TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES OF THE PRINCIPALS' INVITATIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS, TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION AND PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS IN HIGH-POVERTY RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

MATTHEW CHRISTOPHER ZADIN YOUNIS. Teachers' Perspectives of the Principals' Invitational Leadership Behaviors, Teacher Job Satisfaction and Principal Effectiveness in High-Poverty Rural Elementary Schools. (Under the Direction of DR. REBECCA SHORE)

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of Invitational Leadership behaviors on school teacher satisfaction, teacher perceptions of the school principal's performance, and to identify if there was a difference between the levels of inviting behaviors of principals at high-achieving and low-achieving rural schools in North Carolina. The theoretical foundation was based on Purkey and Siegel's (2003) Invitational Leadership Theory. The demographics of the schools had noted similarities: all were Title I, elementary, and rural. A total of 23 schools participated in the study, 15 designated as high-achieving schools that received an A+, A or B grade and eight schools designated as low-achieving schools that received an F, D or C grade on the 2015-2016 North Carolina Report Card (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2016b). Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey was sent to all teaching staff. The 49-item instrument consisted of four parts to measure the invitational quotient in addition to measuring the teachers' job satisfaction and teacher perceptions of the principals' effectiveness. Additional demographical questions at the end of survey were used to analyze the results more thoroughly.

Positive relationships were discovered between teacher job satisfaction and the principals' invitational quotient, and the study showed differences between the teachers' perceptions of their principals' effectiveness with teachers at high-achieving schools

rating their principal's effectiveness significantly higher than their counterparts in low-performing schools.

Findings from this research support the need for continued use of inviting behaviors by leaders to support teacher satisfaction and highlight the need for future studies around Invitational Leadership in schools.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely wife, Michelle, and my son Zadin, thank you for your patience and support; and to my mother and father who raised 12 children and never told me there were limits to what I could accomplish. Finally, to the UNC Charlotte Education Leadership team who supported me and pushed me to complete this dissertation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIG	Academically or Intellectually Gifted
DoE	US Department of Education
ED	Economically Disadvantaged
EOG	End of Grade
ESEA	*Elementary and Secondary Education Act*
ESSA	*Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015
IET	Invitational Education Theory
IQ	invitational quotient
LEA	Local Education Agency
LEP	Limited English Proficient
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act of 2001
NCDPI	North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
NCES	The National Center for Education Statistics
SWD	Students with Disabilities

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (1965), commonly known as *No Child Left Behind* (2001), and the newest reauthorization, referred to as the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), requires states to test students every year in grades three through eight in reading and math, and once in high school in each subject. Since 2001, mandated accountability standards have been thrust upon schools, teachers and students (Burns & Martin, 2010; Camera, 2015; Partee & Sammon, 2001; Stecher & Kirby, 2004). Consequently, educational leaders have more accountability around academic achievement as measured by standardized test scores than educational leaders in previous decades (Aldridge, 2003; Byun-Kitayama, 2012). This increased accountability has led to a shift in school leader responsibilities, expectations, and core competencies needed for success. Leadership models such as Transformational (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Burns, 1978) and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 2002) have greatly influenced educational leadership; yet, with the shifting accountability landscape in public education, additional models of leadership are needed (Burns & Martin, 2010).

One model of leadership, the Invitational Leadership theory (Purkey & Siegel, 2003) was used for this correlation study. According to Purkey & Siegel (2003):

> Invitational Leadership is a theory of practice that addresses the total environment in which educational leaders function. It is a process of communicating caring and appropriate messages intended to summon forth the greatest human potential as

well as for identifying and changing those forces that defeat and destroy potential (p.1).

There are basic assumptions, which exemplify the characteristics of Invitational Leaders: optimism, respect, trust, caring and acting with intention**.** Invitational Leaders create an environment where they are intentionally showing respect for others, both personally and professionally. The study sought to examine if rural North Carolina public school principals' behaviors are connected to teacher job satisfaction and principal effectiveness based on teacher perceptions; then to determine if there is a difference between the invitational quotient of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high-achieving, high-poverty schools.

Concerns regarding student achievement and proficiency gaps for economically disadvantaged students as compared to their non-economically disadvantaged "peers" has been an enduring issue which has led to continued calls for education reforms around accountability and student growth. This issue holds true in North Carolina where testing continues to show a clear correlation between high-poverty and low academic achievement. According to a 2015 *News and Observer* article, there continues to be a correlation between school poverty and letter grades (Bonner & Keung Hui, 2015). Bonner & Keung Hui (2015) highlight that approximately 80 percent of schools that have at least 80 percent of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch received a D or an F on the North Carolina state report card. However, those schools with 20 percent (or less) of their students qualifying for free or reduced lunch fared much better, with 90 percent of those schools receiving an A or B on the North Carolina Report Card. According to data from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI)

this trend continued in 2016. The majority of schools that received an F were high-poverty schools. Of all the schools that received a D or F on their NC Report Card, 93 percent had enrollments with at least 50 percent of students from low-income families. Conversely, some schools with a high concentration of economically disadvantaged students produce higher rates of proficiency than others with similar demographics. Of the schools who received a B, or better, 24.3 percent of those schools had enrollments with 50 percent, or more, of students from low-income families (NCDPI, 2016b). This study examined Title I, rural school principals to see if there is a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high-achieving, high-poverty schools.

Hardré and Sullivan's (2008) and Hardré, Sullivan and Crowson's, (2009) research on rural schools explains that while 30 percent of schools in the United States are in rural communities, less than 6 percent of research on schools includes rural education. As part of Tieken's (2014) research on the impact of rural schools and the role rural schools play on their communities, the author expresses a concern for the lack of research focused on rural education given that so many students in the United States attend rural schools. A literature review on the topic of rural research found that over a 12-year period only 498 journal articles had been written about rural education and the authors concluded that there was a significant gap in the research and called for additional empirical research pertaining to rural schools and education (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy & Dean, 2005).

Given the dearth of research around rural schools in general and rural school leadership (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, (2005); Hardré & Sullivan, 2008; Hardré,

Sullivan & Crowson, 2009; Tieken, 2014), this study focused on rural public schools in North Carolina in hopes of adding to the empirical research pertaining to rural schools and more specifically rural school leadership.

Invitational Leadership Theory (Purkey & Siegel, 2003) served as a lens for the conceptual framework for this study. Invitational Leadership Theory involves a holistic approach and is comprised of behaviors that nurture the idea that everyone is intrinsically motivated and leadership intentionally creates welcoming, cooperative, collaborative school cultures by communicating caring messages that help people reach their full potential (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

A quantitative, correlation approach was selected for this research study to examine the perceived effectiveness of leadership and its potential relationship to student academic achievement. The school leaders for this study came from schools identified as rural, Title I schools by the NCDPI. The teachers at the schools were asked to complete a Leadership Survey originally created in 1994 by Dr. Kate Asbill and later published by Asbill and Gonzalez (2000), which measures the principals' Invitational Leadership qualities and behaviors. The Leadership Survey scores were correlated to the teachers' level of job satisfaction, which is a measure included in the Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) Leadership Survey and with the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness in low- and high-achieving, high-poverty rural schools. Additionally, there was a comparison between the principals in high-achieving schools' Invitational Leadership behaviors and the principals in low-achieving schools' Invitational Leadership behaviors to identify if there is a difference between the Invitational Leadership qualities of the two.

Purpose of the Research

This correlation study sought to determine if there was a relationship between principal behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and teacher perception of principal effectiveness; then to determine if there was a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high-achieving, high-poverty schools.

Statement of the Problem

Across the United States there have been long-standing concerns about educational achievement gaps and proficiency of the economically disadvantaged versus their non-economically disadvantaged "peers." Education reforms continue to call for increased accountability and improvement in student proficiency, especially as it relates to students who are economically disadvantaged.

Testing in North Carolina has shown a clear correlation between high-poverty and low academic achievement, yet there are exceptions to this typical relationship (Bonner & Keung Hui, 2015). Some schools with a high concentration of economically disadvantaged students produce higher rates of proficiency than others with demographically similar students. A possible explanation for these differences may be found through the leadership provided by school principals that support high quality teaching and student achievement. Research findings show that North Carolina teachers' satisfaction with their working conditions, which includes school leadership, is related to proficiency and achievement (North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions, 2016).

While this relationship between poverty and academic performance is consistent across the nation, researchers and practitioners are focused on better understanding this

relationship, to seek out interventions that can disrupt this correlation. Boykin and Noguera (2010) stated, “By drawing attention to what works and why, we may also gain a clearer sense of what it might take to create schools where the race and socioeconomic status of a child no longer predict how he or she will perform in school” (p. 147).

This correlation study sought to determine if there is a relationship between principal behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and teachers’ perceptions of principal effectiveness; then to determine if there was a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high-achieving, high-poverty schools.

Figure 1 represents the hypothetical relationships among the variables in this study and provides the Conceptual Framework. Figure 2 represents the proposed relationship between the principals’ behaviors and the additional variables that were studied for this research topic.

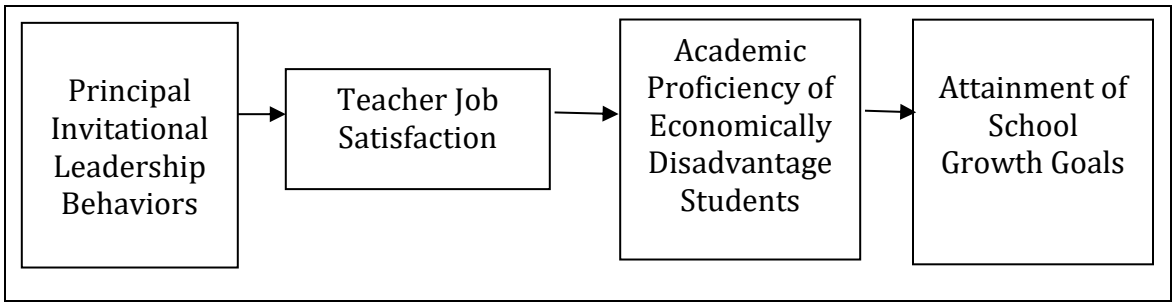

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the study (Nivens, 2006).

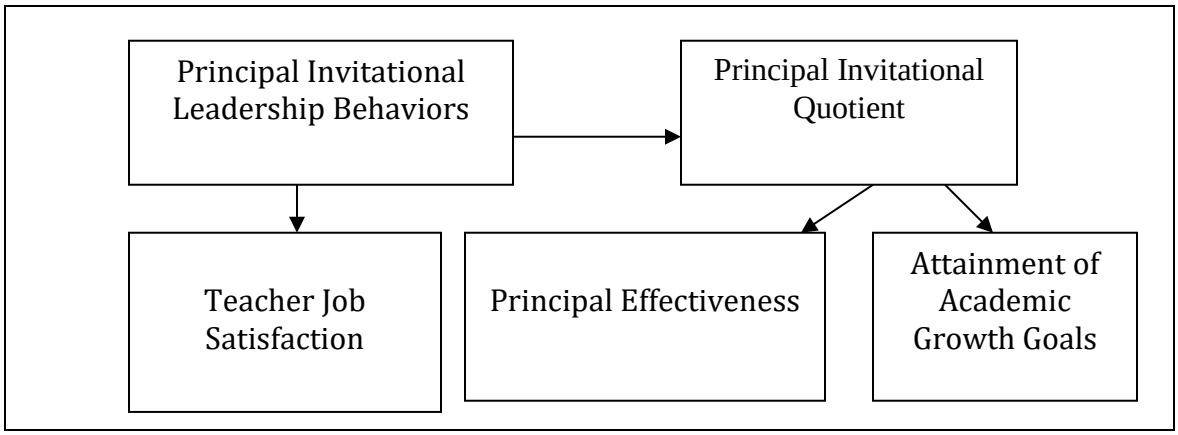

Figure 2. Relationship of principal behaviors to other variables in poverty schools (Nivens, 2006).

Research Questions

This study examined the characteristics of inviting leadership behaviors of selected elementary school principals, teacher satisfaction with the school's leadership (specifically the school principal), and student proficiency in schools that have high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. The study compared the Invitational Leadership scores of principals in high-performing high-poverty schools versus schools with high-poverty that do not perform as well on North Carolina End of Grade Tests. This study intended to better understand and answer the following questions:

1. What are the evidences of reliability and validity of responses to Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey of Invitational Leadership?
2. What is the relationship between professionally inviting principal behaviors and teacher job satisfaction in rural schools?
3. What is the relationship between the principals' invitational quotient and effectiveness from the teachers' perspectives?

4. Is there a difference in the invitational quotient of rural principals between high-achieving and low-achieving schools?

Invitational Education Theory (IET)

Based on the premise that leadership is dependent upon working well with others, William Purkey established the Invitational Education Theory (IET). Purkey (1978) argued that schools that are collaborative in nature, where everybody in the school is treated as a valued individual who is responsible and has the capability to be successful, are more productive than schools with employees without these traits. These tenets of Invitational Education Theory create conditions in schools and classrooms that support a productive work and learning environment (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Brandt, 2003; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). Purkey (1978) stresses that positive, inviting environments yield the best opportunities for collaboration and learning.

