job satisfaction. The Likert scale had the following values: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Moderately Disagree, 3 = Disagree Slightly More Than Agree, 4 = Agree Slightly More Than Disagree, 5 = Moderately Agree, and 6 = Strongly Agree.

Additional questions. Three additional items (76 through 78) were added to gain information about employees' career intentions within the next five years. Item 76 asked respondents to rate their overall level of satisfaction with their current position by indicating whether they were Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, or Very Satisfied. Item 77 asked teachers to indicate whether they had plans to leave their current position within the next five years by selecting one of three response options: Yes, No, or Not Sure. If respondents selected Yes or Not Sure, they were asked to provide a reason as to why they were leaving or were considering leaving in item 78.

Reliability of Survey Instrument

Various methods exist that that can be used to evaluate the reliability, or internal consistency of a survey instrument. The concept of reliability is based on the notion that the items on the data collection instrument measure the same phenomenon. In other words, the items are *homogeneous* (Pedhauzer & Shmelkin, 1991). Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) is frequently used in the field of educational research for the purpose of determining the reliability of survey

items. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was .97, which indicated a high reliability coefficient for the *Special Education Teacher Survey*. Reliability coefficients for sections two through five were .99, .76, .87 and .84 respectively.

Validity of the Survey Instrument

Content validity. Content validity is present when an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Content validity for the *Special Education Teacher* survey was established by asking recognized experts in the field to review the survey instrument for clarity, comprehension, and consistency of question format. Comments from this panel included adding a survey item that asked respondents to provide their salary range and to indicate the administrator who primarily influences their job. Additional suggestions included the use of colored paper on which to copy surveys, as well as suggestions on instrument layout, formatting, and spelling corrections. The survey was adjusted according to the suggestions and recommendations from this expert panel. These suggestions were considered beneficial to the study. Comments from this panel of experts supported the content validity of the instrument.

Construct validity. Construct validation is a statistical process designed to validate the "discreteness of identified behavioral constructs and the intercorrelation of descriptors identified within each construct (Creighton, 2001, p. 6). Construct validation occurs through exploratory or confirmatory factor analysis. Exploratory factor analysis is used when the constructs are unknown; whereas, confirmatory factor analysis is used when the constructs have been previously identified and the items are specifically developed to measure the constructs intended to be measured (Field, 2000). Because the survey constructs were known, confirmatory factor analysis was used for construct validation of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* used in this study. Factor analysis serves two functions—to identify underlying constructs in the data and to reduce data so it is more manageable while retaining as much meaningful information as possible (Creighton, Coleman, and Adams, 1997). Additionally, this analytical procedure ensures that questions on the survey relate to the constructs intended to be measured.

Principal components factor analysis was used in this study to extract constructs from teachers' responses to the *Special Education Teacher Survey*. Principal component analysis is a data reduction method utilized to reduce a large set of data to a relatively small number of components. This method will extract most of the variance of a relatively large set of variables

(Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991, p. 598); thereby allowing the researcher to gain a more insightful approach into the constructs being studied.

Factor analysis provided a loading of eight factors with eigenvalues above 1.0 for special education teachers' responses to the *Special Education Teachers Survey*. However, through analytical procedure discussed more in depth in Chapter IV, only four were determined to be discreet constructs that could be differentiated.

Data Collection

In order to adhere to all ethical considerations and guidelines for conducting research with human subjects, this researcher submitted an application along with all necessary documentation regarding the nature and purposes of this study to the Internal Review Board (IRB) at Virginia Tech seeking their approval of this study. After receiving IRB approval (see Appendix I), this researcher made initial contact with superintendents in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia through electronic mail. In the letter mailed to superintendents (see Appendix J), this researcher introduced herself as a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech, described the study, its purpose, anticipated results, and a requested permission to conduct the study in the superintendents' respective districts. A copy of the *Special Education Teacher Survey*, approved Informed Consent (see Appendix K), and cover letter for survey participants (see Appendix L) were sent as attachments to this email for the superintendents' review. This information was mailed as hard copies to all superintendents as well. Ten superintendents initially responded. A reminder email and an additional request to conduct the study were sent approximately two weeks later to those superintendents who had not yet responded. This resulted in one additional superintendent granting permission.

After receiving permission from superintendents, principals in each participating school district were contacted via telephone or email. Some principals did not respond to either the initial or follow-up attempts for contact. Principals who did respond and granted their permission to proceed with the study in their schools were mailed survey packets to distribute to the special education teachers in their buildings. A total of 255 surveys sent to the participating schools.

Survey packets for the special education teachers contained a letter describing the nature of the study and its intended purpose, an IRB approved Individual Consent Form stating teachers' participation in this study is completely voluntary and their anonymity will be protected and an individually coded survey. Participants were asked to sign the individual

consent form and return it along with their completed survey in a postage paid, pre-addressed envelope. If respondents did not sign and return the Informed Consent form, a completed survey was accepted as permission to include the data as part of this study. Approximately two weeks after mailing the initial survey packets to principals, reminder emails were sent to principals to remind and encourage the teachers in their buildings to complete and return the outstanding surveys.

Data Analysis

The hypothesis guiding this research study is that special education teachers who perceive their administrator's behaviors as transformational have increased levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and an increased sense of teaching efficacy. Subsequently, these teachers are more likely to stay in the field of special education. In order to investigate this hypothesis, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 15.0 (SPSS) software package was used to complete the quantitative data analyses process.

Statistical analysis provides a means of reducing large sets of data into more manageable and understandable sets that are easier to interpret. This study employed descriptive and quantitative methods to conduct the data analyses. Descriptive statistics were used to develop a profile of the study's participants. This procedure generated frequencies, percentages, measures of central tendency and measures of variation based on information provided by the participants.

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to identify and extract constructs from teachers' responses to the *Special Education Teacher Survey*. This procedure served as a data reduction method that provides a practical basis to reduce a large set of variables into a few factors. This is done by combining correlated variables.

Once the constructs, or variables, were identified through factor analysis, Pearson correlation analysis was used to answer the research questions by investigating the relationships between the variables in this study. According to Bordens and Abbott (1991) this analytical procedure yields a Pearson correlation coefficient (Pearson r), which is an "index of the direction and degree of linear relationship between two variables" (p. 341). The value of r ranges from +1 through zero to -1. The closer the coefficient is to either of the limits, (-1 to 1), the stronger the relationship between the two variables. Further examination of the strengths of the relationships between variables was achieved by the calculation *R square* (r^2), or the coefficient of determination (Cronk, 2006). Pearson r^2 is a measure of the proportion of variance

shared by two variables, and represents the degree to which the variability in the dependent variable can be explained by the variability of the independent variable (Howell, 2007). Pearson r^2 values range from zero to one. The closer the r^2 value is to one, the higher the proportion of variance that is explainable.

Summary

This chapter presented a description of the methodology employed in order to complete this research study. Included in this chapter was a description of the intended sample, the survey instrument used in this study and the data collection methods. Reliability and validity procedures have been discussed as well as an overview of the analytical procedures that were used to analyze the survey data. Chapter IV will provide results and descriptions of the data collected for this study as well as the statistical findings and analytical procedures used to test each research question that was investigated in this study. These findings will be presented in narrative form. Tables will be used to exhibit data from the study's findings.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings from the analyses of data collected in this study. Data were gathered by survey method and analyzed through quantitative statistical procedures. These procedures determined whether significant relationships existed between the variables of transformational leadership, teaching efficacy, organizational commitment and job satisfaction among special education teachers employed in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section provides demographic information about the region in which this study was conducted. Results of the data collection process are discussed in the second section. Section three provides a profile of the survey participants. In the fourth section, results of the analytical procedures employed to answer the research questions are presented. The fifth and final section is a summary of the chapter.

School District Demographic Information

This study was conducted in public school districts located in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This region is comprised of eighteen public school districts, and has a total student enrollment of 62,023 (SchoolDataDirect, 2007). The special education student population for these school districts range from 9.9 percent to 20.4 percent. Eleven of the 18 districts are classified as rural, two as urban fringe, three as small town and one as mid-city size. In relation to student ethnicity, the largest percentage of the student population is predominately white, especially in districts classified as rural. More ethnic diversity is present in the urban fringe, small town, and mid-city size districts. At the time data were gathered for this research study, approximately 628 special education teachers were employed in this region.

Data Collection Procedures

Superintendents in region seven were contacted by mail and electronic mail to obtain their permission to conduct this study in their respective school districts. Initially, ten superintendents granted permission to proceed with this study either by replying to this researcher's email or by returning a signed permission form by mail. Approximately two weeks after initial contact with superintendents, a follow-up email was sent to superintendents who had not yet responded. This

resulted in one additional superintendent granting permission. A total of 11 superintendents granted permission to conduct this study in their respective districts.

After receiving superintendents' permission, principals in each of the 11 participating districts were contacted by telephone and/or email to obtain their permission to survey the special education teachers in their respective buildings. Principals were informed they would receive the survey packets by mail and were asked to distribute them to the special education teachers in their buildings. A total of 63 principals from the 11 school districts granted permission and agreed to distribute the survey packets. Table 4 shows the participating school districts, the number of surveys mailed and the corresponding percentage of usable returned surveys that were included for this study's data analysis.

A total of 255 surveys were mailed. After two weeks, principals were sent an email requesting they remind teachers who had not yet returned their surveys to complete and return them in the postage paid envelopes provided by this researcher. A total of 126 (49%) completed surveys were returned. Of the total returned, five were determined not usable due to the respondents being employed in positions other than a special education teacher. The total number of surveys meeting the inclusion criteria for this study was 121, which accounted for a 47% usable return rate.

Table 4

Participating School Districts, Number of Surveys Mailed, Completed Surveys Received, Percentage

Teachers (n = 121)			
School District	Number Sent	Responses Received	Percentage Return
Bristol City	18	7	39
Carroll County	40	13	33
Lee County	10	9	90
Norton City	6	2	33
Pulaski County	51	16	31
Radford City	19	10	53
Russell County	9	3	33
Tazewell County	28	19	68
Washington County	26	11	42
Wise County	32	15	47
Wythe County	16	14	88

Profile of the Participants

The first section of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* is a demographic section that is comprised of 10 items. These items ask teachers to provide the following demographic information about themselves and their jobs: gender, age group, whether or not they are currently employed as a special education teacher, total number of years teaching experience, total number of years teaching special education, current teaching assignment, current licensure, highest degree earned, current salary range and the administrator who primarily influences their teaching job (e.g. building principal, assistant principal or central office administrator). Table 5 shows the results of teachers' responses to these survey items.

As is shown in Table 5, there is a higher proportion of female respondents (88%, n=107) compared to male respondents (12%, n=14) who participated in this research study. The percentage of male and female teachers participating in this study may at first glance appear disproportional; however, additional research studies show a disparity of gender in national studies (National Education Association, 2004; MenTeach, 2008; SPeNSE, 2002). Possible reasons for this disparity will be discussed in Chapter V. 55 (28%, n = 34) year age range. These two groups accounted for 61% of the total survey participants. The remaining groups and their corresponding frequencies and percentages are as follows: less than one percent (.8, n = 1) fell within the less than 26 years age group, eighteen percent (18%, n = 22) fell in the age 26 to 35 group, eighteen percent (18%, n = 22) were in the age group of 36 to 45, and two percent (2%, n = 2) were in the 66 or older age group.