Invitational Leadership

Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) study looked at the basic assumptions of Invitational Education Theory as applied to elementary school principals. The research focused on the study of the principal-teacher relationships based on the tenets of Invitational Education. Although the concept of being an "Invitational Leader" was developed in the 1990's and Asbill and Gonzalez's study actually predates Purkey and Siegel's (2003) release of, "*Becoming an Invitational Leader: A New Approach to Professional and Personal Success*"; Purkey and Siegel's (2003) work which was developed as a holistic approach to teach leadership, not as a series of isolated events, is considered the seminal model and theoretical framework for Invitational Leadership.

Invitational Leadership was developed from the Invitational Education Theory and identifies school leadership behaviors that intentionally create collaborative and supportive school cultures. By being intentionally collaborative and creating cooperative school environment relationships, growth and development are improved (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Novak, 2002). Several previous studies about Invitational Leadership support that these behaviors are positively correlated with job satisfaction and that a principal's inviting leadership qualities are positively related to school performance. These studies support the importance of Invitational Leadership as it relates to teacher job satisfaction and teachers' perception of principal effectiveness and even to school performance and highlight the need for more research in this area (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Burns & Martin, 2010; Egley, 2003; Nivens, 2006; Novak, 2002).

Teacher Morale and Teacher Retention

Schools, districts and states throughout the country continue to look for ways to combat high teacher turnover. Ingersoll and Merrill (2010) explain that there has been an increase of 150,000 new hires a year in 2007-2008 as compared to twenty years earlier. Teacher turnover trends highlight the need for school leadership to identify ways to retain effective teachers.

The literature review around teacher turnover and retention points to the vital role that school principals play in retaining or contributing to teacher turnover. Several studies including Berry and Fuller (2007), Lumsden (1998), Mancuso, Roberts and White (2010), Prather-Jones (2011), support the idea that positive or negative views of principals and how they run the school affect teacher turnover and teacher retention.

Poverty

Poverty is a challenge facing both rural and urban schooling environments. Welburn (2009) concluded that the largest percentages of dropouts come from poor communities in both rural urban areas. The National Center for Education Statistics (2016) support Welburn's (2009) point, showing that student dropout rates of low-income students were about 5 times higher than their affluent peers, 5.9% as compared to 1.3% (McFarland, Stark & Cui, 2016).

Quantifying the conditions that allow for success in schools that are considered to be high-poverty is necessary for (North Carolina) education leaders, teachers and students to minimize the achievement and opportunity gaps between disadvantaged students and their peers (Starks, 2013). With consistent turnover and insufficient numbers of qualified teachers, it is likely that students will not meet learning targets and continue to perform poorly on state mandated testing (Nivens, 2006).

Rural School Research

Teachers and administration face a myriad of challenges in high-poverty schools in both urban and rural school settings. An additional challenge that affects rural schools and not urban schools is a lack of research. Arnold et al., (2005), pleaded for continued research of rural schools to support other rural schools, calling for empirical data that will allow for generalizations to be made about teachers, students, and leadership. Tieken (2014) argues for an increase in research around rural schooling, noting the disproportionate research on rural schools given that a large percentage of the students in the United States are in rural communities and millions of students attend rural schools.

This continued lack of research stresses the need for conducting additional research into rural education, which is part of the focus in this research study.

Significance and Need for the Study

The study of rural principal behaviors within high-poverty elementary schools will contribute to the research by better understanding the use of invitational qualities by rural leaders, and if the principals' invitational quotient influences rural students' academic achievement. This information could support school leadership initiatives in an effort to increase teacher satisfaction and student outcomes. This study sought to better understand Title I schools that are high-achieving and the conditions and leadership choices that support academic performance within a challenging demographic context. The study attempted to better understand the relationship between administration, and staff interactions, and students' performance, to see if that relationship can be correlated to teacher satisfaction as it relates to school leadership and student achievement.

The Invitational Education Theory (Purkey, 1978) and Invitational Leadership Theory (Novak, 2002; Purkey & Siegel, 2003) provided the theoretical framework for this research study and the lens to investigate the research questions. It is crucial to learn from these high-achieving, high-poverty schools to improve public education and to improve opportunities for all students to have a high-quality education.

Plan for Study

This is a correlational study of high-achieving and low-achieving high-poverty North Carolina elementary schools. The study looked at the relationship between teachers' perceptions of inviting principal behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and teachers' perception of the principals' effectiveness as measured by student performance,

as represented by the overall school grade, in high-poverty schools with high achievement and high-poverty schools with low achievement.

Teachers from the high-poverty schools were asked to complete a Leadership Survey measuring their principals' inviting leadership behaviors. Analysis of the leadership scores were used to draw correlations between the teachers' job satisfaction and teacher perceptions of principal effectiveness. Then a comparison was made between the principals' inviting leadership behavior scores in the high-achieving and low-achieving schools to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between the two.

A 44-question Leadership Survey (See Appendix B) designed by Kate Asbill (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000) was used to assess teacher perceptions of inviting behaviors of elementary principals, as they relate to Invitational Education Theory. The Likert-type instrument can be used to calculate the invitational quotient of school principals and the teachers' perceptions of the principal as an effective school leader and the level of teacher job satisfaction. In addition to the 44-items on the Leadership Survey, items 45-49 placed at the end were used to gather additional data relating to gender, years teaching, years working with the principal, level of education, and subject area(s) taught. These final survey items were used order to analyze additional variables that may impact results.

The researcher used the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze leadership behaviors of principals at high-achieving and low-achieving, high-poverty rural schools. The SurveyMonkey served as the tool to organize data. Pearson correlation coefficients was employed to determine if there is a significant relationship

between a principals' inviting qualities (personally and professionally) and teacher satisfaction. The principals' invitational quotient, was used to determine if there is a relationship between a principals' invitational quotient and the teachers' perception of the principals' effectiveness. Finally, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to identify if there were differences between teacher's perception of their principals' invitational quotient in high-poverty rural schools between high-achieving and low-achieving schools after controlling for teacher background information (e.g., teaching experience, licensure, academic degree, subject areas).

Delimitations of the Study

- This is a correlation study of the relationship between teachers' perceptions of inviting principal behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and estimation of principal effectiveness based on student performance, as represented by the overall school grade, in high-poverty schools with high achievement and high-poverty schools with low achievement. Due to it being a correlation study this research cannot show a cause and effect relationship (Coladarci, Cobb, Minium & Clarke, 2008).
- Only North Carolina public elementary schools, K-5 and Pre-K-5, with high levels of economically disadvantaged, Title I, students were included in this study.
- Schools that qualified to be in this study were designated as high-achieving (A+, A, and B Schools) and as low-achieving (C, D and F schools) based on the North Carolina School Report Card from 2015-2016.

Limitations of the Study

- The study investigated teachers' perceptions of the principals' behaviors, but did not reflect other staff, parents, central office or community members' perceptions of the principal.
- The study does not reflect the principal's personal perceptions of his/her behavior.
- This study employed a quantitative analysis of data only. This research was not able to explain how and why different factors contributed to the results.
- It is assumed that teachers would accurately report their perceptions of principal practices, the principal's effectiveness and their own level of job satisfaction.
- Years of experience of the different principals were not specifically addressed in this study.

Definitions and Key Terms

The following terms have been identified as key to conceptualizing this research study. Defining these key terms as necessary allows for the reader to better understand the researcher, the study and the results (Bruffee, 1999).

Poverty/economically disadvantaged. For this study, high-poverty schools are designated as Title I by the state of North Carolina. Schools being economically disadvantaged means that the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch is between 40 and 100 percent.

Rural school (North Carolina). Serve only schools that have a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) school locale code of 7 or 8, or be located in an area of the state defined as rural by a governmental agency of the state.

High-achieving. The schools were identified as high-achieving based on receiving an A+, A or B rating on the North Carolina School Report Card from 2015-2016.

Low-achieving. Schools were identified as low-achieving based on receiving an C, D or F on the North Carolina School Report Card from 2015-2016.

Locale school Code 7. Indicates a school is located in a place that is outside the metropolitan statistical area (MSA) and has fewer than 2,500 persons.

Locale school Code 8. Indicates a school is located inside a MSA with a population fewer than 2,500 persons (2006 & 2015).

Educational Leadership. Has three components: ability to influence others, create a vision, and establish a sense of value and purpose (as a school). This is a general theory in education (Bush, 2003).

Ethical Leadership. A leadership theory based on personal values, one's ethical and unethical behaviors and influence (Yukl, 2006).

Invitational Leadership. The idea that leaders tap into teachers' intrinsic motivation because people are capable, responsible and valuable; that education should be cooperative and collaborative; that people have untapped potential; that this potential is best realized through people, places, policies, processes, and programs that are intentionally inviting to all, professionally and personally (McKnight, 2013; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). The original four principles of Invitational

Education as defined by Purkey and Siegel (2003) are respect, trust, optimism, intention/intentionality. Caring, which is at the core of these interactions has been included more recently (Purkey & Siegel 2015):

Respect - Belief that all people are valuable and should be treated with care because they are valuable.

Trust - Possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity.

Optimism - Believing that human potential is untapped and that every person is capable.

Intentionality - Leaders choose appropriate caring and leading strategies personally and professionally with staff; being respectful, trustworthy and optimistic.

Care - Showing actions such as warmth, empathy and positive regard towards others; being a beneficial presence in one's own life and the lives of others.

Moral Leadership. Leaders support followers' wants and needs, provide value to their work, even during hardships (Burns, 1978).

Servant Leadership. The leader is a servant first (Greenleaf, 2002) and the servant leader emphasizes "…increased service to others, a holistic approach to work, building a sense of community, and the sharing of power in decision making" (Spears, 2002, p. 4).

Transformational Leadership. Transforms organizations and its members to believe in the organization mission and goals and to believe in themselves (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Burns, 1978)

North Carolina School Report Card

As part of the state accountability plan, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) provides School Report Cards for each school. The NC School Report Cards provide an overview of important information about the school(s). The School Report Cards are made up of five parts: School Profile; School Performance; School Indicators; School Environment; and Personnel. For our purposes, it is important to note that every traditional school receives a letter grade of A-F. This is calculated by two components of academic achievement: 1) School achievement 2) Student's academic growth. The school's achievement score is calculated using a composite method based on the sum of points earned by a school on the indicators measured (for that school) accounting for 80 percent of the School Report Card Grade. The students' academic growth, derived by comparing the actual performance of the students to their expected performance based on their previous testing makes up the final 20 percent of the School Report Card Grade (North Carolina School Report Cards (NCDPI, 2016b). School Scores Report Card Grades are divided into 15-point scales:

A: 85-100 points

B: 70-84 points

C: 55-69 points

D: 40-54 points

F: Less than 40 points

Schools may earn an A+NG if the school receives an "A" and does not have significant gaps between subgroups.

To provide more in-depth information about student performance, North Carolina adheres to the READY Accountability Model and federal *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA), or it's reauthorization known as the *Every Student Succeeds Act* of 2015 (ESSA), that require schools to test at least 95 percent of their students. The data reported for student performance on the North Carolina End of Grade tests is disaggregated by student group. The following seven student groups' data is reported:

- Gender: Male and Female
- Racial/Ethnic: American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, Two or More Races, and White.
- Economically disadvantaged (ED): Students who qualify for free and reduced lunch price. Students are currently identified for 2014-15 analysis in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the School Nutrition Services Section and the Division of Accountability Services.
- Limited English Proficient (LEP): Students whose first language is not English and who need language assistance to participate fully in the regular curriculum.
- Migrant Students: A child must engage in or have parents or guardians who engage in migrant agricultural work and the child also must have moved within the last 36 months as part seasonal/temporary agricultural work.
- Students with Disabilities (SWD): Students who, because of permanent or temporary mental, physical or emotional handicaps, are in need of special education services.

- Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG): Students who perform or show the potential to perform at substantially high levels of accomplishment when compared with their peers.

  (NCDPI, 2016c).

Based on the North Carolina General Assemblies' legislation, G.S. §115C-83.15, student achievement scores are calculated by the total number of points earned by a school using a composite approach. The total number of students meeting the standards, set in up to ten different indicators, is divided by the total number of students included. However, only three of the ten indicators relate to elementary schools. The indicators for elementary schools include the following:

- Students that score at or above proficient on annual mathematics End of Grade (EOG) assessments in grades 3-8.
- Students that score at or above proficient on annual reading EOG assessments in grades 3-8.
- Students that score at or above proficient on annual science EOG assessments in grades 3-8. (NCDPI, 2016b)

Summary

The purpose of this correlation study was to determine if there is a relationship between the principals' behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and the teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness; then to determine if there was a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high -achieving, high-poverty rural schools. This chapter provided an introduction explaining the need for conducting the research study,

states the research questions, and explains the methods and procedures which were used to conduct the study and to analyze the data. Chapter Two provides a comprehensive review of the literature for this research study. The review of related literature will expand upon the introduction and background information presented in Chapter One.