Survey item number three asked respondents to indicate whether they were currently employed as a special education teacher. If respondents answered "no" to this question, the survey was not included for data analysis as this study was designed to include only those teachers who were currently employed as a special education teacher.

Table 5

Demographic Information for All Participants: Gender, Age, Total Number Years of Teaching Experience, Total Number of Years Experience Teaching Special Education, Teaching Level Assignment, Current Licensure, Highest Earned Degree, Current Salary Range, and Primary Administrator who Influences Current Teaching Position

Category	Descriptor	N	%
Gender	Male	14	12
	Female	107	88
Age Group	< 26	1	1
	26 to 35	22	18
	36 to 45	39	33
	46 to 55	34	28
	56 to 65	22	18
	66 or older	2	2
Total Number Years Teaching Experience	<=1 to <= 5	21	18
	6 to <= 15	43	36
	16 to <= 25	34	28
	26 to <=35	20	17
	>= 36	2	2
Total Number Years Experience Teaching Special Education	<= 1 to <= 5	26	22
	6 to <= 15	46	39
	16 to <= 25	30	25
	26 to <= 35	16	13
	>=36	1	1
Teaching Level Assignment	Elementary	55	47
	Middle	23	20
	High	40	34
Current Licensure	Provisional	9	7
	Collegiate Professional	62	51
	Postgraduate Professional	50	41
Highest Earned Degree	Bachelor's	58	48
	Master's	60	50
	Educational Specialist	3	3
Salary Range	25,000 to 30,000	2	2
	30,001 to 39,999	67	55
	40,000 to 49,999	28	23
	50,000 to 59,999	22	18
	60,000 to 69,999	2	2
Administrator who Primarily Influences Current Teaching Position	Building Principal	80	68
	Assistant Principal	4	3
	Central Office Administrator	33	28

Note: Percentages were rounded; therefore they may not total to 100%

The second survey question asked participants to indicate their age by selecting one of six age group options. Based on their responses, the largest percentage of respondents fell within the 36 to 45 (33%, n = 39) year age range, and the second highest percentage fell within the 46 to

The next survey item asked participants to provide their total number of years of teaching experience. Respondents listed their number of years in a blank space provided by the question; however, for the purposes of adding data to SPSS, categories were created and coded as follows: 1 = less than or equal to one year to less than or equal to five years; 2 = six to less than or equal to 15 years; 3 = 16 years to less than or equal to 25 years; 4 = 26 years to less than or equal to 35 years; and 5 = 36 years or more. Participants' responses indicated that largest percentages of respondents fell within the 6 years to less than or equal to 15 years category (36%, n = 43). The second highest group was indicated in the 16 years to less than or equal to 25 (28%, n = 34) total years teaching experience. The remaining groups in descending order are as follows: eighteen percent (n = 21) were in the less than or equal to one year to less than or equal to 5 total years; seventeen percent (n = 17) were in the 26 years to less than or equal to 35 years total teaching experience and two percent (n = 2) were in the greater than or equal to 36 years total teaching experience.

Teachers were then asked to indicate the total number of years teaching experience in special education by writing the years of experience in a blank space beside the question. The same coding procedure was used for adding data into SPSS as was used in the previous question. The same categories were again created and coded as follows: 1 = less than or equal to one year to less than or equal to five years; 2 = six to less than or equal to 15 years; 3 = 16 years to less than or equal to 25 years; 4 = 26 years to less than or equal to 35 years; and 5 = 36 years or more. The data revealed that twenty-two percent (22%, n = 26) of the study's participants have less than 1 to 5 years teaching experience in special education, thirty-nine percent (39%, n = 46) have 6 to 15 years, twenty-five percent (25%, n = 30) have 16 to 25 years, thirteen percent (13%, n = 16) have 26 to 35 years, and less than one percent (.8%, n = 1) has 36 or more years teaching experience in special education. The highest percentage of teachers (39%, n = 46) fell within the six to less than or equal to 15 years range.

Survey question number six asked teachers to indicate whether their current teaching assignment was elementary, middle or high school. The highest percentage of respondents (47%,

n = 55) indicated they held elementary assignments. The second highest group held high school assignments (34%, n = 40), and middle school respondents were ranked third (20%, n = 23).

Survey question number seven asked respondents to state their current licensure status. Seven percent (7%, n = 9) reported having provisional licensure, fifty-one percent (51%, n = 62) reported having a collegiate professional license, and forty-one (41%, n = 50) reported having a postgraduate professional license.

The next survey question asked teachers to indicate their highest degree earned. The percentage of teachers holding either a bachelor's or master's degree was nearly equal. Forty-eight percent (48%, n = 58) reported they had a bachelor's degree and fifty percent (50%, n = 60) reported they had a master's degree. The remaining three percent (3%, n = 3) reported having earned an Educational Specialist degree. No respondent reported having earned a doctorate degree.

When asked about their salary range in survey number nine, the largest percentage (55%, n = 67) of teachers reported earning a salary of 30,001 to 39,999 per year. Two percent (2%, n = 2) of respondents reported earning a salary of 25,000 to 30,000, twenty-three percent (23%, n = 28) reported 40,000 to 49,999, eighteen percent (18%, n = 22) reported 50,000 to 59,999, and two percent (2%, n = 2) reported earning 60,000 dollars or more per year.

The last survey item on section one of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* asked respondents to list the title of the administrator who primarily influences their current teaching job. Participants had four response options—Building Principal, Assistant Principal, Central Office Administrator, and Other. If respondents selected the “Other” option, they were asked to list the title of the person. A total of 68% (n = 80) of the survey respondents listed the building principal as the administrator who primarily influences their job. Twenty-eight percent (n = 33) listed a central office administrator such as a director or supervisor of special education, and three percent listed the assistant principal. Respondents were asked to complete section two of the survey in relation to the person they listed as being the primary influencing administrator.

Data Analysis

Quantitative statistical methods were employed to conduct analyses on the data gathered for this study. These procedures included confirmatory factor analysis, item-total analysis, bivariate (Pearson) correlation analysis, and the Pearson *r-squared*. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to extract constructs from teachers' responses to the *Special Education Teacher Survey*.

Item-total analysis provides correlation coefficients of survey items as they relate to each other. Pearson *r-squared* is a procedure that describes the effect size of the variables as they relate to each other. These procedures are discussed more in depth in the following sections of this paper.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis is a statistical procedure commonly used to identify and analyze constructs in questionnaire development (Field, 2000 p 441). According to Creighton, Coleman, and Adams (1997), factor analysis serves two functions—to identify underlying constructs in the data and to reduce data so it is more manageable while retaining as much meaningful information as possible. Additionally, this analytical procedure ensures that questions on the survey relate to the constructs intended to be measured. Sampling adequacy for constructs is determined by the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. The KMO statistic varies between zero and one. A value of zero indicates inconsistencies in the pattern of correlations, making factor analysis procedures inappropriate. A value close to 1 indicates the patterns of correlations that are relatively compact, in which case, factor analysis should yield distinct and reliable factors (Field, 2000, p. 445). For this study, the KMO statistic obtained on each section of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was considered significant for interpretation. The KMO statistic for each section is as follows: Section 2 = .953, Section 3 = .749, Section 4 = .866 and Section 5 = .801.

Principal component analysis was employed to identify the constructs from participants' responses to the survey items. As is shown in Table 6, this procedure extracted a total eight constructs with eigenvalues of 1.0 or higher from teachers' responses to survey items on the *Special Education Teacher Survey*. However, analysis of the factor loadings of items comprising each construct revealed supporting evidence for the identification of four discreet constructs, in which consistent patterns of correlations were identified. The correlation patterns of the remaining four constructs lacked consistency and discreteness, failing to provide evidence for distinct and reliable factors. In making this determination, this researcher employed Stevens' recommendation (as cited by Fields, 2000 p. 440) of accepting factor loadings greater than 0.512 as being significant for a sample size of 100. Items with factor loadings of less than 0.512 were eliminated.

Table 6

Scale Constructs, Eigenvalues and Percentage of Variance

Scale Construct	Eigenvalue	Percent of Variance	Percent of Cum Variance
Survey Section Two (Transformational Leadership)			
Construct 1	23.68	69.66	69.66
Construct 2	1.30	3.85	73.51
Survey Section Three (Teaching Efficacy)			
Construct 3	3.41	34.07	34.07
Construct 4	2.06	20.63	54.70
Survey Section Four (Organizational Commitment)			
Construct 5	6.08	35.74	35.74
Construct 6	3.36	19.79	55.53
Construct 7	1.42	8.38	63.91
Survey Section Five (Job Satisfaction)			
Construct 8	2.76	69.06	69.06

As is shown in Table 6, two constructs were extracted from section two of the *Special Education Teacher* Survey. Together, these two constructs accounted for approximately 74% of the variance in section two of the survey instrument. Construct one, which was the stronger of the two, had an eigenvalue of 23.68, and accounted for approximately 70% of the variance. Most survey items loaded on this construct with high correlation factor loadings equaling to or exceeding .80. These values provided strong supporting evidence for the existence of this construct, which was determined by examining themes and content of survey items to be the factors of Administrative Support. The second construct extracted from section two lacked discreteness and failed to meet the minimal standards as recommended by Stevens (as cited by Fields, 2000 p. 440). As a result this construct was eliminated as a factor to be considered for data analysis.

The extraction of one construct from section two of the survey instrument was an unexpected finding in that Leithwood (1994) identified eight dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors as measured by the *Nature of School Leadership Survey*. However, when

many of the same items were answered by participants in this research study, principal component analysis provided statistical support for one construct of transformational leadership rather than eight. Further analysis of themes and content of the survey items revealed that respondents viewed administrator support as the transformational leadership behavior being measured in this study. This finding will be discussed further in Chapter V.

The same criterion used to delineate the construct in section two of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* was applied to the remaining constructs extracted from sections three, four, and five. From section three, principal component analysis initially extracted two constructs with eigenvalues of 1.0 or higher; however, further analysis of item factor loadings again revealed no distinct differentiation of the two constructs. Based on this analysis, Teaching Efficacy was the one extracted construct that was considered to be discreet.

In section four, principal component analysis initially extracted three factors with eigenvalues 1.0 or higher. However, through the same analytical procedures as used on section two and three, it was determined the survey item factor loadings revealed no distinct differentiation of the three constructs. As a result, one identifiable and discreet construct was determined to exist. This construct was identified as Organizational Commitment. The fifth and final section of the *Special Education Survey* had one identifiable construct with an eigenvalue exceeding 1.0. This construct was identified as Job Satisfaction.

Computing the Variables

Based on the results of the extraction of constructs from principal component analysis, and through the application of Stevens' (as cited by Fields, 2000 p. 440) guidelines for acceptance of significance of factor loadings, compute equations for the four variables were created in SPSS. These equations were created by combining each survey item with factor loadings exceeding .051 into their corresponding construct. Items with correlations failing to meet this minimal standard were determined to be weak, and were therefore not included in the computation of variables.

After the four variables were computed, additional reliability analyses were conducted on those items that best defined each newly computed variable. Through item-total analysis, survey items that reduced the construct's reliability coefficient were eliminated one at a time until the scale's reliability could no longer be increased. Table 7 lists the four variables and the final survey items selected to comprise each variable. A coefficient alpha was computed for the total

scale as well as for each variable. The coefficient alpha for the four variables ranged from .800 to .838, indicating high reliability for each variable. The total scale reliability was .975.