CHAPTER 2

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The 1983 report by the *National Commission on Excellence in Education* made a compelling case that American students would be unable to compete in the global market due to the inadequate education offered in American schools (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). This notion that our workforce was poorly educated, was falling behind international peers and would struggle to compete in a global market was the catalyst for many school reform initiatives in the years that followed (Masumoto and Brown-Welty, 2012). Such initiatives included the 1987 *Leaders for America's Schools* (Griffiths & Stout, 1988), President Bush's Governor's Conference on Education in 1989 (Masumoto and Brown-Welty, 2012), and research on Effective Schools (Levine & Lezotte, 1995). This research identified key characteristics of effective schools, which included having strong leaders and leadership (Masumoto & Brown-Welty, 2012). These studies and reports also identified certain deficiencies. This, coupled with politics and the climate around education at the time, spurred the development of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) (Coeyman, 2003; Masumoto and Brown-Welty, 2012; U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

Since 2001, mandated accountability standards have been placed upon schools, teachers and students (Stecher & Kirby, 2004;). Thus, additional pressure and accountability has been put on educational leaders to improve test scores (Aldridge, 2003). There is myriad of leadership styles and approaches to the study of leadership and

as a result, over the years, a rich literature has developed around the topic of school leadership, including: Authentic (Avolio, Gardner, Luthans, Walumba & May, 2004), Contrarian (Sample, 2002), Instructional (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), Moral (Sergiovanni, 1992), Primal (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002), Servant (Greenleaf, 2002), Shared (Chrispeels, 2004), and Transformational (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Burns 1978). Leadership models such as Transformational Leadership (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003; Burns 1978) and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 2002) have greatly influenced educational leadership stressing the importance of ethical and positive behaviors in themselves and their employees (Burns & Martin, 2010).

Invitational Leadership includes the concepts of working collaboratively to develop a vision, emphasizing communication, being personal and practicing shared leadership (Bush, 2003; McKnight, 2013; Yukl, 2006). In addition, Invitational Leadership includes a holistic approach to leadership that is not part of the other leadership styles (McKnight, 2013). The main differences lie in the elements of being intentional and being optimistic which are believed to be paramount characteristics for effective leadership. Additionally, the idea that places, policies, programs, processes and people contribute to ones' success or failure are fundamental to Invitational Leadership and Invitational Education Theory (Burns & Martin 2010). Despite all this research around leadership and its relationship on school performance, schools continue to experience persistent gaps of student achievement, particularly within high-poverty school environments.

This correlational study sought to examine if there is a relationship between rural North Carolina public school principals' behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and principal

effectiveness as perceived by their teachers. Then to determine if there is a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of lower-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of higher-achieving, high-poverty schools.

The study focuses on public schools in North Carolina that are rural and high-poverty. This study uses Title I to indicate a school is high-poverty. According to the United States Department of Education (2001), the purpose of Title I, "is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments." In North Carolina, Title I is identified as having 40 percent or more students from economically disadvantaged families (NCDPI, 2016c). All rural North Carolina, Title I schools were considered for this research. The schools were identified as high-achieving based on receiving an A+, A or B rating on the North Carolina School Report Card. Schools were identified as low-achieving based on receiving an C, D or F on the North Carolina School Report Card.

The variables studied for this research will be the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership qualities as measured by Asbill and Gonzalez's Leadership Survey (2000), teacher job satisfaction as reported through teacher responses on the Leadership Survey (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000), and the student achievement of economically disadvantaged rural schools based on the North Carolina School Report Card. Chapter two is a review of the literature as it relates to these variables influenced by school leadership. More specifically, this chapter will conceptualize Invitational Education Theory and Invitational Leadership, explain the impact of poverty and leadership on teacher morale and teacher retention, examine the implications of poverty on student

achievement, describe the challenges facing rural schools including rural schools in North Carolina and how those relate to school leadership, and explore the implications of effective leadership and successful practices in high-poverty schools.

Invitational Education Theory

For decades, leadership has been predicated on the concept of leaders' ability to work effectively with others (Mahoney, 1998). Palmer, Walls, Burgess and Stough's (2001) research highlights the benefit of leaders who view others as individuals and pay attention to their employees' growth and development needs, personally and professionally. In the literature relating to effective leadership, the important of human relationships as necessary for having a successful organization is a consistent theme (Mahoney, 1998). Based on this notion, William Purkey initially established the Invitational Education Theory (IET) and later Purkey and Siegel (2003) developed Invitational Leadership Theory.

Purkey's (1978) initial work on Invitational Education Theory was centered around the notions of Self-Concept Theory and Perceptual Tradition. Perceptual Tradition is rooted in the idea that human behavior is the product of the unique ways in which people view the world (Purkey, 1978). It acknowledges that behavior is based on perceptions which are learned and can be reconstructed. Self-concept is a set of complex learned beliefs that each individual has related to their experiences (Purkey, 1978). Furthermore, Purkey's (1970) research focusing on self-concept found a positive correlation between academic achievement and self-esteem. Given these ideas of self-concept, perceptual thinking and the positive correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement, Purkey (1978) developed the theory that students will have more

positive feelings about school if the teachers are “doing with”, rather than “doing to”, the students. Purkey goes on to explain that teachers need to consider students in a positive manner, treat them accordingly and invite them to behave in that manner (Purkey, 1978). These qualities form the basis for Invitational Education Theory.

Invitational Education Theory and leadership coverage to create an environment of respect. Benefits of this are that staff and students are typically more involved in the learning experience which can make the experience more meaningful. Being part of the decision-making process encourages a greater sense of responsibility towards learning and the school community. Teachers and administrators who can see from other’s perspectives are able to create a supportive learning environment where all stakeholders feel safe to explore new skills and take learning risks. Invitational Education Theory when applied, creates an environment in which others can become self-directed individuals and recognize that they are capable learners. Schools have seen positive benefits such as decreases in referrals, bullying incidents, stress and anxiety. Additionally, they have experienced increases in attendance, graduation rates, academic achievement and teacher job satisfaction (Purkey & Novak, 2008).

Purkey and Novak (1996) emphasized the approach that should be people viewed as valuable, responsible and having the ability to succeed. Leaders should treat them that way. Invitational Education Theory is built on the belief that interactions are based on positive and negative signals that exist in human experience. Invitational Education Theory highlights the need for communicating caring messages that convey support and understanding which will help people reach their potential, while productively identifying the negatives that inhibit ones’ ability to meet their potential (Purkey & Stanley, 1991;

Purkey, 1992; Purkey & Novak 2008, Purkey & Novak 2001). Part of Invitational Education Theory (IET) is this concept that school and classroom climates have been shown to transform through Invitational Education Theory (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Brandt, 2003).

Invitational Education Theory is based on the mental health concepts of respect, trust, optimism, caring and intentionality amongst all stakeholders in a school community, from administration, to teachers, to parents, students and the community. Treating people with the previously mentioned tenets allows for conditions that support a productive working and learning environment (Purkey & Novak, 2015; Purkey & Stanley, 1991).

Perceptual Traditions and Self-Concept Theory are two of the major elements in Invitational Education. In their research and training on counseling and teaching and learning, Purkey and Stanley (1991) describe Perceptual Traditions, how people behave, as a byproduct of how they view themselves in the larger context of the world. Self-Concept Theory asserts that an individual's behavior is constructed by, "a complex and dynamic system of learned beliefs which each individual holds to be true about his or her personal existence and which gives consistency to his or her personality and behavior" (Purkey & Stanley, 1991, p.1).

Purkey & Stanley (1991) state that people are able, valuable, and responsible and that education must be cooperative and collaborative. They go on to explain that all people have potential in all areas of human development, and the optimum realization of this potential happens through places, policies, processes, and programs that intentionally invite development. Such work must be led by people who are intentionally inviting to

others, both in professional and personal matters. In sum, elements of the environment work in conjunction with one another to influence the human potential either positively or negatively.

Invitational Stances

Purkey and Stanley (1991) elaborate on this concept of being intentionally or unintentionally inviting. They explain that these "stances" characterize individuals' personal and professional functioning.

> *Intentionally disinviting* stance is evidenced by personal and/or professional functioning that is intentionally negative in its impact on the realization of human developmental potential.
>
> *Unintentionally disinviting* stance also has a negative impact on the realization of human potential, but occurs because of inappropriate or careless functioning.
>
> *Unintentionally inviting* has a positive impact on the development of human potential, but this impact occurs despite a lack of purpose, direction, or consistency.
>
> *Intentionally inviting* stance has a positive influence on the realization of human potential, and accomplishes this with deliberate purpose, direction, and consistency (Purkey & Stanley, 1991, p.1).

Purkey and Stanley (1991) stress that leaders' adoption of the appropriate "stances" is crucial to creating an effective learning environment. Publicly humiliating a student in front of the class would be an example of being intentionally disinviting. Adopting negative stances typically result in negative environments, and intentionally

creating positive, inviting environments yields the best opportunities for collaboration and learning.

Purkey and Stanley (1991) stress the importance of being intentionally inviting, "Invitational teaching requires that the feelings, wishes, and aspirations of others be taken into account" (p.57). Examples of intentionally inviting behaviors include writing positive notes, being polite by always using "Please" and "Thank you" (spoken and printed), talking to students about out of school activities, having a sense of humor, treating students like they are responsible and involving students in decision making (Amos, Purkey & Tobias, 1985; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). Teachers who are more intentionally inviting are better able to read students' "cues" and are more responsive to the students. Being able to recognize students' "cues" gives teachers the chance to adjust their communication and instruction (O'Keefe & Johnston, 1989). This leads to the logical conclusion that the learning environment can improve or detract from the personal and professional interactions in a building.

In the past 40 years, Purkey's theory has expanded and been studied throughout the United States and applied in education institutions across five continents (Nivens, 2006). Later, William Purkey and Betty Siegel (2003) developed the Invitational Leadership model based on the IET.

Invitational Leadership

Bolman and Deal (2013) contend that effective leadership is not monopolized by one personality, race, or gender, but there are certain qualities that are consistent in effective leaders. They point out that the challenge is finding the right combination to allow leaders to succeed regularly. Kouzes and Posner (1995) define leadership as, "the

art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations" (p.30). Purkey and Siegel (2003) attempt to achieve this by using the Invitational Education Theory as their framework for leadership. Part of the premise for this leadership model is to have more "connectedness, cooperation and communication" (Purkey and Siegel, 2003, p.1) with staff, teachers and students and to create inviting spaces where all can meet their potential (Novak, 2002). The theory of Invitational Leadership was developed as a holistic approach to teach leadership not as a series of isolated events, but as a comprehensive model that develops an outlook that can impact one's personal and professional life (Purkey & Seigel, 2003).

Invitational Leadership is modeled from the Invitational Education Theory and highlights administrative behaviors that intentionally create collaborative, cooperative school cultures. It is built on the idea that caring and appropriate messages get humans to want to do their best and reach their potential (Purkey & Siegel, 2003). Central to this premise is the concept that human relationships and human growth and development are improved by being intentionally collaborative and creating cooperative school environments (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000). Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) state that an Invitational Leadership style is respectful of human dignity, collaborative between staff members and between staff and the administration. Purkey and Siegel explain Invitational Leadership as such (2003):

> Invitational Leadership is a theory of practice that addresses the total environment in which educational leaders function. It is a process of communicating caring and appropriate messages intended to summon forth the greatest human potential as

well as for identifying and changing those forces that defeat and destroy potential (p.1).

Invitational Education theory assumptions about optimism, respect, trust, intentionality and being caring serve as the principles for Invitational Leadership (Purkey & Novak 2015; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Nivens 2006). Purkey and Siegel (2003) and Purkey and Novak (2015) describe them more in-depth.

Respect – belief that all people are valuable and should be treated with care because they are valuable;

Trust – possessing confidence and predictability of others' abilities and integrity;

Optimism – believing that human potential is untapped and that every person is capable;

Intentionality – leaders choose appropriate caring and leading strategies personally and professionally with staff; being respectful, trustworthy and optimistic.

Care – showing actions such as warmth, empathy, and positive regard, towards others; being a beneficial presence in one's own life and the lives of others.

Purkey and Siegel (2003) describe the different levels of intentional leadership. Intentionally inviting leaders are considered the highest level. These leaders, through intentional caring messages, in their personal and professional lives, have direction, purpose and skill in their relationships and choices. According to Purkey and Siegel (2013) being intentionally inviting may include behaviors such as creating a wellness program for your employees, sending cards for birthdays or loss of loved ones, placing

plants around the building, adding cheerful posters and handling difficult situations in a kind and caring manner.

Unintentionally inviting leaders may have some of the same characteristics of the intentional leaders, but due to this occurring "unintentionally" they may be inconsistent in their behaviors and choices. Unintentionally disinviting leaders are more negative and they make decisions that may seem counter-productive to bringing people together and creating collaborative work and personal relationships, but they are unaware that they are doing this. The lowest level of intentional leadership is intentionally disinviting. This includes behaviors that one is cognizant of that are a negative and/or toxic and are intentionally meant to, "demean, dissuade, discourage, defeat and destroy" (Purkey and Novak, 1984, p.4). This can include berating a staff member in front of colleagues.

According to Purkey (2003) everything leaders do either adds to or takes away from the overall human existence, and being intentionally inviting helps to create a place where everyone is welcome and provided with the tools and opportunities to reach their potential. The intentional inviting leader operates through people, places, their policies, the programs they choose and the processes in which tasks are accomplished. Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) explains that being intentionally collaborative and creating a supportive school environment facilitates growth and development for all, staff and students. Some characteristics or examples of being an Invitational Leader include:

- Learning names of staff and their families
- Getting to know staff and their out of school activities
- Being optimistic
- Holding high expectations for staff and students

- Creating a climate of improvement through collaboration and shared decision-making
- Providing constructive feedback in a respectful way
- Having a belief that people are more important than results
- Considering their leadership role to be a service position
- Delegating authority and responsibility to provide learning opportunities
- Expressing appreciation for a job well done and treating each co-worker as a unique individual (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Purkey and Siegel, 2013).

Invitational Leadership Research

The theory of Invitational Education has deeper roots than Invitational Leadership, which is considered relatively new. Although, there have been studies using IET to examine teachers' classroom behaviors (International Association for Invitational Education, 2005), the studies on Invitational Leadership or its potential impact on high-achieving, high-poverty schools is relatively limited. The following studies demonstrated Invitational Leadership behaviors and teacher job satisfaction as being strongly correlated. A study done by Asbill and Gonzalez in 2000 focused on the relationships among principals' Invitational Leadership behaviors, which she called the invitational quotient, teacher job satisfaction and perceptions of principal effectiveness in New Mexico elementary schools. The survey was sent to three teachers at 92 schools and 153 surveys were returned and usable for their research. Egley (2003) studied principals' Invitational Leadership behaviors as they related to teacher job satisfaction, teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness, and the Computed Accreditation Performance Index of Mississippi high schools. Seventy-seven districts in the state of Mississippi

participated in Egley's research. Two hundred and eighty-three of the 509 surveys that were distributed to high school teachers were returned and usable. Burns and Martin (2010) studied the effectiveness of male and female principals who had an Invitational Leadership style. Their research consisted of 14 principals (seven females and seven males) and of the original 252 teachers that were sent surveys, 164 teachers participated in the study and showed no differences between males and females and their effectiveness as a leader. However, the research did find that there was a statistically significant difference between effective and less effective schools and the leaderships' use of Invitational Leadership qualities. McKnight (2013) examined off-campus centers in midwestern states and administrator effectiveness in creating a learning environment for adult learners through the lens of Invitational Leadership theory. A qualitative multi-case study approach was utilized for this research. For this research study, three administrators were chosen for each case study and an additional 31 individuals, approximately ten participants at each site, were either interviewed or participated in the study. Findings from McKnight (2013) suggest that the use of Invitational Leadership in off-campus center administrators was, "directly related to creating an effective learning environment" (p. 124).

Nivens (2006) studied the principals' Invitational Leadership behaviors as they relate to teacher job satisfaction and perception of principal effectiveness in public elementary schools in North Carolina. Nivens' study is most aligned with this research proposal. Nivens (2006) used the Leadership Survey (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000) to survey seven high-performing and seven low-performing schools. A total of 443 surveys were sent and 224 surveys were returned, and 223 surveys were used for the statistical

analysis. Of the 223 surveys used, 102 were from one of the seven high-performing schools and 121 were from one of the seven low-performing schools. Nivens' research found strong positive correlations were found between the principals' professionally inviting leadership behaviors and teacher job satisfaction and between principals' personally inviting behaviors and teacher job satisfaction. Additionally, the research found a strong positive correlation between principals' invitational quotient and teacher perception of principal effectiveness. Additional analysis showed a statistically significant difference between principals, with high-achieving school principals having a higher invitational quotient than lower achieving schools.

All studies demonstrated Invitational Leadership behaviors and teacher job satisfaction as being strongly correlated. Egley (2003), Nivens (2006) and Burns and Martin's (2010) studies found also that principals' inviting leadership behaviors were positively related to school performance. These studies support the importance of Invitational Leadership as it relates to teacher job satisfaction and teacher perception of principal effectiveness and even to school performance and highlight the need for more research in this area. None of these studies focused specifically on high-poverty, rural schools, thus showing a gap in the literature.

Teacher Retention

In the K-12 education field, teacher turnover is a challenge. Likewise, in the field of education teachers often do not persist in the profession long enough to build effective relationships with students, parents and the community that are necessary for teachers to be effective in teaching careers (Berry & Fuller, 2007).

With the continuation of high teacher turnover rates, schools, districts and states have been investigating ways to combat high attrition. Teaching has a particularly high turnover compared to many other occupations and has become more unstable over the years (Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey 2014) with many of the teachers leaving during the first few years of teaching. Within the first five years approximately 40 percent to 50 percent of new teachers leave (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009; Grissmer & Kirby, 1997; Hanushek, Kain, Rivkin, 2005; Hemphill, Nauer, Zelon & Jacobs, 2009; Ingersoll, 2003). Year after year, teachers are leaving the classroom in pursuit of other opportunities. Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff (2011) found that about 500,000 teachers in the United States leave their schools annually, a figure that astoundingly repeats itself every year at a staggering cost to districts.

Ingersoll and Merrill (2010) explain that there has been an increase of 150,000 new hires in the year 2007-2008 as compared to twenty years earlier. Additionally, the modal years of experience for a teacher in 2008 was one year, as opposed to 1988 when the modal average was 15 years of teaching experience. They argue that teacher turnover is not the same in all types of schools and that the highest rates of turnover occur in high-poverty, high minority, urban and rural schools. These trends highlight the dynamic issue of teacher turnover within schools and stress the need to investigate whether changes in how leadership interacts with staff might impact how schools retain (effective) teachers.

In 2002, North Carolina became the first state in the United States to conduct a survey of public school teachers to understand what key factors affect teacher retention and student achievement (Nivens, 2006). A recent report to the North Carolina General Assembly regarding the state of the teaching profession in North Carolina, based on the

aforementioned survey, states that data from 2015-2016 showed an attrition rate of 9.04% for the state. Of the 95,594 teachers employed during the 2015-2016 school year, 8,636 teachers were reported as "attrition" by the state. In comparison, the average LEA (Local Education Agency) attrition rate was 13.40%. Of the 8,636 teachers considered to be "attrition" by the state of North Carolina, approximately 11.5 percent of them left due to a career change or being dissatisfied with teaching. Additionally, five districts in North Carolina had approximately a 25 percent (or higher) turnover rate ([NCDPI], 2016e). Eight of the ten Local Education Agency's with highest teacher turnover rates the last two years are considered to be rural school districts (North Carolina Department of Instruction [NCDPI], 2016e; United States Census Bureau, 2010; The Rural Center, 2016). According to the United States Department of Education's Strategic Plan (DoE) 2014-2018 a priority goal is to ensure that "more students have effective teachers and leaders" (p. 2) and for effective teachers and leaders to be more equitably distributed across schools.

Teacher Morale

Jarnagin (2004) defined teacher morale as the thoughts and perceptions teachers may have as it relates to the degree that they perceive their abilities to have successful outcomes as a teacher. According to Lumsden (1998), teacher morale and a healthy school environment are related and the principal's ability to create a positive school climate has an impact on teacher morale. Mancuso et. al., (2010), state that one of the key contributors to teacher dissatisfaction is, "poor school leadership" (p. 307). Teachers who feel they receive a lack of support from their school administrators are more likely to leave their job (Prather-Jones, 2011). Berry and Fuller (2007) found that the amount of

support and empowerment that administrators provide is related to whether or not a teacher will return to a school or leave. One survey found that about 40% of teachers who left their position said that inadequate support from school administration was their main reason for leaving (Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek, & Morton, 2006). To make matters more challenging, many successful teachers leave the classroom within a few years to explore other opportunities (Scherer, 2012). Schools with high teacher turnover rates are more likely to have poorer student achievement results (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2001).

A study in North Carolina from 1995-2006 investigated the levels at which high-poverty schools could recruit and keep effective teachers. The study found that high-poverty schools have trouble attracting and retaining teachers (Guarino, Brown & Wyse, 2011). Other studies support this finding including, Scafidi, Sjoquist and Stinebrickner (2007), who explain that new teachers are more likely to leave challenging schools that have a concentration of students living in poverty, score poorly on achievement tests and have a higher concentration of minorities. Clotelter, Ladd, Vigdor and Wheeler's (2006) research went beyond teachers to include principals. Their study found that high-poverty schools had staff, teachers and principals that were less qualified than those staff in schools with fewer students living in poverty. These factors serve to continue a cycle in which we can expect schools that struggle to perform and have a student body that comes from low-income homes to have high teacher turnover. Freeman, Scafidi and Sjoquist (2005) explain that one would expect these schools with high turnover to continue to be low performing because they have to retain teachers that are less effective and continue to hire new and inexperienced teachers.

Impact of Leadership on Retention

Boyd et al., (2011) showed perceptions of the school administration by teachers has the greatest influence on teacher retention decisions. Johnson, Kraft, and Papay (2011) found that schools with positive teaching conditions have teachers that are more satisfied with their jobs and these teachers intend to continue to teach. This is still true when controlling for factors including student and school characteristics such as the percentage of students categorized as low income. Ladd (2009) supports the idea that teaching and learning conditions predict teacher plans to leave a school, independent of school demographics.

The work of Johnson et al., (2011) and Ladd (2009) indicate that conditions such as effective principal leadership, collaboration amongst colleagues, and working in a trusting atmosphere are important factors influencing teachers' decisions to stay in their schools. Additionally, research done on the 2014 *North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey* indicates that school leadership has a significant and negative association with teacher retention (2015). On the *North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey* (2015), the variable of leadership had a larger effect than other constructs including community support and involvement, managing student conduct, and teacher leadership on teacher retention. This coupled with what we know about teacher retention highlights the need principals with inviting behaviors.

Thibodeaux (2014) asserts that one of the biggest challenges facing schools is providing a high-quality education from highly-qualified teachers for all students. Johnson (2006) postulates that student success is clearly dependent on this notion of

having knowledgeable and caring teachers in our schools. Consistent teacher turnover does not allow for this to occur.

Positive relationships with stakeholders is beneficial for teachers and can be a reason why teachers want to stay, or leave their school and/or the teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2001). To better nurture relationships with students it is important that teachers have support from all stakeholders. Additionally, it would be beneficial if all stakeholders adhered to the idea that for schools to improve and for instruction to be of high quality, schools could be more active in identifying problems of teacher retention. This means parents, communities, the local board of education, students, administration and teachers all work together to resolve these problems (Strom, Strom, & Beckert, 2011). Invitational Leadership Theory supports these ideas. The principles of creating welcoming, cooperative, collaborative school cultures and that have principals who are supportive and care about their staff professionally and personally will likely retain more teacher (Purkey & Siegel, 2003).

Poverty and Dropout

As this research seeks to study students who attend Title I schools and live in poverty, it is important that some context is provided for how poverty affects students in schools. Jensen (2009) defines poverty, "as a chronic and debilitating condition that results from multiple adverse synergistic risk factors and affects the mind, body, and soul" (p.6). He identifies six different types of poverty: situational, generational, absolute, relative, urban, and rural (p.6). Jensen (2009) expounds upon the challenges of rural poverty in the United States, highlighting that there are, "more single-guardian households, and families often have less access to services, support for disabilities, and

quality education opportunities" (p.6). Contrary to what many may believe, Kusmin (2016) notes that poverty rates during the Great Recession rose for both rural and urban areas. However, urban areas began to see a decline in poverty in 2011 while rural areas did not see any decline in poverty until 2013. Kusmin (2016) explains that general poverty rates have been higher in rural areas since the data was first recorded in the 1960's. When including the Supplemental Poverty Measure, which includes cost of living and cost of housing, there is a higher poverty rate in urban areas. Regardless, poverty poses challenges to many rural families and students.

When addressing poverty, it is important to know that poverty does not occur in isolation. As Sapolsky (2005) and Jensen (2009) explain, poverty can impact everything and different aspects of poverty are interconnected; in essence, one type of poverty can encompass and impact all other types of poverty explained. Moreover, rural poverty can be situational, generational, absolute and relative. This research will focus on rural poverty and more specifically, financial poverty.

Rebell and Wolff (2012) assert that our country does not have an education crisis, but instead a crisis of poverty. Poverty disproportionally affects economically disadvantaged communities, be they urban or rural communities, and according to the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (2011) student achievement more strongly correlated with family income than any other factor. Welburn (2009) concluded that the largest percentages of dropouts come from low-income rural and urban communities. Families living in poverty are often less likely to identify or address school and academic issues, as parents often leave education matters to the schools because they are not confident in challenging the teacher's knowledge and/or are busy

with the daily stresses of life without financial stability. This leads to students in low-income families being more reliant on the schools for their education and lacking in parental support (Chenoweth, 2009). McFarland, Stark & Cui (2016) support Welburn's (2009) point, reporting that student dropout rates of low-income students were about five times higher than their affluent peers, 5.9 percent as compared to 1.3percent, respectively.