Table 7

Final Scale Constructs, Items and Reliabilities

Construct Name	Items	Construct Scale Cronbach's Alpha
Administrative Support	Items 11 through 18, and 20 through 44	.987
Teaching Efficacy	Items 45r, 46r, 47, 48r, 49r, 53, 54r	.800
Organizational Commitment	Items 55, 57, 58, 59, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71	.914
Job Satisfaction	Items 72, 73, 74, 75	.838
Total Scale Reliability		.975

Note. r = reverse coded items because of negative wording

Answering the Research Questions

This research study sought to investigate whether special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors were related to job satisfaction, teaching efficacy and organizational commitment. Six research questions served as a guide to this investigation: (1) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy? (2) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction? (3) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment? (4) Does teaching efficacy significantly influence organizational commitment? (5) Does job satisfaction significantly influence organizational commitment? (6) Is job satisfaction significantly influenced by teacher efficacy?

Correlation Analysis

Pearson (*r*) correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the effect size, or strength of the relationship, between the variables in this study. According to Howell (2007), the Pearson's correlation coefficient is defined by dividing the covariance by the standard deviation.

Coefficients range on a point scale ranging between -1 and 1. The closer the coefficient is to the one on either of these limits, the stronger the relationship between the two variables. Once the effect size was determined, further analysis of the variance shared by variables was conducted on statistically significant relationships by calculating of the coefficient of determination, or Pearson r^2 . Pearson r^2 is a measure of the proportion of variance shared by two variables, and varies from 0 to 1 (Howell, 2007). The closer the r^2 value is to one, the higher the proportion of variance that is explainable.

Research Question One

The first research question sought to investigate whether there was a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy. Perceived administrative support was the transformational leadership behavior recognized by survey respondents participating in this study. Correlation analysis was conducted between the variables of administrative support and teaching efficacy. Results of this correlation were not significant ($r = -.077, p > .05$). This finding suggests no significant relationship exists between the variables of administrative support and teaching efficacy. In other words, special education teachers' perceptions of administrative support do not significantly increase or decrease their perceived sense of teaching efficacy.

Research Question Two

Research question two sought to investigate whether a significant relationship existed between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction. A significant correlation was found between these two variables ($r = .520, p < 0.01$). The significance of this correlation provides strong evidence for the presence of a significant relationship between perceived administrative support and job satisfaction. This suggests the more or higher teachers perceive their administrator as being supportive, the higher their level of reported job satisfaction. In other words, as perceived administrator support increases, so does teacher's job satisfaction. The Pearson r^2 value (.270) indicates that approximately 27% of the variability in special education teachers' level of job satisfaction is related to their perceptions of administrative support. This value represents a medium effect size for the relationship between these two variables. Although this value suggests that administrative support can account for approximately 27 % of the

variation in special education teachers' job satisfaction, it does not necessarily cause this variation.

Research Question Three

The third research question sought to determine whether a significant relationship existed between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment. Correlation analysis conducted on these two variables resulted in the second highest significant correlation, ($r = .629$, $p < 0.01$) in this study's analyses. The significance of this relationship suggests that the more teachers perceive their administrator as supportive, the higher their levels of commitment to their organization. Further analysis of the data through examination of the Pearson r^2 value (.395) indicates that approximately 40% of the variability in teachers' level of organizational commitment is related to their perceptions of administrative support. This is suggestive of a strong effect size for the relationship between these two variables. Although this value suggests that perceived administrative support can account for approximately 40 % of the variation in special education teachers' level of organizational commitment, it does not necessarily cause this variation.

Research Question Four

Research question four sought to determine whether teaching efficacy significantly influences organizational commitment. Analysis of these variables did not result in a significant correlation ($r = .098$, $p > .05$). These results do not confirm the existence of a relationship between these two variables, suggesting that teachers' sense of teaching efficacy does not significantly influence their organizational commitment.

Research Question Five

Research question five investigated whether job satisfaction significantly influences organizational commitment. Analysis between these two variables resulted in the highest correlation ($r = .682$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting a significant and strong positive relationship between these two variables. This correlation suggests that as teachers' level of job satisfaction increases, so do their reported levels of organizational commitment. The Pearson r^2 value (.465) indicates that approximately 47% of the variability in teachers' level of organizational commitment can be accounted for by job satisfaction. Although this value suggests that job satisfaction can account

for approximately 47% of the variation in special education teachers' organizational commitment, it does not necessarily cause this variation.

Research Question Six

The sixth and final research question sought to determine whether teaching efficacy significantly influences job satisfaction. The correlation between these two variables indicates that teaching efficacy does have a significant influence on job satisfaction ($r = .241, p < 0.01$). This correlation indicates that the higher teachers perceive their sense of teaching efficacy, the higher their levels of job satisfaction. The Pearson r^2 value (.058) indicates that approximately six percent of the variability in teachers' level job satisfaction is related to their perceived sense of teaching efficacy. This value represents a medium effect size for the relationship between these two variables. Although special education teachers' perceived sense of teaching efficacy can account for approximately 6% of the variation in their job satisfaction, it does not necessarily cause this variation.

Table 8 shows the Pearson correlation coefficients, and the levels of significance between variables.

Table 8

Pearson correlation coefficients, levels of significance, and Pearson r^2 value

Variable	Statistic	Administrator Support	Teaching Efficacy	Organizational Commitment	Job Satisfaction
Administrator Support	<i>r</i>	1.00			
	Sig				
Teaching Efficacy	<i>r</i>	-.077	1.00		
	Sig	.423			
Organizational Commitment	<i>r</i>	.629**	.098	1.00	
	Sig	.000	.298		
Job Satisfaction	<i>r</i>	.520**	.241**	.682**	1.00
	Sig	.000	.010	.000	

Note: ** indicates $p < .01$

Additional Findings

Three additional questions (survey items 76 through 78) were added to the *Special Education Teacher Survey*, which were independent of the scales described above. These items

were added to gather additional information regarding participants' overall level of job satisfaction, their career intentions for the next five years. If teachers indicated they were leaving or were not sure whether they intended to leave, they were asked to provide a reason contributing to their decision to leave or indecisiveness. Results of the participants' responses are discussed below.

Survey question 76 asked, *Overall, how satisfied are you with your current teaching position?* Respondents were given four response options--Very Satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, and Very Dissatisfied. A total of 119 respondents answered this survey item. Of the 119 respondents, 48% (n = 57) indicated they were very satisfied with their current teaching positions and, 41% (n = 49) indicated they were satisfied. Seven percent (7%, n = 8) indicated they were dissatisfied with their current teaching position and four percent (4%, n = 5) stated they were very dissatisfied. In summary, approximately 89% of special education teachers responding to this survey reported they were satisfied to some degree with their current teaching position, while 11% reported some level of dissatisfaction.

Survey question 77 asked, *Do you have any plans to leave your current teaching position within the next five years?* Teachers were given three response options—"Yes," "No," or "Not Sure." A total of 120 teachers responded to this question. Fifty-eight percent (58%, n = 69) of the teachers indicated they were not leaving within the next five years by selecting "No" as their response choice. However, the remaining 42% (n = 51) indicated they were either leaving within the next five years or were not sure of their career intentions (28%, n = 34 selected Yes; 14%, n = 17 selected Not Sure). These 42% were then asked to answer survey item 78.

Survey Item 78 was as follows: *If you plan to leave or are considering leaving your current teaching position, please state the reason why.* The 42% of respondents (n = 51) who said they were leaving or were not sure whether they would leave, were asked to provide a reason for their decision in survey item 78. Forty-eight of the 51 teachers who stated they were leaving or were considering leaving within the next five years answered question 78. These teachers' responses to this question were categorized according to similarities. These categories, along with the frequencies and percentage of responses are shown in Table 9. The frequency represents the number of teachers and the percentage represents the percentage in relation to the total number of respondents who participated in this research study.

Table 9

Reasons Special Education Teachers Stated they were Leaving or Considering Leaving their Current Teaching Positions

Category	Frequency (n = 48)	Percentage
Retirement	16	13
Plans to Transfer to Administrative or Other Teaching Positions	10	8
Excessive Job Demands/Paperwork	7	6
Administrative or District Related Issues	6	5
Salary/Benefits	5	4
Affective Responses	2	2
Personal Reasons	2	2

Note: Percentages were rounded.

Thirteen percent (n=16) of teachers participating in this survey indicated an intent to leave or stated they were considering leaving due to retirement. Eight percent (n=10) of the survey respondents reported they had plans to leave the field of special education because they planned to transfer either into an administrative or general education position. Six percent (n=7) reported excessive job demands, such as paperwork time and accountability standards, as contributing factors to their decision to either leave their job or their consideration to leaving. Five percent (n = 6) reported issues relating to their administrator or employing school district. Some of the reported issues transfers or school closings, perceptions of unfair or unequal treatment by their administrator, and perceived lack of support and administrative involvement.

Four percent (n=5) of participants reported salary and benefit issues as the contributing factors. Two percent (n=2) attributed their decision affective responses such as job dissatisfaction, stress or burnout. The remaining 2% percent (n=2) reported personal reasons, such as wanting to be closer to family or wanting to work in a school that was in closer proximity to their home as contributing factors to their career decisions.

Summary

Chapter four presented the results of the data analyses used to explore the relationships between the variables of transformational leadership, teaching efficacy, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The study consisted of 121 special education teachers employed in region seven of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Descriptive statistics were employed to analysis the data provided by the participants in section one of the survey instrument. Frequencies and percentages were used to create a profile of the survey participants.

Principal components factor analysis was conducted on the survey instrument. Initially, this procedure extracted eight constructs identified by teachers' responses to the survey items; however, further analysis of the items revealed that only four were considered to be discreet. These constructs were administrative support, teaching efficacy, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

Pearson correlation analyses were used to examine the relationships between the variables. Pearson *r-squared* provided a means whereby the variability among the related variables could be accounted. Findings, as they related to the research questions, indicated that significant relationships existed at the $p < .01$ level between the variables of administrative support, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. These were expected findings. An unexpected finding was that teaching efficacy did not share a significant relationship with either administrative support or organizational commitment, but did share a significant relationship with job satisfaction.

Additional findings from the last three items of the survey instrument revealed that the majority of special education teachers participating in this study were satisfied with their current job and intended to remain in their current teaching position for at least the next five years. Of those planning to leave, or considering leaving, most were leaving or would be leaving due to retirement. A smaller percentage of those leaving or considering leaving cited reasons such as administrative or district issues, transfers to administrative or other teaching positions, issues relating to excessive job demands or paperwork, salary or benefit issues, stress related to job and personal reasons.

The fifth and final chapter will contain a summary and discussion of this study's findings, the study's implications and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The presentation and analyses of data were reported in Chapter IV. In Chapter V, a summary and discussion of the study's findings, implications for the study, and recommendations for future research will be presented. Information provided in this chapter will promote further understanding of the influence of perceived administrative behaviors on special education teachers' sense of teaching efficacy, organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

For at least two decades, nationwide shortages of certified special education teachers in the United States have threatened the quality of special education programming provided to students with disabilities. However, it is only recently that the shortage problem of special educators has received significant attention from policymakers at the national level (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004). In order to examine this shortage of special education teachers, researchers have investigated the influence of a vast majority of factors as they contribute to teachers' career decisions. Among these factors, research findings have consistently shown that perceived administrative support is significantly correlated to teachers' career decisions.