Assuming that success in education leads students out of poverty, these findings highlight the importance of schools preparing students at an early age for academic success in the future, especially for those children living in poverty. It is also important that leaders and policy makers cultivate teaching and learning environments that makes a difference in the achievement of our students from high-poverty schools, particularly elementary schools. Leaders and policy makers can identify ways that these high-poverty, high achieving schools excel to assure that all schools working with students living in poverty are receiving a high-quality education that will allow them to succeed in elementary, middle, high school and beyond.

The News and Observer's (2015) article about school report card grades and students' wealth and NCDPI data show a correlation between school poverty and the school's North Carolina Report Card grade (Bonner & Keung Hui, 2015; NCDPI, 2016b). Given this information, quantifying the conditions that allow for success in schools that are high-poverty is necessary to minimize the achievement and opportunity gaps between economically disadvantaged students and their peers (Starks, 2013).

Given, the negative impacts of poverty combined with the consistent turnover and insufficient numbers of qualified teachers, it is likely that students will not meet learning

targets and will continue to perform poorly on North Carolina End of Grade Testing (Nivens, 2006). High turnover amongst teachers is exacerbated in high-poverty schools and facilitates conditions for students to struggle in school and contributes to the possibility that students will not persist to graduation.

Although dropping out is a major issue in schools with high levels of poverty, another issue is the rate at which schools with a high percentage of students living in poverty attend college compared to their peers at schools with more concentrated affluence. Palardy (2013) found that students attending schools composed of students with a high socioeconomic status were 68 percent more likely to enroll at four-year colleges than their peers who attend low socioeconomic schools.

The impact of long-term poverty on students and accountability measures due to high stakes testing measures requires strategic planning by school districts and administrators. School leaders must clearly recognize impoverished students' needs and identify what teaching and learning strategies are successful in these high-poverty schools (Lopez, 2012). This stresses the critical importance of the role of the school leader in these high-poverty schools.

Rural School Research

Initially, settlers from Europe sought to establish schools. In the 1700's the youth education curriculum was generally focused on the needs of the community and country. Most lesson were delivered in single-room, multi-aged rural schoolhouses throughout the United States which created the foundation for education in our country (Pate, 2012). Early in our country's development we were an agrarian society and schools continued to be largely rural. According to the United States Census in 1900 about 60 percent of

people lived in what were identified as “rural” communities. In the southern part of the United States approximately 84% of people were from rural areas (US Census Bureau, 1995).

Butterworth and Dawson (1952) explain that the 20th century began to mark a change in the areas where people lived, and the education system as a whole experienced growth, especially in these new, more populated areas. As people began to transition from farm and rural life into cities with high concentrations of people, business and money, a shift began that allowed for more inequalities between rural and urban areas to develop (Butterworth and Dawson, 1952). Pate (2012) explains that during this period, rural schools, “which were once known as efficient providers of knowledge, were now treated with neglect by the U.S. education system” (p. 27).

Rural schools, teachers and administrators face a myriad of challenges, as do urban schools; however, one challenge that impacts rural schools more specifically, is a lack of research. Tieken (2014) explains that a large percentage of the students in the United States are still found in rural communities, yet there is a lack of publications related to rural education. Researchers call for more empirical research around rural areas, to allow for greater generalization to the rural school setting including students, teachers, leadership and communities (Arnold et al., 2005).

Research shows that although approximately 30 percent of United States schools are in rural communities only about six percent of the research conducted included rural schools (Hardré & Sullivan, 2008; Hardré et al., 2009). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2013), in 2011-2012 about half of the operating school districts were rural (Gray, Bitterman & Goldring, 2013). Additionally, the National Center for

Education Statistics shared that in 2013-2014 approximately 30 percent of all public schools were considered rural and about 19 percent of public school students were enrolled in rural schools (Glander, 2015). This means that between nine and ten million students in United States public schools attend rural schools (Glander, 2015).

Arnold et. al., (2005) concluded that based on their review of literature, "a significant gap may exist in the knowledge base about the professional growth of rural teachers and the work of rural school administration" (p.15). Arnold et. al., (2005) noted that over a 12-year period until 2001 only 498 journal articles were written about rural education, and of those articles, 20 were written on leadership and teacher retention, respectively, and few of them were deemed as high-quality work regarding rural education.

Coladarci (2007) also calls for more research to be done in rural schools. Johnson and Strange (2009) highlighted that although about 20 percent of students attend rural schools and a third of the public schools are in rural communities, only a small fraction of education research is related to this caveat of education. Coladarci (2007) postulates, that one of the reasons for this is an unclear and inconsistent definition of the word rural. Hill (2015) builds upon this notion, explaining that it is difficult to truly understand rural issues without truly knowing the place. This dearth of research highlights the need for additional research into rural education and more specifically rural education leadership and teacher job satisfaction, which are both addressed in this research study.

Additional research upholds this need for more support for rural education. Penix (2009) explains that the schools located in rural West Virginia are likely to be impoverished and not receive some of the same support as urban or more populated

areas. Penix (2009) asserts that rural schools are, ". . . isolated from the influences, assistance, and support found in more densely populated areas. Thus, rural schools by necessity must compete for scarce resources in their communities and districts in order to be successful" (p.105). This is another example of challenges faced by rural schools and correlates to Purkey and Siegel's (2003) theory that school leaders must be intentional through people, place, policies, programs and processes. To see improved student learning.

Strange, Johnson, Showalter and Klein (2013) explain that even though there are a great number of communities, schools and students that are still rural, there still seems to be a shortage of research around rural education and its problems. Strange et al., (2013) found that the rural school enrollment is multifaceted with growing diversity and sets of challenges. Enrollment in rural schools is increasingly poor, diverse and has students with a variety of special needs (Strange et. al, 2013). Johnson, Showalter, Klein and Lester (2014) confirm the increased diversity in rural schools. They report that approximately 27 percent of rural students are of color and that "seventy-five percent of rural students of color attend school in 17 states with rural minority student rates above the national average" (p. 10). Strange et al., (2013) argue that the country cannot try to educate our rural students and run our rural schools exactly the same way we educate our urban students. They contend that rural education needs to be supported in a way that considers the unique needs and challenges of being a rural school.

Rural Schools in North Carolina

The United States Census Bureau (2010) describes the differences between urban and rural based on population. Urban is broken up into two categories, Urbanized Areas

and Urbanized Clusters. Urbanized Areas have 50,000 or more people; Urban Clusters consist of at least 2,500 and less than 50,000 people and rural encompasses all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area.

In rural areas across the United Stated and in North Carolina, students and staff are faced with various and immense challenges to meet the needs of these students in the context of a society that is becoming more city and urban-centric. In addition to some of the unique problems found in rural schools, rural students face many of the same challenges that their peers in urban areas do. Like urban schools, rural schools face issues of teacher retention, staffing high needs schools, insufficient resources and inadequate school leadership (Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Ross & Chung, 2003; Lashway, 2003; Roza, Celio, Harvey & Wishon, 2003). Additionally, rural schools face challenges related to lack of research (Arnold, et al., 2005) and they, in conjunction with their students, face other challenges that are more uniquely related to rural schools.

Rural schools often face a lack of central office staff and resources necessary for staff support, including assistance with recruitment of teachers and administrators. Rural schools are often geographically isolated, without nearby institutions that could provide students with choices and possible options to transfer from low-achieving rural schools (NCDPI, 2016d). This is supported by Warren and Peel (2005), who looked at the effectiveness of collaboration in a rural school reform partnership between universities and rural public schools in North Carolina, that rural school principals often had limited resources and few options for support.

Other problems that have a greater impact on rural schools are dwindling tax bases which exacerbate the loss of effective teachers and other professionals (as they

move to more urban areas in search of jobs and stability) and a curriculum that is not concerned or aligned with the needs or identity of rural communities. Economic issues can have a more direct impact on rural communities and schools and they can feel the effects of changes rapidly. Fewer K-12 schools with high-achievement minimizes the opportunities to attract and keep businesses and the educated people needed to staff these businesses. The loss of businesses also provides schools with challenges related to keeping and/or attracting effective teachers to these rural districts (Carr & Kefalas, 2009). This fact, combined with research on teacher retention emphasizes the importance of the leadership qualities of principals for retaining effective teachers.

Rapid population growth, specifically of English Language Learners, brings a different set of challenges for rural areas because rural schools generally do not have the resources for the increased population nor the additional staff needed to assist in meeting the varied need of this relatively new group of students (Hill, 2014).

According to Hill (2014), North Carolina is one of six states where more than 40 percent of the students are rural. More specifically, Johnson et al., (2014), found that more than one-third of North Carolina students in rural schools are of color and North Carolina has the second largest population of non-white rural school students in the United States. North Carolina has the eighth highest percentage of English Language Learners in its rural schools in the country. Hill (2014) explains that federal initiatives and state policies like those tied to the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* and more recently, *Every Student Succeeds Act*, do not accurately fit the needs of many rural schools. Hill goes on to suggest that due to the structure of federal policy, such as ESSA, rural areas get less funding for their disadvantaged students than more densely populated

areas. Schafft and Jackson (2010) argue that rural schools and areas are painted in a negative light that makes them seem less progressive as compared to the urban society. Given the increased diversity and difference in funding, it is challenging for rural schools to meet the needs of their students.

Per the North Carolina Department of Instruction (2010) application for *Race to the Top* funding, economically distressed rural include many of North Carolina's lowest-achieving schools. According to this report, "Sixteen of NC's 115 LEAs fall into this category, 15 of which are in rural areas. The 16 lowest-achieving districts contain 48 of the 132 lowest-achieving schools. Eight of these lowest-achieving districts are clustered in NC's rural northeast region, which has struggled economically with the decline of the region's agrarian and manufacturing industries" (p. 205). Clearly, rural schools in North Carolina need additional investigation to support these low-achieving schools.

Johnson et al., (2014) collected data to analyze from the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES) to explain the condition of rural education across the country. They categorized North Carolina as in need of "crucial" support from policymakers to address rural education issues. This was based on factors including the percent of rural schools, percent of small rural school districts, percent of rural students, total number of rural students and the percentage of state funding that goes to rural schools. Additionally, Johnson et al., (2014) identifies North Carolina as in need of "urgent" support from policymakers to address concerns related to changes in rural communities as it pertained to percentage of rural minority students, total number of rural students, percent of rural students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) or student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) and percentage of student mobility.

Finally, they found that 23.7percent of rural students in North Carolina attend Title I schools and that 53.1percent of rural students are eligible for free or reduced lunch; ranking North Carolina as the 7th and 14th, respectively, highest states in these categories (Johnson et al., 2014).

All this research supports the notion that North Carolina's rural schools are becoming more diverse and more challenging and that more research needs to be conducted to identify ways that rural schools in North Carolina can be supported.

Effective Leadership

Bolman and Deal (2003) asserted that leaders are to, "persuade and inspire rather than coerce and give orders," and they add that the goal is to, "produce a cooperative effort and to pursue goals that transcend narrow self-interest" (p. 337).

Research in leadership has recently begun to focus more on how the leadership personnel collaborate with the employees in an organization; adopting the idea that everybody has something positive to contribute to the group (Bolman & Deal, 2002; Cleveland, 2002; Brookfield & Preskill, 2009; Purkey & Siegel, 2003; Spears, 2002; Yukl, 2006). Childress (2009) explains that it is the duty of the district and school leadership to support the conditions that allow for student success. If encouraging positive contributions from teachers ultimately leads to student success, leaders should consider adopting this approach.

Chenoweth (2009) stresses the importance of functioning as a whole school working collaboratively around specific problems of practice and not as a group of isolated individual classrooms. Saphier, King and D'Auria (2006) support Chenoweth's (2009) idea. They call for consistent collaboration that focuses around problems of

practice and analyzing students' work. Pate (2012) summarized that the successful schools analyze data from all stakeholders and analyze it to identify the needs of the school and school community. Pate (2012) highlighted that successful leaders collaborated with all stakeholders, which built trust among all the stakeholders and allowed for the vision to be created together. This notion of collaboration amongst staff and other stakeholders is supported through Invitational Leadership.

Research has established that effective principals focus on building a positive school culture (Bruggencate, Luyten, Scheerens, & Sleegers, 2012; Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005; Penix, 2009; Wang, Haertal & Walbert, 1993). The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (2008) describe leadership and culture this way, "An educational leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth" (p. 18). Penix (2009) states that effective principals build cultures that are positive and supportive of the teachers who have the most direct impact on students.

Chenoweth (2010) found that creating high expectations for students was another characteristic that successful schools do differently. Chenoweth (2010) explains that principals of highly effective schools are highly visible and active throughout the school with students, teachers and parents. Being highly visible and getting to know students was found as a characteristic of an effective leader (Pate, 2012). A common component for successful schools is strong and successful leadership (Warren and Peel, 2005).

Effective Leadership for High Poverty Schools

Starks (2013) calls for continued understanding for staff on the effects of poverty and for education leaders to address all the aspects of poverty, "as well as the factors related to income that are correlated with school performance" (p.21). School leaders need to address the complex needs of students in poverty in order for these students to consistently experience academic success. To meet the needs of low-income students, the focus of leadership should remain on the needs and weaknesses of the school and not the deficits of the student and to avoid stereotypes often related to low-socioeconomic households (Gorski, 2009).

Barton (2004) identified several strategies that school leaders need to put in place to support students in poverty. Barton points to the need for creating a print-rich environment to compensate for what is often a lack of books and reading in lower socioeconomic households. Relationship building is also important for student success and because impoverished students are more mobile, it is helpful for schools to communicate when a student transfers to help ensure that the programs in the old school can be transferred to the new school. It is imperative for school leaders to create and support these strategies for students in high-poverty schools to be successful. Chenoweth (2010) concluded that leaders in high-poverty schools that are high-performing create a positive climate for teachers to support their students.

A myriad of high-poverty schools instituted a number of supports and social programs that are not commonly found in public schools in hopes of combating the impact of poverty and providing services that these students may not have the ability to access. From the Harlem Children Zone providing healthcare and social programs, to

California earmarking hundreds of millions of dollars for afterschool supports for their economically disadvantaged students, to some schools providing medical services through grants and partnerships with local hospitals; these are some efforts put in place in urban areas (Scherer, 2010). However, given the remote nature of rural schools and the challenges of transportation these ideas may not be practical.

One component of effective school leadership is the relationship between school and the community. Starks (2013) provides an additional suggestion for rural school leaders to make an intentional effort of making connections between home and school. Starks (2013) argues that this connection is vital to maximizing student learning. According to Jacob and Lefgren (2007), to close the achievement gap there must be a collaborative commitment between home and school that allows students to grow and to keep parents engaged by offering support and resources.

Given all the leadership styles and strategies and the fact that many high-poverty, low-achieving schools still exist, this study will focus on leadership through the lens of Invitational Leadership which has been researched less than many other major leadership theories in hopes that it may offer some insights into the relationship between leadership of high-poverty, rural schools and student achievement.

Teacher Perceptions of Leadership

This research will seek to better understand the teacher's perceptions of their school principals' effectiveness as seen through the lens of Invitational Leadership Theory. By the nature of their jobs, teachers often work closely with school administration, parents and students. Generally, teachers work more closely with their principals than central office staff. They are typically immersed in the school culture on

a consistent, daily basis (Penix, 2009). This connection affords teachers the opportunity to get to know these stakeholders, form opinions about administration and to have an overall feel for what others think of the principal. This vantage point puts teachers in a position where they can assess the principals' leadership qualities (Penix, 2009).

The research will not consider the principals' own perceptions because self-reporting is not necessary to determine student achievement, teacher satisfaction or to measure the leaders' invitational qualities. This study does not utilize principals' self-reporting in the data collection process because it can cause inflated data and biased viewpoints (Penix, 2009). Adams, Soumerai, Lomas, and Ross-Degnan (1999), conducted a study in the field of health care and they determined that there was a considerable amount of bias in self-reporting. Self-reporting can cause others to call into question the validity of the research because results can be overstated and negatively impact the development of theories related to particular research studies (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002). As a result, this study will use teachers' perception of the principals' behaviors to identify if the research would identify the leader as having a high invitational quotient.

Summary

This chapter offered a review of pertinent literature including Invitational Education Theory and Invitational Leadership which provided the lens through which this research was analyzed. Additionally, variables that impact student success and school leadership such as poverty, teacher retention and teacher morale were also reviewed in this chapter and serve as the basis for this research study. The following

chapter provides an explanation of the research methodology that will be utilized for the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This correlation study had a two-fold objective. First the study sought to determine if there was a relationship between principal behaviors, teacher job satisfaction and teacher perception of principal effectiveness. Second, the study sought to determine if there was a difference between the invitational qualities of principals of low-achieving, high-poverty schools and the invitational quotient of the principals of high-achieving, high-poverty schools.

This chapter provides an explanation of the methods that are used for the research study. The chapter identifies the research questions, population being studied, research design, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, threats to the internal and external validity of this study and the methods used to conduct this research.

Research Questions

All rural, North Carolina public elementary schools that were identified as Title I were considered for this research study. Schools were considered to be high- or low-achieving based on their North Carolina Report Card grade from the 2015-2016 school year.

This study examined the characteristics of inviting leadership behaviors of rural elementary school principals, teacher satisfaction with the school's leadership (specifically the rural school principal), and student performance in schools that have high concentrations of economically disadvantaged students. The study compared the Invitational Leadership scores of rural principals in high-performing high-poverty

schools versus schools with high-poverty that do not perform as well on North Carolina End of Grade Tests and received lower grades on the North Carolina Report Card. Through the utilization of the Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the evidences of reliability and validity of responses to Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey of Invitational Leadership?
2. What is the relationship between professionally inviting principal behaviors and teacher job satisfaction in rural schools?
3. What is the relationship between the principals' invitational quotient and effectiveness from the teachers' perspectives?
4. Is there a difference in the invitational quotient of rural principals between high-achieving and low-achieving schools?

Population and Study Design

For this study the unit of analysis was the school. The population encompasses Title I rural elementary North Carolina public schools serving grades K-5 and Pre-K-5. In studying to see if there were differences between the Invitational Leadership qualities of the principals at high-achieving, high-poverty rural schools and those principals at low-achieving, high-poverty schools, it was important to distinguish what was considered high-poverty. For this study, high-poverty schools were considered Title I by the state of North Carolina, which constitutes schools as being economically disadvantaged which means that the percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch is between 40 and 100 percent. Additionally, the school must be considered rural. According to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, to be considered rural in North Carolina

the Local Education Agency must serve only schools that have a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) school locale code of seven or eight (indicates rural schools according the US Census Bureau) or they must be in an area of the state defined as rural by a governmental agency of the state (NCPDI, 2016). Of the 2,716 public schools (including charter) in North Carolina, 1,068 were identified as rural schools. Of the rural schools 942 were identified as rural Title I schools and 415 are elementary schools (K-5 and Pre-K-5). For the purposes of this study "rural fringe" schools are not included because of their close proximity to cities. This left a total of 194 possible schools for consideration (NCDPI, 2016b).

The school's achievement scores were calculated using a composite method based on the sum of points earned by a school on all the indicators measured (for that school) and this accounts for 80 percent of the School Report Card Grade. The students' academic growth, derived by comparing the actual performance of the students to their expected performance based on their previous testing made up the final 20% of the School Report Card Grade (NCDPI, 2016b). Schools may earn an A+NG if the school receives an "A" and does not have significant gaps between subgroups. The Report Card Grade Scores are divided into a 15-point scale. Table 1 provides the total number of points (student achievement plus student academic growth) to earn each letter grade on the North Carolina School Report Card (NCDPI, 2016b).

Table 1

NC School Report Grade Scale

NC Report Card Grade	A	B	C	D	F
Scale Score (points)	85-100	70-84	55-69	40-54	< 40

Tables 2 and 3 represent achievement levels in grades 3-6 on the math and reading End of Grade Test. Each grade has 5 achievement levels. Achievement level 3 is considered proficient and levels 4 and 5 are considered "College and Career Ready". Levels 3, 4 and 5 contribute to each school's achievement score, which counts for 80% of their North Carolina Report Card grade (NCDPI, 2014).

Table 2

Math Scale Scores Grade 3-6

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	≤ 439	440-447	448-450	451-459	≥ 460
4	≤ 440	441-448	449-450	451-459	≥ 460
5	≤ 440	441-448	449-450	451-459	≥ 460
6	≤ 443	444-450	451-452	453-460	≥ 461

Table 3

Reading Scale Scores Grade 3-6

Grade	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
3	≤431	432-438	439-441	442-451	≥ 452
4	≤438	439-444	445-447	448-459	≥ 460
5	≤ 442	443-449	450-452	453-463	≥ 464
6	≤ 441	442-450	451-453	454-464	≥ 465

Every year the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) publishes a yearly listing of schools and their school performance grade. The study used

this pre-existing data compiled from NCDPI (2016b) from the 2015-2016 school year to identify the schools as high-achieving and low-achieving.

Sample

A total of 23 school principals agreed to participate in the study. Of the 23, fifteen of the schools were considered high-achieving schools (received an A+, A, or B on the NC Report Card) and eight were considered low-performing schools (received a C, D, or F on the NC Report Card). A total of 276 respondents, from these 23 schools, agreed to take the survey, but of that number only 240 filled out all or almost all of the items on the Leadership Survey. The low-performing schools had a response rate of approximately 44 percent and the high-performing schools had a response rate of approximately 50 percent. There was a total of 240 respondents for this survey. Of the 240 respondents 76 of them were from low-performing schools which made up 31.67 percent of total respondents. One hundred sixty-four (164) teachers from high-performing schools took the survey which was 68.33 percent of the total respondents to the survey.

The responses from the teachers, including facilitators and coaches, at 23 schools (15 of which were high-achieving and 8 were low-achieving schools), were downloaded into IBM SPSS for data analysis. The appropriate items were reverse scored and responses were spot checked for errors.

Table 4

Number, Gender and Percentage of Respondents from High- and Low-Achieving Schools

	Schools	*Teachers*	% of Respondents	F	% of Respondents	M	% of Respondents
Low	8	76	31.67%	70	29.17%	6	2.50%
High	15	164	68.33%	158	65.83%	6	2.50%

Note. F = Female; M = Male

Both sets of schools had to be identified as Title I in order to be considered economically disadvantaged for the purpose of this study. The design allowed for a comparison between the high-achieving and low-achieving Invitational Leadership scores to determine if there are differences between high-achieving and low-achieving rural principals and their Invitational Leadership qualities. The study also examined if there was a correlation between teachers' job satisfaction and the leaderships' Invitational behaviors.

Procedures

The research design and data analysis were intentionally selected to address the research questions being presented in this study. Teachers from the rural schools completed Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey, which measures the principals' Invitational Leadership qualities and behaviors. The Leadership Survey scores were correlated to the teachers' level of job satisfaction, which is a measure included in the Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) Leadership Survey. Additionally, the Leadership Survey was used with the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness in the low and high achieving high-poverty rural schools. Finally, there was a comparison between the principals in high-achieving schools' Invitational Leadership behaviors and the principals in low-achieving schools Invitational Leadership behaviors to identify if there were differences between the Invitational Leadership qualities of the two.

Instrument

Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey was used for this study (A copy of this study is included in Appendix B). The 44-item Likert-Type survey was used to

assess teacher perception of professional and personal behaviors of elementary principals as it related to Invitational Education Theory and Invitational Leadership. A Likert-Type scale allows for closed-ended responses which helps minimize ambiguity (Dunn-Rankin, Knezek, Wallace & Zhang, 2004; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2004). The instrument was used to conduct the invitational quotient of the rural school principals. For Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) research, the items were divided into five subscales to gather teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership characteristics. Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) developed the items to gauge the components of Invitational Theory by addressing teachers' perception of their leaders' effectiveness and teachers' level of job satisfaction. In addition to the 44-items on the Leadership Survey, items 45-49 placed at the end were used to gather additional data relating to gender, years teaching, years working with the principal, level of education, and subject area(s) taught. These final survey items were used order to analyze additional variables that may impact results.

Asbill's Leadership Survey was found to have a high degree of reliability, .97, which indicates a high degree of internal consistency (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000). Internal consistency is important because it indicates reliability by expressing, "the degree to which subjects' answers to items measuring the same trait are consistent" (McMillian, 2008, p.152). Additionally, in creating this instrument, Dr. Asbill worked in conjunction with experts in the field of education, experts in Invitational Leadership and practicing educators to ensure that the instrument was valid (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000). Validity of the instrument allows for the data to be used to make inferences that are appropriate and meaningful (McMillian, 2008).

Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) used an expert panel of 11 judges to help validate their survey. To evaluate the content and clarity five judges were used. This included a statistics professor from New Mexico State University, a school superintendent and three teachers that had experience with Invitational Education Theory. After the initial evaluation, seven other judges who are considered to be leaders in Invitational Education Theory were selected to identify if the survey items were appropriate. The judges had to decide if the items were acceptable and then categorized them as personally or professionally inviting or disinviting. A majority of the judges had to find the item as acceptable to be included in the survey. Of the seven judges, six of them returned the survey with feedback (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000).

Based on the judges' feedback the items were described as acceptable, but with no clear majority identified as personally or professionally inviting were classified as "both". Using this information, Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) categorized nine of the items as personally inviting, 17 items were identified as professionally inviting and 11 items were classified as being both, personally and professionally inviting. Additionally, the judges found many of the items to be written negatively. It was decided to include these (eight) negatively written items for a few reasons – the main reason being that it would help respondents to carefully read the questions and provide additional information from the respondents. These items were reversely scored.

Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) used a pilot study as part of their research. Asbill's and Gonzalez's (2000) preliminary statistics indicated that there was a positive correlation between variables (personally inviting behaviors, professionally inviting behaviors, teacher perceptions of principal effectiveness and teacher satisfaction) being

tested and the pilot test supported the statistical procedures that would be used to calculate the results.

Finally, after the surveys were submitted and assessments were completed, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. This coefficient measured the internal consistency of the survey. The Leadership Survey was found to have an overall reliability level of .97 which indicates a high degree of internal consistency for this instrument (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000).

Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) research found that items 3, 7, 19, 20, 21, 27, 31, 32, and 33 had an alpha coefficient of .89 and named this construct as “personally inviting characteristics". With an alpha coefficient of .94, seventeen items were designated as a measurement of professionally inviting principal practices. This included items 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 30, 34, 35, and 36. This measure indicated a high level of reliability and internal consistency for the instrument used in this study. Items 42-44 which related to teacher satisfaction had an alpha coefficient of .68. Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) stated that these items had a somewhat lower alpha coefficient than what was found for items 1-37, however these items were also found to be reliable.

The survey asked teachers to rate their principals’ behaviors by choosing the response that best describes their perception of their principal and the principals’ behaviors (See Appendix B).

In conducting the survey, respondents (teachers) were asked to complete items 1-37 by selecting the response that best described their perceptions of their principal and their leadership behaviors. The response scale is as follows:

5- Very Often or Always

4- Often

3- Occasionally

2- Seldom

1- Very Seldom or Never

Items in this section represent personally inviting behaviors, professionally inviting behaviors and personally and professionally inviting behaviors (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000):

- Personally inviting characteristics represent nine items on the survey (items 3, 7, 19, 20, 21, 27, 31, 32, 33). Alpha = .89.
- Professionally inviting characteristics represent seventeen items on the survey (items 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 30, 34, 35, 36). Alpha = .94.

  Items 38-41 provide an indication of teachers' perceptions of their principals' effectiveness. The scale is as follows:

  5- Very Effective

  4- Effective

  3- Uncertain

  2- Seldom Effective

  1- Never Effective

Teachers are asked to rate their satisfaction as it relates to their job, their satisfaction related to peers/other staff members in the school and their satisfaction related to their principal, in items 42-44 (Alpha =.68). The scale is as follows:

5- Very Satisfied

4- Fairly Satisfied

3- Uncertain

2- Fairly dissatisfied

1- Very dissatisfied

Items 45-49 are demographical information relating to gender, years teaching, and years working with the principal, level of education, and subject area(s) taught.

Negative items (4, 5, 9, 15, 25, 28, 29, 33) received a reverse scoring. The mean score for the total and for each construct was calculated and the missing values were not being counted towards the mean. Higher scores were defined as a high level of Invitational practices, which represented a high invitational quotient for the principals in our study.

Data Collection

It is important that ethical issues are taken into consideration in conducting this, or any, research study. The issue of informed consent and the protection of all participants is paramount to the research. Participants were made aware of any potential harms or risk as it relates to this study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Participants received information regarding the intent of the study, the anticipated findings of the study, and any consequences that could be related to the study as part of the informed consent form (Seels, Fullerton, Berry, & Horn, 2004).

As stated previously, the data was collected for this study by survey. The survey was created and sent electronically using SurveyMonkey.

After the schools were identified and prior to the data collection process, the researcher sought and received permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Then superintendents were contacted and

asked for permission to conduct the research in their respective school districts (see Appendix A with example of letter sent to superintendents). Once the superintendent gave permission, the researcher contacted the principals (unless designated otherwise by the superintendent) and informed them about the research that would be conducted in their school. In a few cases the principals asked not to participate, and they were not included in this study. For each rural, Title I, North Carolina public school that agreed to participate in the research, all teaching staff were emailed the *Leadership Survey* created by Asbill and Gonzalez (2000).

On the introduction page of the email (Appendix C) and online Consent Form, information regarding the purpose of the research, the survey and an explanation of the research was included. The survey was anticipated to take respondents ten minutes to complete. Beneath this information on the online Consent Form, there was a place for respondents to "agree" or "disagree" if they gave their permission to participate in the study. Any respondents who responded "disagree" were disqualified from this study.

In order to ensure that participants' information and sensitive data were protected, the SurveyMonkey website (2016a) stressed the importance of enabling Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption, which SurveyMonkey does for all its surveys. According to the website an SSL, "creates a secure connection between a client and a server, encrypting sensitive information being transmitted through the web page." The IP address tracking can be disabled to make the survey anonymous. At the end of the survey, the respondents were given the option to withdraw from the survey. Additionally, there were two links created for the same survey. One link was sent to schools identified as high-achieving and one link was sent to the schools identified as low-achieving schools. This kept the

survey participants and their responses anonymous and allowed for the researcher to distinguish between the two groups after they responded.

As part of the analysis the researcher searched for any missing data values. Littles' Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test was performed to see if the missing values were at random. This information was considered important to identify if any questions were not completed at a disproportional rate as compared to other questions. If one or some items were not answered at a disproportional rate, it could be that the participants found the answers objectionable and the researcher would need to decide how this impacted the particular survey questions and/or whether a question or respondents' answers were removed.

Data Analysis

The researcher used IBM SPSS to analyze leadership behaviors of principals at high-achieving and low-achieving, high-poverty rural schools. SurveyMonkey was used to serve as the tool to organize data. Pearson correlation coefficients were employed to determine if there was a significant relationship between a principals' inviting qualities (personally and professionally) and teacher satisfaction. The principals' invitational quotient, was used to determine if there was a relationship between a principals' invitational quotient and the teachers' perception of the principals' effectiveness. Finally, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to identify if there were any differences between teacher's perception of their principals' invitational quotient in high-poverty rural schools between high-achieving and low-achieving schools after controlling for teacher background information (e.g., teaching experience, licensure, academic degree, subject areas).

Summary

This chapter provided an explanation of the research methodology that was utilized for the study. This study was designed to identify if inviting behaviors by principals, teacher satisfaction and teacher perceptions of principals' effectiveness were correlated and if they were related to school achievement in rural, Title I, elementary schools in North Carolina. The chapter identified the research questions, population being studied, research design, instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, and the methods used to conduct this research. The next chapter will provide results of data analyses and findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived effectiveness of leadership and its possible relationship to student academic achievement and overall performance in rural, Title I, North Carolina elementary schools. More specifically, the research sought to see if there was a significant relationship between the inviting behaviors of elementary school principals, teacher job satisfaction and teachers' perceptions of the principal's effectiveness. Additionally, the research study sought to determine if there was a difference between the invitational quotients of principals at high- and low-achieving, rural elementary schools. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the evidences of reliability and validity of responses to Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey of Invitational Leadership?
2. What is the relationship between professionally inviting principal behaviors and teacher job satisfaction in rural schools?
3. What is the relationship between the principals' invitational quotient and effectiveness from the teachers' perspectives?
4. Is there a difference in the invitational quotient of rural principals between high-achieving and low-achieving schools?

Chapter four presents the results regarding the relationship between the inviting behaviors of elementary school principals, teacher job satisfaction, teachers' perceptions of the principal's effectiveness and the results identifying if there was a difference

between the invitational quotients of principals at high- and low-achieving, rural elementary schools.

Check of Statistical Assumptions

Although 276 participants responded to the survey request, only 240 respondents completed the entire survey. There were a few items skipped by some of the 240 respondents. Those who only agreed to take the survey and then did not complete any of the 49 items on the survey were not included in the data analysis.

All variables were examined for accuracy of data entry, outliers, missing values, normality of distribution and homogeneity of variance, prior to running any data analysis. All data were in acceptable ranges with no outliers found (i.e., greater than three standard deviations away from the mean), missing values were not included. A visual inspection of the distribution for each group and the values for skewness had an absolute value greater than 1.0, which is approximately normal distribution.

Out of the 240 participants, 236 had complete data with four having missing values between one and four items out of 44-items on the Leadership Survey. Little's Missing Completely at Random (MCAR) test showed that the missing values were completely at random, χ^2 (df = 933) = 964.16, p = .23. Therefore, means were calculated for each construct, respectively, with the missing values and assuming these missing values would not impact the mean values.

Table 5

Assumption of Homogeneity of Variance for Invitational Quotient, Teacher Satisfaction and Principals' Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers

Variables	*F*	df1	df2	Sig.
IQ	.78	1	238	.38
TS	1.60	1	237	.21
PE	.86	1	235	.35

Note. IQ = Invitational Quotient; TS = Teacher Satisfaction; PE = Principal Effectiveness

Table 5 (above) shows that the assumption of homogeneity holds because all p-values are greater than .05.

Table 6 (below) shows the test for normal distribution. The test indicates that the data were not normally distributed because all p-values are less than .05.

Table 6

Test of Normal Distribution for Invitational Quotient, Teacher Satisfaction and Principals' Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		D	df	Sig.	*D*	df	Sig.
IQ	Low	.13	74	.002	.87	74	.00
	High	.15	162	.000	.87	162	.00
TS	Low	.19	74	.000	.87	74	.00
	High	.19	162	.000	.86	162	.00
PE	Low	.16	74	.000	.90	74	.00
	High	.19	162	.000	.85	162	.00

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Note. IQ = Invitational Quotient; TS = Teacher Satisfaction; PE = Principal Effectiveness; Low = Low Achieving School; High = High Achieving School

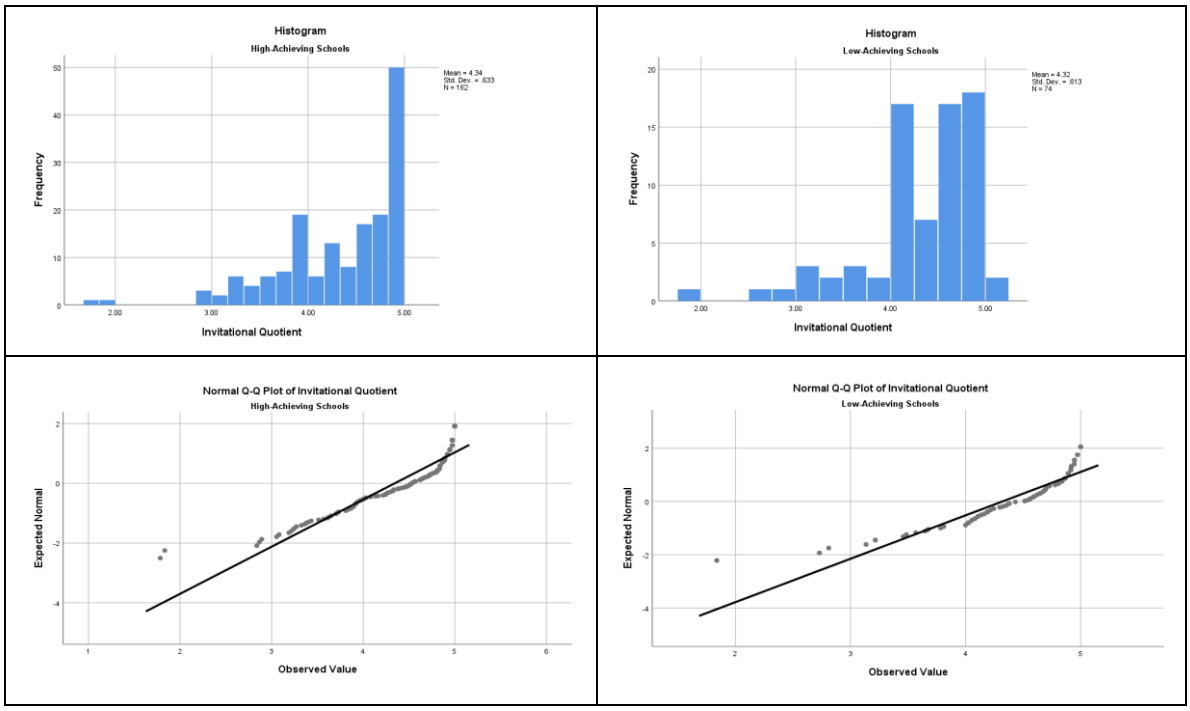

Figure 3. Histograms and Q-Q Plots Depicting Distribution of Means for the Invitational Quotient