Maintaining a stable and qualified special education teaching staff presents unique challenges for today's school leaders. Special education teachers often have specific challenges related to their jobs and job roles that differ to the challenges teacher of regular education experience. Because of the varying needs of general and special education teachers, an effective transformational leader must be able to attend to the diverse needs of his or her staff by employing refined leadership skills. Through individual consideration, the transformational leader will ensure that personal attention is provided to individual staff members, and will empower their staff think of old problems in new and innovative ways. Through inspirational motivation and idealized influence, transformational leaders must communicate high expectations and provide a model of behavior for teachers to follow (Marzano, et al., 2005).

Additionally, school leaders practicing a transformational leadership model must be able to meet the needs of diversified teaching staffs in order to promote a school climate conducive to increasing staff satisfaction and collegiality. This is especially important for special educators in

that research has shown that special educators report feeling more isolated and lesser part of the school climate more often than do regular education teachers. Although these leadership qualities are essential for any school leader, these skills are especially important for administrators who supervise special education personnel.

Results of this study show a strong correlation between transformational leadership, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which are key factors in sustaining a stable and qualified special education teaching force. Transformational leaders can increase levels of satisfaction and commitment among their special education teaching staff by being supportive, accessible, designing reasonable assignments, reducing role overload, clarifying job assignments and teaching roles among both general and special educators, listening to special education teachers, and ensuring the school climate is conducive to building relationships between special and general educators.

Because of the diversity of special educators' needs, the transformational school leader supervising special education personnel will need knowledge, and an increased awareness of problems and issues that special educators face regularly. It is critically important that school leaders, and those aspiring to become school leaders, be equipped with leadership skills that are flexible and receptive to diversity.

As has previously been discussed in Chapter II, transformational leadership has received attention and recognition as the leadership style of choice not only in the business and military fields, but also in education. In the field of educational research, this leadership paradigm has been studied in the context of its shared relationships and influences with other variables such as job satisfaction, employee career intentions, student achievement, organizational commitment and teaching efficacy. These studies have been conducted in various geographical regions and yield similar findings, which suggest that administrators who demonstrate a transformational leadership style have more satisfied and committed employees.

A review of the literature for this study resulted in the location of research studies examining the influence of transformational leadership in many educational contexts. However, no research studies were found in which the effects of transformational leadership behaviors were studied exclusively to the field of special education. In light of the high and escalating rates of teacher attrition from special education, as well years of documented findings that continually

link administrative behaviors to attrition; it is logical to study the effects of and the interactions of these variables.

This study was purposed to investigate the effects of transformational leadership behaviors upon the variables of job satisfaction, teaching efficacy, and organizational commitment among special education teachers, all of which have been shown through previous research, to be significantly linked to teachers' career decisions. In order to examine the interactions and effects of these variables, six research questions were developed to guide this study. They are as follows:

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and teaching efficacy?
- 2) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction?
- 3) Is there a significant relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational commitment?
- 4) Does teaching efficacy significantly influence organizational commitment?
- 5) Does job satisfaction significantly influence organizational commitment?
- 6) Is job satisfaction significantly influenced by teacher efficacy?

Descriptive and quantitative statistical procedures were used to analyze and report data in this study. The findings are reported and summarized in the following sections.

Demographic Findings

My study was conducted in region seven in the southwestern part of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This region has an approximate total student enrollment of 62,023 (SchoolDataDirect, 2007). Twelve of the 18 districts are classified as rural, two as urban fringe, three as small town and one as mid-city size. Surveys were mailed to 255 special education teachers employed by public school districts in this region. Forty-seven percent ($n = 121$) of the total 255 special education teachers responded by returning their completed surveys.

As discussed in the Limitations section of Chapter I, the decision to distribute surveys to special education teachers through building level principals created specific limitations to this study that not only affected the number of surveys mailed, but likely the return rate as well. Principals' attitudes toward this study varied. Many were supportive in that they readily provided the number of special education teachers employed in their buildings and agreed to distribute the

surveys without hesitation. However, some principals expressed concerns regarding the time of the school year in which the surveys were being distributed (late April through early June), the additional demands completing the survey would make on teachers' time, and concerns relating to section two of the survey instrument, which asked teachers to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with various leadership behaviors associated with the transformational leadership paradigm. It is possible that some principals may have felt their personal leadership capabilities and skills were being questioned. As a result, one must give consideration to the possibility that the principals' negative attitudes may have played a role in teachers' willingness to participate in this research study.

With regards to basic demographic information, further analysis of participants' profile information revealed that the gender representation for my study was 12 percent male and 88 percent female. At first glance, this may appear disproportionate. However, when compared to national demographic data from the Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education conducted by the United States Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (SPeNSE 2002), this percentage of male and female representation is nearly identical for the number of male and female special education teachers participating in the SPeNSE study from the southeastern region of the United States. According to data in the SPeNSE report, the percentage of male and female special education teachers in the SPeNSE study were 12.3 % and 87.8 percent respectively. Across the nation as a whole, the male/female special education teacher ratio is 15.1% male and 84.9% respectively. The data from the SPeNSE national study adds supporting evidence that the gender representation in my study is representative of the male/female special education teacher ratio on a national level as well as the southwestern geographical region of the United States.

Although the gender representation in this study is reflective of national representations, there is no doubt that the number of male teachers has steadily declined, currently reaching a 40-year low (National Education Association, 2004). In order to better understand the continual decline number of male teachers, the National Education Association (2004) and MenTeach (2008) conducted research studies examining reasons for the minority of male teachers. Findings from both studies yielded similar results. The shortage of male teachers can be traced to a number of factors; however, findings from these studies were similar in that they suggest economics play a major role in the gender split. Low salaries in the field tend to deter males from

teaching because many do not believe that teaching pays enough to support their families. Other factors found to be deterrents include the perception that teaching is “women’s work” and the fear of being unfairly labeled as a homosexual or pedophile if they exhibited too many traits that are often associated with being female.

In this study, the age dispersion for special education teachers was comparable to the age demographics for the southeastern region of the United States, as indicated in the SPeNSE (2002) national study. The median age group for survey respondents in my study was 36 to 45 years of age. The largest group of respondents (61%) was in the 36 to 55 years age range, which is fairly consistent with data from the SPeNSE study. According to data from the SPeNSE study, the largest percent (67%) of respondents reported fell within the 35 to 54 year age range. Nineteen percent (19%) of this study’s participants in 35 years or less age range compared to 22% of participants in the 34 years or less age range in the SPeNSE study. Twenty percent (20%) of this study’s respondents were in the 56 and older age group compared to nearly 12 percent of SPeNSE study respondents who were reported to be 55 years or older.

The largest percentage group of teachers (36%) who participated in this study reported having between 6 and 15 years total teaching experience. This included both general education and special education teaching experience. The second highest percentage group (28%) reported having between 16 and 25 years while eighteen percent (18%) reported having one to five years total teaching experience. The smallest percentage group (2%) reported having an equivalent of or more than 36 years total teaching experience.

The percentages of respondents’ total number of years experience teaching special education varied slightly from their reported total years of teaching experience. The largest percentage (39%) of teachers reported they had between 6 and 15 total years of teaching experience in the field of special education. Twenty-two percent (22%) reported between 1 and 5 years teaching experience while 25% percent reported between a total of 16 to 25 years teaching experience. The smallest group of teachers (14%) reported having 26 or more years of teaching experience in special education.

Survey respondents represented each of the three teaching levels in this study. Forty-seven percent (47%) stated they teach elementary, 34% stated they teach at the high school level and 20% teach in the middle school level. Participants’ licensure status revealed some variances between Provisional licensure when compared to those reporting a Collegiate or Postgraduate

Professional licensure. The majority of this study's participants (51%) reported having a Collegiate Professional License, while 41% reported a Postgraduate Professional License. Seven percent reported having a Provisional License.

Ninety-eight percent of this study's respondents reported holding either a Bachelors Degree (48%) or Masters Degree (50%). Only three percent (3%) reported holding an Educational Specialist Degree. None of the respondents reported having a doctoral degree. With regards to their current licensure status, 92% of the respondents reported either a Collegiate Professional License (51%) or a Post graduate Professional License (41%). Seven percent (7%) reported they currently held Provisional licensure.

The median salary reported by survey respondents was in the 30,001 to 39,999 range. Approximately 55% of this study's participants reported their annual salary fell within this range. Twenty-three percent (23%) reported a salary range of 40,000 to 49,000 while 20% reported annual earnings of 50,000 or more. Only two percent (2%) of survey respondents reported a salary of less than or equal to 30,000.

The last survey item on section one of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* asked respondents to list the title of the administrator who primarily influences their current teaching job. Participants had four response options—Building Principal, Assistant Principal, Central Office Administrator, and Other. If respondents selected the “Other” option, they were asked to list the title of the person. A total of 68% (n = 80) of the survey respondents listed the building principal as the administrator who primarily influences their job. Twenty-eight percent (n = 33) listed a central office administrator such as a director or supervisor of special education, and three percent listed the assistant principal. Respondents were asked to complete Section 2 of the survey in relation to the person they listed as being the primary administrator who influences their job.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was used to summarize the factors among the existing relationships of individual variables in this study. This analytical procedure serves as a data reduction method that condenses large sets of data into smaller, more manageable amounts of data (Bordens & Abbot, 1991). Confirmatory, rather than exploratory factor analysis was the procedural choice because the constructs had been previously identified in the survey instrument used in this study.

Principal components factor analysis was used to extract and identify which constructs of the survey were recognized by survey respondents. A total of 64 survey items, comprising sections two through seven of the *Special Education Teacher Survey*, were analyzed through principal components analysis. Since each section of the survey was developed from existing survey instruments and were designed to measure a different construct, principal components analysis was conducted as a separate procedure on each of the survey sections. Data from a total of 121 survey respondents were analyzed through this procedure.

Findings. A total of eight factors were originally extracted from the survey instrument—two factors from Section 2, two factors from Section 3, three factors from Section 4, and one factor from Section 5. Of these eight, four were confirmed to be discrete. Factors one and two from survey Section 2 were combined to form the construct of Administrative Support. Factors three and four from survey Section 3 were combined into the construct of Teaching Efficacy. Factors five, six, and seven from survey Section 4 were combined to form the construct of Organizational Commitment. Finally, Section 5 of the survey yielded the extraction of one construct. This factor was identified as Job Satisfaction.

The extraction of the factors of Teaching Efficacy, Organizational Commitment, and Job Satisfaction from the survey were expected because the survey instruments selected to develop these sections of the *Special Education Teacher Survey* were specifically designed by the developing researchers to measure these constructs. However, an unexpected finding was that Administrative Support was the only discrete factor identified from Section 2 of the survey. As was previously discussed in chapter three of this paper, Jantzi and Leithwood's (1995), *The Nature of School Leadership Survey* was used and adapted accordingly to develop Section 2 of the *Special Education Teacher Survey*.

The Nature of School Leadership Survey was originally developed according to Leithwood's (1994) paradigm of transformational leadership. Leithwood's model suggests there are eight dimensions of administrative behaviors that comprise the paradigm of transformational leadership. However, findings from my study, which was conducted exclusively with special education teachers, suggest that participants in this study did not recognize the eight dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors, as proposed by Leithwood. Instead, data from this study indicates that the special education teachers view the construct of administrative support as the transformational leadership behavior most important and recognized. This finding is of

particular importance in that it lends additional supporting evidence to previous research studies that have found perceived administrative support is pivotal in special education teachers' job satisfaction and decisions to remain in their current teaching positions (Billingsley, 2002; Boe et al., 1999, Gersten, et al., 2001; Littrell, et al., 1994; Miller et al., 1999).

Research Question One

The purpose of the first research question was to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the variables of transformational leadership and teaching efficacy. The hypothesis guiding this question was that transformational leadership was significantly related to teaching efficacy.

Findings. Results of this analysis did not support the hypothesis. Teachers' responses to survey items corresponding to these two variables were analyzed by Pearson (r) correlation coefficient. The finding was not significant, suggesting that transformational leadership behaviors, as perceived by special education teachers participating in this study, do not significantly influence teachers' sense of teaching efficacy. This finding differs from the results of research completed by Nir and Kranot (2006) and Hipp (1997) in which significant relationships between these two variables were identified. These researchers identified strong positive correlations between teachers' reported sense of personal teaching efficacy and their perceptions of their administrator as being one who regularly and frequently practices a transformational leadership style.

Although the analysis of data for this study did not support the existence of a significant relationship between the variables of transformational leadership and teaching efficacy, it is of interest to note that teachers' sense of teaching efficacy is significantly correlated with job satisfaction, which is supported by the research work of Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi (2002). Moreover, job satisfaction is significantly correlated with transformational leadership. This finding suggests that transformational leadership may share an indirect link to teaching efficacy as mediated by job satisfaction, which is supported by research findings of various researchers (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Ross & Gray, 2006).

Research Question Two

The purpose of the second research question was to determine if a significant relationship existed between transformational leadership behaviors and job satisfaction. The hypothesis

guiding this research question was that the variable of transformational leadership behavior was significantly related to special education teachers' job satisfaction.

Findings. The results of this study supported this hypothesis. The Pearson (r) correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between these two variables. The analysis of data revealed a significant positive correlation was present at a $p < 0.01$, which suggests the more special education teachers perceived their leader as being supportive, or transformational, the higher their levels of job satisfaction. Further analysis of these variables using the Pearson r^2 showed that approximately .270 (27%) of the variability in special education teachers' level of job satisfaction could possibly be accounted for by teachers' perceptions of their administrators' supportive or transformational behaviors.

This is an important finding in that it is strongly supported by an expanse body of research conducted by expert scholars in the field (Bogler, 1999; Billingsley and Cross, 1992; Boe, et al., 1999; Gersten, et al., 2001; Griffith, 2004; Lashley and Boscardin, 2003, Littrell, et al., 1994; Miller, et al., 1999). These scholars have shown through their research that perceived administrative support is linked not only to teachers' intent to stay in teaching, but also mediates the effects of other variables such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which have both direct and indirect links to teachers' career decisions.

Research Question Three

The third research question sought to evaluate whether transformational leadership is significantly related to organizational commitment. The hypothesis guiding this question was that transformational leadership is significantly related to the variable of organizational commitment. Previous research has shown that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on organizational commitment (Geijsel, et al., 2003; Koh et al., 1995). Higher levels of organizational commitment are reported among employees when leaders are perceived as being more transformational.

Findings. This study's results support previous research findings, as well as the hypothesis guiding this particular research question. A Pearson (r) correlation coefficient was used to evaluate whether this relationship existed as well as the strength of the relationship. The correlation coefficient between these two variables was the second highest, being significant at a $p < 0.01$. This correlation suggested that the more teachers perceive their leader as transformational, the higher their levels of commitment to their organization. Further, the

Pearson r^2 showed that approximately 40% of the variability in special education teachers' level of job organizational commitment could possibly be accounted for by teachers' perceptions of their administrators' supportive or transformational behaviors.

Research Question Four

Research question four sought to determine whether special education teachers' sense of teaching efficacy significantly influenced organizational commitment. The hypothesis guiding this question was that teachers' sense of teaching efficacy significantly influences their level of organizational commitment. In other words, as teachers report higher levels of teaching efficacy, their level of organizational commitment should also be higher.

Findings. The results of this study did not support this hypothesis and did not show a direct significant influence, which was an unexpected finding. However, research conducted by Nir and Kranot (2006) shows that teaching efficacy may influence organizational commitment through the mediating variable of job satisfaction. This is a supposition that is worthy of consideration in that results of this study do support the existence of a significant relationship between teaching efficacy and job satisfaction. Additionally, job satisfaction is shown to be significantly related to organizational commitment. These results support the research findings of Nir and Kranot in that they suggest teaching efficacy may indirectly effect organizational commitment through the mediating variable of job satisfaction.

Research Question Five

The purpose of research question five was to determine whether the variable of job satisfaction significantly influenced the variable of organizational commitment. The hypothesis guiding this question was that job satisfaction does have a significant influence on organizational commitment.

Findings. The results of this study support this hypothesis as well as previous research conducted by scholars in the field who also found these variables share a significant relationship (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Bogler, 2001; Gersten et al, 2001). Pearson (r) correlation analysis indicated there was a significant relationship between these variables at a $p < .001$. The strength of the relationship between these two variables yielded the highest correlation of all variables measured in this study. Pearson r^2 value (.465) indicated that approximately 47% of the variability of teachers' level of organizational commitment can be accounted for by the variable

of job satisfaction; however, it should also be noted that job satisfaction does not necessarily cause the variation. This was an expected finding based on the review of literature.

Research Question Six

The purpose of the sixth research question was to determine whether the variable of teaching efficacy had a significant influence on teachers' job satisfaction. Studies have shown that teachers who have higher levels of teaching efficacy are better able to cope, have higher levels of commitment to teaching, and experience greater satisfaction with their job (Nir and Kranot, 2006). Based on the review of literature for this study, the hypothesis guiding this question was that a teachers' sense of teaching efficacy does significantly influence their levels of job satisfaction.

Findings. The results of this study supported this hypothesis. Pearson (r) correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between these two variables at a $p < 0.01$ level. The significant correlation between these two variables suggests that the higher teachers perceive their sense of teaching efficacy, the higher they rate their levels of job satisfaction. The Pearson r^2 value (.058) indicates that approximately six percent of the variability in teachers' reported job satisfaction can be accounted for by their sense of teaching efficacy. Although this variation in job satisfaction can be accounted for by teaching efficacy, it should be noted that teaching efficacy does not necessarily cause the variation.

Additional Findings

Three additional questions were included on the *Special Education Teacher Survey* in an effort to gather additional information about the respondents' intentions to leave or stay in the field of special education. These questions asked teachers to rate their overall level of satisfaction with their current teaching position, to indicate whether they have plans to leave their current teaching position within the next five years, and to provide a reason for their departure or indecisiveness relating to their intentions.

Results indicated that approximately 89% of this study's respondents stated they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their current teaching position compared to 11% who indicated dissatisfaction, which is an impressive percentage of special education teachers who report they are satisfied with their job. Through the application of research data to these figures, it is logical to imply that teachers who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to remain in

their current teaching positions. Moreover, this suggests that special education teachers participating in this study are more likely than not to stay in the field of special education, which is supported by the percentage of respondents who indicate they do not plan to leave their current teaching position within the next five years.

When asked to indicate whether they intended to leave their current teaching position within the next five years, 58% of the special education teachers participating in this study stated they had no plans to leave within the next five years compared to 42% who indicated they were not sure of their intentions or that they were leaving (28% reported they were leaving; 14% reported they were not sure).

When asked to provide a reason for their decision to leave or a reason as to why they were considering leaving their current teaching position, survey participants provided reasons that are similar and consistent with findings from previous research conducted by scholars in the field. A total of 13% percent of participants in this research study stated they were either leaving or were considering leaving within the next five years because of plans to retire. Eight percent (8%) reported plans to transfer to either a teaching position in regular education or an administrative position. Excessive job demands (e.g. time, accountability standards, and paperwork related issues) were reported by 6% of survey participants planning to leave or considering leaving. Five percent (5%) reported administrative or district related issues (e.g. transfers to other schools, closing of schools, lack of perceive administrative support/involvement and unequal treatment by administrators). Four percent of survey respondents reported dissatisfaction with salary and benefits, while 2% reported job dissatisfaction, stress and/or burnout as the reason for their departure or consideration to leaving. The remaining 2% reported personal reasons, such as wanting to be closer to family or wanting to work in a school in closer proximity to their home as their reasons for leaving.

Implications for Study

Over the years, accountability standards for schools have resulted in the enactment of federal legislation that has forced school leaders and policymakers to focus their attention on the field of education and student performance. In doing so, the severity of teacher shortages have been highlighted as a major educational issue, especially in the field of special education. Vast amounts of research examining reasons that contribute to the shortage of special education teachers have been conducted. Through these studies, attrition has been shown to be a major

contributing factor (Boe, Bobbitt, et al, 1997). Moreover, many of these studies continue to yield similar results that consistently identify variables such as perceived administrative support, job satisfaction and commitment as being significantly linked to teachers' departure from or decision to stay in special education.

The findings of my study not only adds supporting evidence for the critical importance and influence of each of these variables on teachers' career decisions, but highlights the significant role that perceived administrative support plays. The framework for this study was theorized to measure the relationships between transformational leadership and the variables of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment as perceived by special education teachers. This framework was based Leithwood's (1994) model of transformational leadership, which outlined eight dimensions of transformational leadership behaviors. The results of my study indicated that the teachers' participating in this study did not necessarily recognize these eight discrete dimensions of transformational leadership, as purported by Leithwood (1994). Instead, administrative support is the transformational leadership behavior that was recognized and most desired by the special education teachers who participated in this study.

Results of this study confirm that some solutions for the reduction of teaching shortages in special education are policy amenable and can be carried out without major financial burdens for school districts who already struggle with fiscal shortfalls. Local school divisions can change work-related variables as well as educate and train their administrators to be more cognizant of the needs of their special education staff. Results of this study show that perceived administrative support is significantly linked to teachers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Increasing administrative support is important in that teachers will be more satisfied and committed to their jobs. Teachers, who are more satisfied with their jobs, experience a greater sense of confidence and commitment. Therefore, they are more likely to remain in their current teaching positions.

For the university community and principal preparation training programs, the findings of my study show the effects of administrative behavior and leadership practices on variables linked to teachers' career decisions. As I have previously discussed in this paper, special education teachers often have unique needs that are dissimilar from the needs of general educators. Without an adequate knowledge base of special education, newly trained administrators will be ineffective in their efforts to meet the needs of their special education staff. Results of this study

offer insight as to the importance of preparing and equipping new administrators with a knowledge base of special education that will prepare administrators to be more supportive and cognizant of the needs of their special educators. Many principal preparation training programs require one or two special education courses. Incorporating a more in depth special education component into existing administrative training programs is critical in developing administrators with the knowledge and skills that are required to provide the support special educators desire and need.

For school administrators, this study offers insight as to how leadership practices affect teachers' job satisfaction, their commitment, and sense of teaching efficacy. By increasing administrative support, principals can influence the factors of job satisfaction and commitment, which have been shown to be linked to teachers' career intentions. As teachers' levels of job satisfaction and commitment increase, the likelihood they will stay in their current teaching positions also increase. Increased administrative support can reduce rates of attrition; thereby, creating a more stabilized and committed special education teaching staff.

Recommendations for Future Research

The goal of my study was to investigate special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors that significantly influenced or were significantly related to the variables of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Data for this study were collected from region seven in the southwestern part of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Although many findings in this study found that significant relationships existed between the variables, this study's design creates limitations. One limitation is the geographical setting in which this study was conducted. Region seven in Virginia is mostly rural and sparsely populated with a vast majority of the residents being Caucasian. Therefore, the results of this study are limited in that they cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. Conducting this study by using a national sample would likely yield results that would be more reflective and generalizable to the national population.

As indicated by the findings of this study, teaching efficacy was found to not be significantly related to the variables of transformational leadership and organizational commitment, which as previously stated, were unexpected findings. This finding could have occurred for a variety of reasons, one of which is dependent upon the manner in which teaching efficacy was measured by responses to survey questions. In this study, teaching efficacy was

subjectively measured as a product of teachers' perceptions of their own skills, capabilities, and their abilities to successfully accomplish specific teaching tasks.

In Chapter II of this study, supporting literature was provided that showed teaching efficacy was related to perceived administrative responsiveness (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), and that teachers' sense of teaching and self efficacy were linked to a healthy school climate and student achievement (Ross, 1993). A study designed to examine teaching efficacy from objective measures such as these would be insightful and most likely would be beneficial in gaining a deeper understanding of the interactions of these variables. A study designed to examine teaching efficacy by objective means and actual outcome based results such as these described above would provide a deeper understanding of the relationships teaching efficacy shares with other variables.

This study was designed to exclusively measure special education teachers' perceptions of their primary influencing administrator's leadership behaviors. Expanding this study to include principals could result in a comparative research project that would compare the results of principal and teacher responses. This type of study would provide insightful information about principals' perceptions of their leadership style and behaviors compared to the perceptions of their teachers. A study such as this would help not only to identify gaps and discrepancies that often exist between teachers' and principals' perceptions of leadership, but would be beneficial in the development of collaborative training opportunities.

This study was designed to be analyzed through quantitative methods, which did not allow for further exploration of teachers' responses on survey items. Designing a comprehensive qualitative study that includes an interview component with study participants would allow the researchers to explore in greater depth the relationships and interactions between perceived administrative behavior, job satisfaction, teaching efficacy and organizational commitment.

Many teachers' provided unsolicited comments and/or concerns relating to their job as well as their individual thoughts regarding the field of special education and education in general. As stated above, the quantitative nature of this study did not allow these comments and concerns to be analyzed as part of the data analysis process. However, the importance of these comments cannot be discounted. Many teachers expressed concerns and dissatisfaction regarding the current direction of special education and the accountability standards imposed by federal legislation acts such as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Federal legislation has

dramatically changed their job role in that many are now required to practice a model of inclusion. This teaching role is carried out by often requiring the special education teacher to go into the regular education classroom to provide special education programming to students with disabilities. While in regular education classroom, many of the special education teachers describe their teaching role more in the capacity of a classroom or teacher's assistant rather than a special education teacher. Because of these teaching role issues, along with increased attention on statewide assessments and accountability standards, some respondents participating in this study reported dissatisfaction with their job. Additionally, some attributed to their decisions to leave their current teaching positions either through retirement, transferring to other teaching positions, or leaving the field of education altogether to these issues. A study examining the concept of inclusion and the impact inclusive practices have had on special education teachers' job roles as well as their perceptions of inclusionary special education practices would be beneficial to the educational.

Finally, a study is needed to explore the collaboration efforts used between university administrator training programs and public school districts that will increase the awareness of the critical importance of administrative support among newly trained school administrators. Findings of this study add to the field of previous research that administrative support continues to be a key element in reducing teacher attrition. Solving the teacher shortage in special education will be no easy task. Results of this study offers suggestions for policy-amenable strategies will increase awareness of the significant positive impact that administrative support has in teacher retention.

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APPENDIX A
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY

1

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER SURVEY

The purpose of this survey is to gather data that describes various aspects of leadership behaviors in schools as well as teachers' affective responses and opinions to various aspects of their teaching jobs. Your responses will be used to help others who are interested in enhancing the effectiveness of leadership as it is practiced in schools.

Please complete this questionnaire and then return in the postage paid, pre-addressed envelope provided. I appreciate the many demands on your time, including this request for information. Completion of this survey is completely voluntary, but I urge you to complete this survey since only those people actually involved in schools can provide an accurate picture of how schools work. YOUR ANONYMITY IS GUARANTEED. No individuals will be identified in any reports on the research.

Your cooperation in completing this survey is greatly appreciated!

SECTION 1

1. What is your gender?
 - Male
 - Female
2. What is your current Age Group?
 - Under 26
 - 26 to 35
 - 36 to 45
 - 46 to 55
 - 56 to 65
 - 66 or older
3. Are you currently employed as a special education teacher?
 - Yes
 - No
4. Total number of years of teaching experience? _____
5. Total number of years of teaching special education? _____
6. What is your current teaching assignment?
 - Elementary
 - Middle
 - High
7. What is your current licensure?
 - Provisional
 - Collegiate Professional License
 - Postgraduate Professional License
 - Pupil Personnel Services Licensure
 - Other (please specify) _____
8. What is your highest degree earned?
 - Bachelor's
 - Master's
 - Educational Specialist
 - Doctorate
 - Other (Please specify) _____
9. What is your current salary range?
 - 25,000 to 30,000
 - 30,001 to 39,999
 - 40,000 to 49,999
 - 50,000 to 59,999
 - 60,000 to 69,999
 - 70,000 to 79,999
 - 80,000 or more
10. Who is the administrator that **Primarily** influences your teaching job the most?
 - Building Principal
 - Assistant Principal
 - Central Office Administrator (Please specify title) - _____
(e.g. Director of Special Education, etc.)

Please complete **Section 2** based on the **PERSON** you have identified in **question 10** as being the administrator who primarily influences your teaching job.

For items 11 through 75, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by circling response options 1 through 6. Use the following as a guide for your answers:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Moderately Disagree
- 3 = Disagree Slightly More Than Agree
- 4 = Agree Slightly More Than Disagree
- 5 = Moderately Agree
- 6 = Strongly Agree

Section 2

- 11. Excites us with visions of what we may be able to accomplish if we work together to change our practices/programs..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 12. Regularly encourages us to evaluate our progress toward achieving school goals..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 13. Leads by 'doing' rather than simply by 'telling' . 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 14. Provides resources to support my professional development..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 15. Encourages me to reexamine some basic assumptions I have about my work..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 16. Gives high priority to developing within the school a shared set of values, beliefs and attitudes related to teaching and learning..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 17. Has high expectations for us as professionals... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 18. Provides staff with a process through which we generate school goals..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 19. Holds high expectations for students..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 20. Gives us a sense of overall purpose.....1 2 3 4 5 6
- 21. Takes my opinion into consideration when initiating actions that affect my work..... 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 22. Shows respect for staff by treating us as professionals 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 23. Stimulates me to think about what I am doing for my students.....1 2 3 4 5 6
- 24. Ensures that we have adequate involvement in decision making related to programs and instruction..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 25. Supports an effective committee structure for decision making 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 26. Makes an effort to know students (e.g. visits classrooms, acknowledges their efforts) 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 27. Encourages me to pursue my own goals for professional learning..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 28. Encourages ongoing teacher collaboration for implementing new programs and practices 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 29. Helps clarify the specific meaning of the school's vision in terms of its practical implications for programs and instruction 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 30. Encourages us to develop/review individual professional growth goals consistent with school goals and priorities.....1 2 3 4 5 6
- 31. Expects us to engage in ongoing professional growth 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 32. Encourages us to evaluate our practices and refine them as needed..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 33. Expects us to be effective innovators 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 34. Demonstrates a willingness to change own practices in light of new understandings..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 35. Encourages me to try new practices consistent with my own interests..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 36. Facilitates effective communication among staff 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 37. Stimulates discussion of new ideas relevant to school directions..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 38. Communicates school vision to staff and students..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 39. Facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 40. Provides an appropriate level of autonomy for us in our own decision making..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 41. Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 42. Promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 43. Works toward whole staff consensus in establishing priorities for school goals..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 44. Is open and genuine in dealings with staff and students..... 1 2 3 4 5 6

Section 3

- 45. The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 46. If students aren't disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 47. When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 48. A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because a student's home environment is a large influence on his/her achievement..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 49. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 50. If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson..... 1 2 3 4 5 6

- 51. If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him/her quickly..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 52. If one of my students couldn't do a class assignment, I would be able to accurately assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 53. If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 54. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment..... 1 2 3 4 5 6

Section 4

- 55. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this school in which I am currently teaching 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 56. I really feel as if this school's problems are my own 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 57. I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my school 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 58. I feel "emotionally attached" to this school 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 59. I feel like "part of the family" at my school 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 60. Right now, staying with my school is a matter of necessity as much as a desire 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 61. It would be very hard for me to leave my school right now, even if I wanted to 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 62. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my school now..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 63. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this school 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 64. If I had not already put so much of myself into this school, I might consider working elsewhere 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 65. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this school would be the scarcity of available alternatives... 1 2 3 4 5 6

78. If you plan to leave or are considering leaving your current teaching position, please state the reason why.

- 66. I feel an obligation to remain with my current school..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 67. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my school now 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 68. I would feel guilty if I left my school 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 69. This school deserves my loyalty 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 70. I would not leave my school right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 71. I owe a great deal to my school 1 2 3 4 5 6

Section 5

- 72. I look forward to going to work each day..... 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 73. I get a lot of satisfaction from my work.....1 2 3 4 5 6
- 74. I would recommend my school as a good place to work 1 2 3 4 5 6
- 75. If I had it to do all over again, I would go into the same profession..... 1 2 3 4 5 6

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire! If you want to elaborate on any issues, please write your comments in the margins or on the back of any of the pages. Please seal the questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it in the enclosed pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

76. Overall, how satisfied are you with your current teaching position?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

77. Do you have any plans to leave your current teaching position within the next five years?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

APPENDIX B
REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO USE NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
QUESTIONNAIRE

WebMail: Sent: Requesting permission for use of Nature of School Leadership Survey Page 1 of 1



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Date: Mon, 14 Jan 2008 12:04:39 -0500
From: fhorntur@vt.edu
To: kleithwood@oise.utoronto.ca
Subject: Requesting permission for use of Nature of School Leadership Survey

Dear Dr. Leithwood:

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia. For my dissertation topic, I am studying the effects of transformational leadership behaviors on the teaching-efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment of early career special education teachers in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Because the shortage of special education teachers continues to be problematic and many of those teachers who leave often cite administrative leadership as contributing to their decisions to leave, I think this is an area viable for study.

I am writing you to request permission to use the Nature of School Leadership survey as one of my survey instruments. Please advise me in writing if you are able to grant permission for my request. Also, if you grant me permission, will you please share with me your 1997 unpublished manuscript describing the validity and reliability constructs of this instrument so that I can include this information into my methodology chapter:

If you have any questions or need clarification of my information, please do hesitate to contact me. You may also contact my dissertation Chairperson, Dr. Ted Creighton, at (540)231-4546 should you require additional information.

Thank you for your consideration to my request.

Sincerely,
Frances Horn-Turpin,
Educational Leadership Doctoral Student
Virginia Tech

Mailing Address:

56 Cottonwood Lane
Hillsville, VA 24343
(276) 728-7301 (home)
(276) 733-5033 (cell)
(276) 236-2150 (work)

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APPENDIX C

PERMISSION TO USE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

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Page 1 of 1



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Date: Tue, 15 Jan 2008 15:17:25 -0500

From: "Robin E. Sacks" <rsacks@oise.utoronto.ca>

To: fhorntur@vt.edu

Subject: Re: Fwd: Nature of School Leadership Questionnaire

Attachments:

- 2 application/msword 48.82 KB Nature L 95 instrument.doc
- 3 application/msword 39.19 KB Nature L 95 const & alpha.doc

Hi Frances,
Ken Leithwood forwarded your e-mail to me. I'm attaching a copy of instrument you requested as well as a separate file that will provide you with scale reliabilities. The instrument is not copywrite so you are free to adapt it for your own purposes. This e-mail serves as permission for you to use the instrument in your research. We would appreciate receiving a copy of any resulting publication.
Good luck. Your research sounds very interesting.
-Robin Sacks, on behalf of Ken Leithwood

Robin Sacks, PhD Candidate
Research Officer
Department of Theory and Policy Studies, Suite 6-187
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto
252 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6
Telephone: 416-978-1172
Fax: 416-926-4752

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APPENDIX D
THE NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Staff Survey

THE NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

The purpose of this survey is to describe various aspects of leadership within schools. School leadership may be exercised by one or more persons and involves a broad range of activities. This survey is intended to provide a description of school leadership with all its complexities. Your responses will be used to help others who are interested in enhancing the effectiveness of leadership as it is practiced in schools.

Please complete this questionnaire and then return in the postage paid, pre-addressed envelope provided. I appreciate the many demands on your time, including this request for information. But I urge you to do this survey since only those people actually involved in schools can provide an accurate picture of how schools work. **Your anonymity is guaranteed.** No individuals will be identified in any reports on the research.

Your cooperation in completing this survey is greatly appreciated.

June 1995

Kenneth Leithwood and Doris Jantzi

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
of The University of Toronto

NATURE OF LEADERSHIP

The following statements are descriptions of leadership that may or may not reflect leadership practices in your school. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree (1 = strongly agree, 2 = moderately agree, 3 = agree slightly more than disagree, 4 = disagree slightly more than agree, 5 = moderately disagree, and 6 = strongly disagree) that the statement describes leadership practices in your school. Record your response by circling the appropriate number beside the statement.

To what extent do you agree that the person(s) providing leadership in your school:

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>			<i>Strongly Disagree</i>		
1. Excites us with visions of what we may be able to accomplish if we work together to change our practices/programs.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Regularly encourages us to evaluate our progress toward achieving school goals.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Rarely takes our opinion into account when making decisions.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Leads by 'doing' rather than simply by 'telling'.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Provides resources to support my professional development.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Encourages me to reexamine some basic assumptions I have about my work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Gives high priority to developing within the school a shared set of values, beliefs and attitudes related to teaching and learning.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Distributes leadership broadly among the staff, representing various viewpoints in leadership positions.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Has high expectations for us as professionals.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Maintains a very low profile.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Provides staff with a process through which we generate school goals.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Is a source of new ideas for my professional learning.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Holds high expectations for students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Gives us a sense of overall purpose.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Takes my opinion into consideration when initiating actions that affect my work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

Nature of Leadership (Cont'd)

To what extent do you agree that the person(s) providing leadership in your school:

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>			<i>Strongly Disagree</i>		
16. Shows respect for staff by treating us as professionals.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Stimulates me to think about what I am doing for my students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. Ensures that we have adequate involvement in decision making related to programs and instruction.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Supports an effective committee structure for decision making.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Makes an effort to know students (e.g., visits classrooms, acknowledges their efforts).....	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Sets a respectful tone for interaction with students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Encourages me to pursue my own goals for professional learning.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Encourages ongoing teacher collaboration for implementing new programs and practices.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Helps clarify the specific meaning of the school's vision in terms of its practical implications for programs and instruction.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Encourages us to develop/review individual professional growth goals consistent with school goals and priorities.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Expects us to engage in ongoing professional growth.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Displays energy and enthusiasm for own work.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Lacks awareness of my unique needs and expertise.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Encourages us to evaluate our practices and refine them as needed.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Expects us to be effective innovators.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Demonstrates a willingness to change own practices in light of new understandings.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Encourages me to try new practices consistent with my own interests.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Rarely refers to school goals when we are making decisions related to changes in programs or practices.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

Nature of Leadership (Cont'd)

To what extent do you agree that the person(s) providing leadership in your school:


	Strongly Agree			Strongly Disagree		
34. Stimulates discussion of new ideas relevant to school directions.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. Facilitates effective communication among staff.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Establishes working conditions that inhibit staff collaboration for professional growth and planning.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. Communicates school vision to staff and students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. Encourages the development of school norms supporting openness to change.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. Shows favoritism toward individuals or groups.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. Facilitates opportunities for staff to learn from each other.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. Reinforces isolation of teachers who have special expertise.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. Provides an appropriate level of autonomy for us in our own decision making.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. Provides moral support by making me feel appreciated for my contribution to the school.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
44. Helps us understand the relationship between our school's vision and board or Ministry initiatives.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
45. Models problem-solving techniques that I can readily adapt for work with colleagues and students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
46. Promotes an atmosphere of caring and trust among staff.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
47. Symbolizes success and accomplishment within our profession.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
48. Supports the <i>status quo</i> at the expense of being at the cutting edge of educational change.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
49. Works toward whole staff consensus in establishing priorities for school goals.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
50. Is open and genuine in dealings with staff and students.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire. If you want to elaborate on issues related to leadership, write your comments in the margins or on the blank page. Please seal the questionnaire in the envelope provided and return it to your school secretary.

APPENDIX E

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO USE TEACHER EFFICACY SCALE-SHORT FORM

WebMail: Sent: Fwd: Requesting Permission to Use Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form Page 1 of 1

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Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2008 12:51:10 -0500
From: fhorntur@vt.edu
To: schoolpsycho27894@yahoo.com
Subject: Fwd: Requesting Permission to Use Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form

----- Forwarded message from fhorntur@vt.edu -----
Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2008 12:49:40 -0500
From: fhorntur@vt.edu
Reply-To: fhorntur@vt.edu
Subject: Requesting Permission to Use Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form
To: hoy.17@osu.edu

Dear Dr. Hoy:

I am writing you to request your permission to use the Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form in my research. I am currently completing my PhD in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program at Virginia Tech. My dissertation topic is: The Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on Teacher Efficacy, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment of Early Career Special Education Teachers in Virginia.

I have reviewed this instrument as well as others on your website. I feel this particular survey instrument is most suited to my study.

If you are able to grant me permission to use this instrument, please advise me in writing. I appreciate your consideration to my request. Please feel free to contact me should you require any additional information or verification of my request.

Sincerely,
Frances Horn-Turpin,
56 Cottonwood Lane
Hillsville, VA 24343
(276) 728-7301 (H)
(276) 236-2150 (W)
(276) 733-5033

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1/21/2008

APPENDIX F

PERMISSION GRANTED TO USE TEACHER EFFICACY SCALE-SHORT FORM

WebMail: INBOX: Re: Requesting Permission to Use Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form Page 2 of 3

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Date: Mon, 21 Jan 2008 12:51:17 -0500
From: Anita Hoy <anitahoy@mac.com>
To: fhorntur@vt.edu
Subject: Re: Requesting Permission to Use Teacher Efficacy Scale-Short Form

You are welcome to use the scale for your research.

Anita Woolfolk Hoy, Professor
Educational Psychology & Philosophy
School of Educational Policy and Leadership
The Ohio State University
Columbus, OH 43210

phone: 614-488-5064
fax: 614-292-7900
e-mail anitahoy@mac.com

<http://www.coe.ohio-state.edu/ahoy>

On Jan 21, 2008, at 12:49 PM, fhorntur@vt.edu wrote:

- > Dear Dr. Hoy:
- >
- > I am writing you to request your permission to use the Teacher
- > Efficacy
- > Scale-Short Form in my research. I am currently completing my PhD
- > in the
- > Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program at Virginia Tech.
- > My
- > dissertation topic is: The Effects of Transformational Leadership
- > Behaviors on
- > Teacher Efficacy, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment of
- > Early
- > Career Special Education Teachers in Virginia.
- >
- > I have reviewed this instrument as well as others on your website.
- > I feel this
- > particular survey instrument is most suited to my study.
- >
- > If you are able to grant me permission to use this instrument,
- > please advise me
- > in writing. I appreciate your consideration to my request. Please
- > feel free
- > to contact me should you require any additional information or
- > verification of
- > my request.
- >
- > Sincerely,
- > Frances Horn-Turpin,
- > 56 Cottonwood Lane
- > Hillsville, VA 24343
- > (276) 728-7301 (H)
- > (276) 236-2150 (W)
- > (276) 733-5033
- >
- >
- >

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1/21/2008

APPENDIX G
TEACHERS' EFFICACY SCALE – SHORT FORM

Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form)*

A number of statements about organizations, people, and teaching are presented below. The purpose is to gather information regarding the actual attitudes of educators concerning these statements. There are no correct or incorrect answers. We are interested only in your frank opinions. Your responses will remain confidential.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling the appropriate response at the right of each statement.

KEY: 1=Strongly Agree 2=Moderately Agree 3=Agree slightly more than disagree
4=Disagree slightly more than agree 5=Moderately Disagree 6=Strongly Disagree

1. The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2. If students aren't disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3. When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4. A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because a student's home environment is a large influence on his/her achievement.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6. If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7. If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him/her quickly.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8. If one of my students couldn't do a class assignment, I would be able to accurately assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9. If I really try hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.	1 2 3 4 5 6

*In Hoy, W.K. & Woolfolk, A.E. (1993). Teachers' sense of efficacy and the organizational health of schools. *The Elementary School Journal* 93, 356-372.

APPENDIX H
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License Agreement

LICENSEE

Name: Frances Turpin
Organization: Virginia Tech
Department: Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
Address: 56 Cottonwood Lane
Hillsville, Virginia

Project: TCM Employee Commitment Survey - Academic Package - SI
Use of the Survey in a Single Student Research Project (Acar
Dec 2004.pdf)
Date: April 3, 2008 6:06:02 PST

TCM EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT SURVEY LICENSE AGREEMENT - FOR STUDEN
TCM EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT SURVEY LICENSE AGREEMENT - FOR ST

As posted on March 18, 2008

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(b) This Agreement is the entire agreement between YOU and WESTERN regarding the subject matter. YOU will not contest the validity of this Agreement in any court or in any electronic form.

(c) No modification of this Agreement will be binding, unless in writing and signed by an authorized representative of each party.

(d) The provisions of this Agreement are severable in that if any provision of this Agreement is determined to be invalid or unenforceable under any applicable law, that provision will not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Agreement.

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(f) YOU agree to print out or download a copy of this Agreement and re records.

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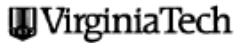
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The University of Western Ontario - Industry Liaison
Research Park - Gordon Mogenson Building
100 Collip Circle, Suite 105, London, ON, Canada N6G 4X8
Tel: (519) 661-4183

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APPENDIX I
IRB APPROVAL



Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4991 Fax 540/231-0939
e-mail moored@vt.edu
www.irb.vt.edu

FWA00000172 expires 1/05/2010
IRB # is IRB000000007

DATE: April 22, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Theodore Creighton
Frances Horn- Turpin

Approval date: 4/21/2008
Continuing Review Due Date: 4/6/2009
Expiration Date: 4/20/2009

FROM: David M. Moore 

SUBJECT: **IRB Expedited Approval:** "A Study Examining the Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on the Factors of Teaching Efficacy, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment as Perceived by Special Education Teachers", IRB # 08-261

This memo is regarding the above-mentioned protocol. The proposed research is eligible for expedited review according to the specifications authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110. As Chair of the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board, I have granted approval to the study for a period of 12 months, effective April 21, 2008.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in previously approved human subject research activities to the IRB, including changes to your study forms, procedures and investigators, regardless of how minor. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.
3. Report promptly to the IRB of the study's closing (i.e., data collecting and data analysis complete at Virginia Tech). If the study is to continue past the expiration date (listed above), investigators must submit a request for continuing review prior to the continuing review due date (listed above). It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain re-approval from the IRB before the study's expiration date.
4. If re-approval is not obtained (unless the study has been reported to the IRB as closed) prior to the expiration date, all activities involving human subjects and data analysis must cease immediately, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.

Important:

If you are conducting **federally funded non-exempt research**, please send the applicable OSP/grant proposal to the IRB office, once available. OSP funds may not be released until the IRB has compared and found consistent the proposal and related IRB application.

cc: File

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APPENDIX J
LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENT



Educational Leadership and
Policy Studies
219 E. Eggleston Hall (0302)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-5642 Fax: 540/231-7845

Frances Horn-Turpin
Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University

Dear Division Superintendent:

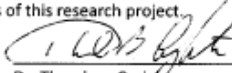
I am writing to request your assistance and permission in collecting information for my doctoral dissertation. My study is entitled, *A Study Examining the Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on the Factors of Teaching Efficacy, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment as Perceived by Special Education Teachers*. As you are well aware, there is a nationwide shortage of special education teachers. Many past research studies have shown leadership behaviors and styles significantly affect teachers' affective responses to their jobs as well as their career decisions. More recent research has shown that a transformational leadership style has a positive influence on these factors. As part of my dissertation research at Virginia Tech, I am studying the effects of special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership on their sense of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

I have enclosed the actual survey to be distributed that has been approved by the IRB (Institutional Review Board) for your review. The surveys should take a maximum of 30 minutes for the teachers to complete. They have the option of taking the surveys home so as not to intrude on instructional time. The surveys are confidential. Neither teachers' personal information nor the school district's identity will be identified in the study. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Teachers will be provided a copy of the Informed Consent Form to read and review prior to completing the survey. The Informed Consent document is enclosed for your review. Teachers will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this survey.

Once the data collection and analysis is finalized, I will provide your school district an overview of the study's results in the form of a summary report. It is my hope to distribute the surveys in late May and have data collection complete by late June.

As previously stated, I need your permission to survey your teachers. You can email me at fhornTUR@vt.edu granting me permission or return the permission slip enclosed in this packet. I can also be contacted at (276) 728-7301 or (276) 733-5033. Dr. Creighton, my dissertation chairperson, can be contacted at (540) 231-4546 should you require further verification or have questions. I want to take this time to thank you in advance for consideration to my request. The participation of your special education teachers is invaluable to the success of this research project.

Frances D. Horn-Turpin,
Doctoral Candidate


Dr. Theodore Creighton,
Dissertation Committee Chair

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APPENDIX K

INFORMED CONSENT

08-261

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Informed Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: A Study Examining the Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on the Factors of Teaching Efficacy, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment

Investigators: Frances D. Horn-Turpin, Doctoral Candidate
Dr. Theodore Creighton, Dissertation Chair
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program Leader

I. The Purpose of the Research /Project

The purpose of this research study/project is to investigate the perceived effects of transformational leadership behaviors on the factors of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organization commitment of special education teachers. This research study will test the hypothesis that special education teachers who perceive their school leader as one who practices transformational leadership behaviors, have increased levels of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Teachers who have increased levels teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment are more likely to stay in their current teaching position.

Participants for this study will include special education teachers who are employed as full-time in the public schools of Region 7 in the Commonwealth of Virginia. There are an estimated 300 to 400 special education teachers employed in this region.

II. Procedures

The Superintendent of each school district will be the entry point. Permission to conduct the study from district Superintendents in Region 7 of the Commonwealth of Virginia will be obtained prior to the delivery of surveys to the respective schools. The Superintendent will be given copies of all documents that will be delivered to the teachers for review. After receiving superintendent approval, school principals will then be contacted and will receive the same documents as the Superintendent. The principals will be asked to deliver the survey packets to the special education teachers in their schools. Special Education teachers will be asked to read and sign the Informed Consent, complete the enclosed survey and return it to the researcher in the enclosed postage paid, pre-addressed envelope. Completion of the survey should take a maximum of 30 minutes of the participants' time.

The survey is designed to gather data from a series of questions. In Section 1 of the survey, participants will be asked to answer questions about their background and current employment

Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board: Project No. 08-261
Approved April 21, 2008 to April 20, 2009

information. In the proceeding sections, participants will be asked to rate items that explore their perceptions of their school administrator's leadership behaviors and practices, their sense of teaching efficacy, their organization commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to stay in their current teaching position. Participants will be asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with these statements by circling response options ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree.

Data from the completed surveys will then be analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistical procedures by utilizing the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 15.0 (SPSS) software package. Teachers and school districts who indicate they would like a summary of the research results when available will receive a summary report of the survey findings.

III. Risks

Risks for subjects participating in this study should be minimal. However, several questions in this survey ask participants to rate their level of agreement or disagreement to various leadership behaviors, satisfaction with their job and whether they intend to leave their current teaching position. Subjects may feel answering these questions may pose the risk of their supervisor or colleagues knowing their feelings or intent, which may create some emotional discomfort. This potential risk is safeguarded by ensuring the anonymity of the subjects. Participants will be provided a pre-addressed, postage paid envelope in which they can return the completed surveys directly to the researcher rather than returning completed surveys through supervisors. This method of return will assure the participants that their supervisors and colleagues will not have access to their survey responses.

IV. Benefits

No promise or guarantee of benefits have been made to encourage you to participate. However, indirect effects or societal benefits include gaining a greater understanding of the interrelationships of these variables would be beneficial to school leaders and those aspiring to become school leaders. As a result, school leaders, through their leadership practices, will be able to create more stable, satisfied, and committed teaching staffs.

The manner in which teachers perceive their leader's administrative style and behaviors greatly influences their psychological state and attitude toward their job. As such, it is important to study and identify through empirical research those leadership behaviors that teachers perceive as being essential for positively influencing their psychological states and attitudes. Given the increase in special education teacher attrition rates, and the fact that administrative leadership practices are often cited as significant reasons contributing to teachers' decisions to leave the field, findings from this study will be useful in assisting administrators to develop and implement leadership practices that are conducive to increasing the likelihood of teachers staying in the field of special education. In addition, information gained from this study will be beneficial to the university community to incorporate into their administrative training programs for future school leaders. Developing school administrators and providing them with a knowledge base of administrative leadership skills that are most desired by teaching staffs will equip newly trained

administrators with skills and leadership qualities they can employ into their leadership roles that will enable them to become more effective school leaders.

This study goes beyond previous research in that this study examines the perceived effects of transformational leadership behaviors on teaching efficacy, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment exclusively to the field of special education. Although many past studies have examined these variables on an individual basis or in some combination, no research studies were found during the literature review that studied this combination of variables exclusively to the field of special education.

€ Please check here if you would like to receive a summary of the research results when they become available.

V. Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality

Each individual participant and school district will be assured confidentiality at the outset of the study. No information that would identify the school district or individual participants will be written in the final report. No identifiable information will be requested on the surveys; however, the surveys will be individually coded with a letter and number affixed on a label for the investigators' use and understanding. At no time will the researchers release the results of the study to anyone other than individuals working on the project without participants' written consent. It is possible that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research. The data collected for this study will be maintained in a secure location for three years after the completion of this study. After the three years have expired, the data will be destroyed by shredding all surveys completed by study participants.

VI. Compensation

No monetary compensation is connected to participation in this study.

VII. Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. Additionally, you are free not to answer any questions or respond to experimental situations that you choose without penalty.

VIII. Subject's Responsibilities

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibility: (a) to participate by completing a written survey and return it in the enclosed pre-addressed, postage paid envelope.

IX. Subject's Permission

I have read the Consent Form and conditions of this project. I have had all my questions answered. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent:

Signature

Date

Subject

Frances Horn-Turpin, Investigator

(276) 728-7301
fhornfur@vt.edu

Dr. Theodore Creighton, Dissertation Chair

(540) 231-4546
tcreigh@vt.edu

Dr. Richard Salmon (Faculty Advisor)

(540) 231-9711
rgsalmon@vt.edu

If I should have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, I may contact:

David M. Moore
Chair, Virginia Tech Institutional Review
Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Office of Research Compliance
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, VA 24060

(540) 231-4991
moored@vt.edu

APPENDIX L
LETTER TO SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS



**Educational Leadership and
Policy Studies**
219 E. Eggleston Hall (0302)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-5642 Fax: 540/231-7845

Frances Horn-Turpin
Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State
University

Dear Special Educator:

I am writing to request your assistance in collecting information for my doctoral dissertation. My study is entitled, *A Study Examining the Effects of Transformational Leadership Behaviors on the Factors of Teaching Efficacy, Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment as Perceived by Special Education Teachers*. As you are well aware, there is a nationwide shortage of special education teachers. Many past research studies have shown leadership behaviors and styles significantly affect teachers' affective responses to their jobs as well as their career decisions. More recent research has shown that a transformational leadership style has a positive influence on these factors. As part of my dissertation research at Virginia Tech, I am studying the effects of special education teachers' perceptions of transformational leadership on their sense of teaching efficacy, job satisfaction and organizational commitment.


I realize this is a busy time of the school year for each of you and the demands on your time are great. However, only those who are actually employed and work in the schools can provide an accurate picture of how schools work. Please take a few minutes of your time to read and sign the enclosed Informed Consent and complete the enclosed Special Education Teacher Survey. The information you provide is confidential. Neither teachers' personal information nor the school district's identity will be identified in the study. Your confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed.

After completing the survey, please return the survey and signed Informed Consent in the postage paid, pre-addressed envelope. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and there will be no monetary compensation for your participation in this study.

Should you have questions feel free to email me at fhornTUR@vt.edu. I can also be contacted at (276) 728-7301 or (276) 733-5033. Dr. Creighton, my dissertation chairperson, can be contacted at (540) 231-4546 should you require further verification or have questions.

I want to take this time to thank you in advance for taking time to participate in my study. Your responses are invaluable to the success of this research project.

Frances D. Horn-Turpin,
Doctoral Candidate



Dr. Theodore Creighton,
Dissertation Committee Chair

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