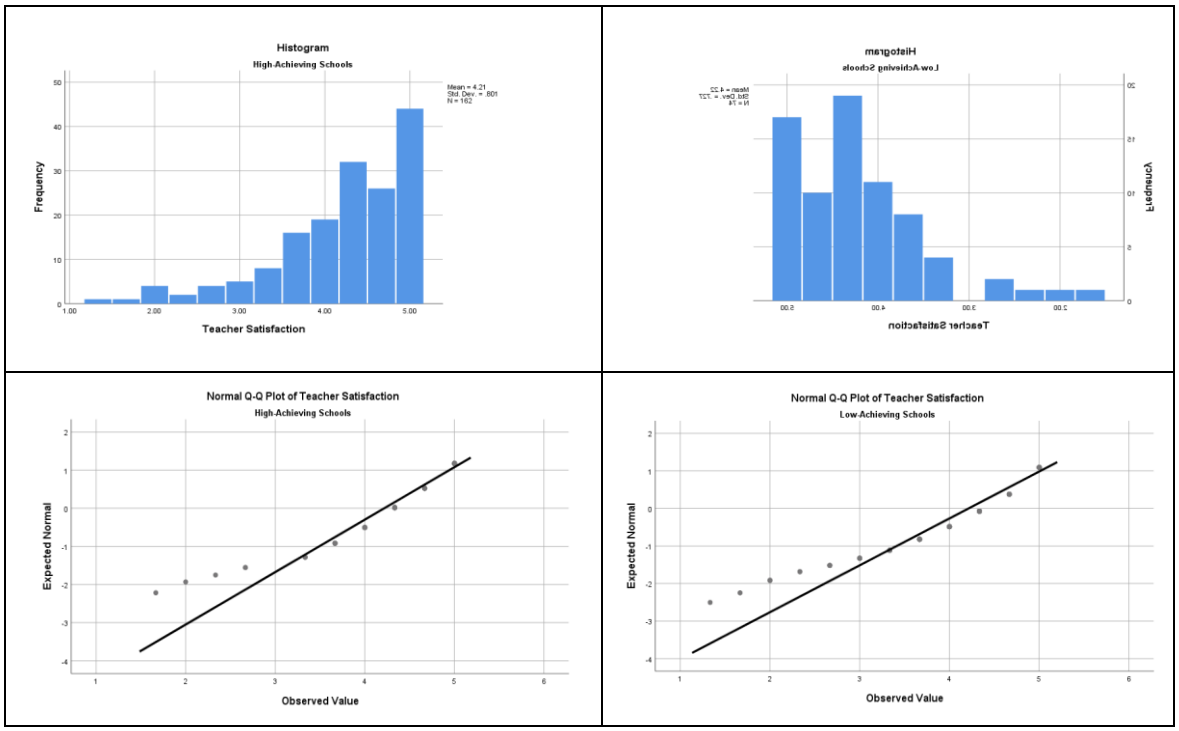

Figure 4. Histograms and Q-Q Plots Depicting Distribution of Means for Teacher Satisfaction

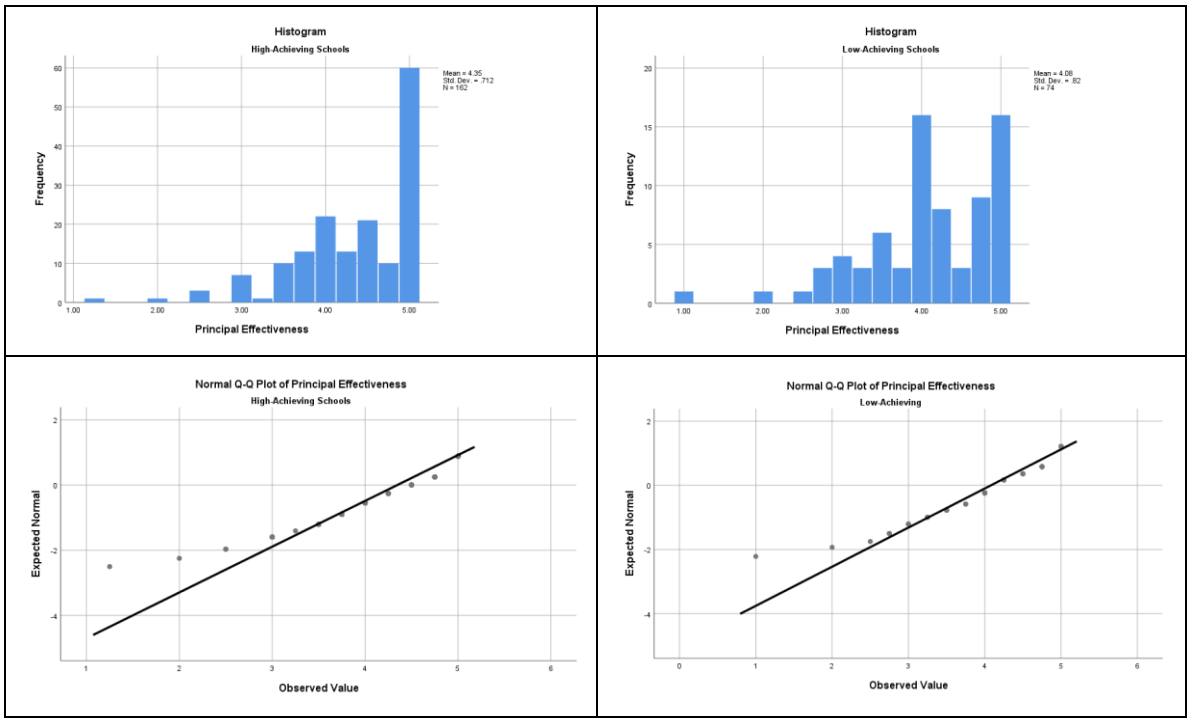

Figure 5. Histograms and Q-Q Plots Depicting Distribution of Means for Principals' Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers

The dependent variables are not normally distributed as shown in Figures 3-5. However, the ANOVA is robust against the violations of normality as long as the variables are skewed in the same direction, which is the case (Field, 2013).

Results

Research Question 1. *What are the evidences of reliability and validity of responses to Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey of Invitational Leadership?*

For this research, Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is often used when there are multiple Likert questions in a survey/questionnaire that form a scale and the objective is to determine if the responses to the scale are reliable (Santos, 1999).

The reliability analysis was carried out on the perceived invitational qualities of principals which was comprised of 37 of the 49 survey items. Cronbach's alpha showed the questionnaire to reach acceptable reliability, $\alpha = 0.97$. All items appeared to be worthy of the retention.

Cronbach's alpha was also conducted on the questions related to principal effectiveness and teacher satisfaction. Principal effectiveness, as measured by teachers' perceptions, consisted of four items and the Cronbach's alpha showed it to be reliable, $\alpha = 0.89$. Teacher satisfaction was comprised of three questions with $\alpha = 0.79$, which shows an acceptable level of internal consistency. These findings are presented below in Table 7.

This is consistent with Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) findings related to internal consistency. These tests provide additional evidence that the Leadership Survey (Asbill & Gonzales, 2000) has internal consistency.

Descriptive statistics were run to find the means and standard deviations for each variable based on identification as a high or low achieving school. High achieving schools were those who received an A+, A or a B on the North Carolina Report Card and low achieving schools were those who received a C, D or F on the North Carolina Report Card.

Table 7 presents the mean (*M*) and standard deviation (*SD*) by group. The analysis shows the invitational quotient of the principals at the low achieving schools as $M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.61$ and the invitational quotient of principals at high achieving schools as $M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.63$. The results show that the teacher satisfaction in low achieving schools to be $M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.72$ and teacher satisfaction at high achieving schools to be $M =$

4.21, *SD* = 0.80. Finally, the means for principal effectiveness were calculated and low achieving school teachers rated their principals' effectiveness as *M* = 4.08, *SD* = 0.82, with high achieving school teachers rating the principals' as *M* = 4.35, *SD* = 0.71.

Table 7

Invitational Quotient, Teacher Satisfaction and Principals' Effectiveness in High Versus Low Achieving Schools

Variable	IQ			TS			PE		
	N	*M*	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*N*	*M*	*SD*
Low-Achieving	76	4.32	.61	76	4.22	.72	76	4.08	.82
High-Achieving	164	4.34	.63	163	4.21	.80	163	4.35	.71
Alpha		.97			.79			.89	

Note. IQ = Invitational Quotient; TS = Teacher Satisfaction; PE = Principal Effectiveness

A Pearson's correlation coefficient was run to compare all variables and to find if there were any correlations between the invitational quotient, teacher satisfaction and the teachers' perception of the principals' effectiveness. Table 8 shows this data. There were correlations found across all variables which shows that these variables are related. This seems to indicate that having a high (principal) invitational quotient would also mean that the teachers are satisfied with their jobs and that they perceive their principals to be effective.

When analyzing the correlation between the different variables as a whole (not separated by high- and low-achieving) the results showed a strong correlation between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction scores, r=.75, n=239, p <.001. Regarding the principals' invitational quotient and teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness variables there was a strong correlation between the two, r=.82, n=237,

$p<.001$. Finally, a strong correlation was found between teacher satisfaction and the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness, $r=.73$, $n=237$, $p<.001$.

Table 8

Correlations between Invitational Quotient, Teacher Satisfaction and Principals' Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers

	1	2	3
1. Invitational Quotient (n=240)	—		
2. Teacher Satisfaction (n=239)	.75	—	
3. Principal Effectiveness (n=237)	.82	.73	—

Evidences related to validity are provided in the answers to research questions 2-4 (below) and Chapter Five will address this research study in comparison to previous research studies that were in the Literature Review (Chapter Two).

Research Question 2. *What is the relationship between professionally inviting principal behaviors and teacher job satisfaction in rural schools?*

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction scores for all respondents. For the 239 respondents, the correlation between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction was high ($r=.75$).

To see if there was a correlation between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction at high-achieving schools the Pearson correlation coefficient was also run and found that there was a correlation across variables. The results showed a strong

correlation between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction scores, r=.78, n=163, p<.001. This suggests that as teachers in high-achieving schools provided high invitational quotients for their principals, they themselves were more satisfied with their jobs.

The Pearson correlation coefficient was run to see if there was any correlation specific to low-achieving schools. The results showed a strong correlation between invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction scores, r=.69, n=76, p<.001. Therefore, these finding indicate a statistically strong positive relationship which suggests that as teachers rated principals higher on inviting behaviors, they also rated themselves as more satisfied with their jobs.

Research Question 3. *What is the relationship between the principals' invitational quotient and effectiveness from the teachers' perspectives?*

The Pearson correlation coefficient was used again to examine the relationship between invitational quotient and perceptions of principal effectiveness. There was a very strong positive correlation between invitational quotient and the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness, r=.82, n=237, p<.001. Overall, teachers who rated their principals with a high invitational quotient also rated their principals as effective leaders.

Next, the correlation test was run to examine the relationship between invitational quotient and perceived principal effectiveness at low-achieving schools. There was a very strong positive correlation between invitational quotient and teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness, r=.84, n=74, p<.001. This means that when these teachers rated

their principals as having highly inviting behaviors they also rated their principals as effective leaders.

Additionally, the correlation test was run to examine the relationship between invitational quotient and teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness and the results found that there was a very strong positive correlation between invitational quotient and the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness at high-achieving schools, r=.83, n=163, p<.001. Therefore, as principals' invitational quotient ratings increased, teachers' ratings of the principals' effectiveness increased.

Research Question 4. *Is there a difference in the invitational quotient of rural principals between high-achieving and low-achieving schools?*

To help address this research question the data from research questions two and three was analyzed. To better understand if there was a difference as it relates to teacher satisfaction of the principals at the high-achieving (M = 4.21, SD = 0.80) and low-achieving schools (M = 4.22, SD = 0.72) a t-test was run and the homogeneous variance was satisfied (Levene's test, F = 1.60, p = .21). Results can be found in table 7 (on p. 73). The mean score for teacher satisfaction in the high-achieving schools was not significantly higher, t = (237) = .062, p = .95.

When comparing the invitational quotient of the principals at high-achieving and low-achieving rural schools and the homogeneous variance (Levene's test, F = 0.78, p = .38), the mean score for the invitational quotient of principals at the high-achieving schools was not significantly higher than the mean at the low-achieving schools t = (238) = -0.24, p = .81. This shows that the teachers at the high- and low-achieving schools

believed that their principals had similar levels of inviting behaviors and therefore a similar invitational quotient.

However, when comparing means for teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness the homogeneous variance was satisfied (Levene's test, $F = 0.86$, $p = .354$). The mean score for the teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness for principals at the high-achieving schools was significantly higher than the mean at the low-achieving schools $t = (235) = -2.53$, $p = .012$. Cohen's d was calculated to find the effect size for this data. Cohen's d =0.35, which is considered a medium effect (Cohen, 1988). This indicates that the teachers at the high-achieving schools rated their principals as more effective than the teachers at low-achieving schools rated their principals (effectiveness). Table 9 (below) presents the comparison of the means in high and low achieving schools.

Table 9

Comparison of Means in High- and Low-Achieving Rural Schools for Teacher Satisfaction, Invitational Quotient and Principals' Effectiveness as Perceived by Teachers

Variable	High (N=164)		Low (N=76)		T
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	
TS	4.21	0.80	4.22	0.54	-0.24
IQ	4.34	0.63	4.32	0.61	0.62
PE	4.35	0.71	4.09	0.82	-2.52

Note. IQ = Invitational Quotient; TS = Teacher Satisfaction; PE = Principal Effectiveness

To develop a deeper understanding of the data and to identify if there were differences between the principals' invitational quotients based on high- and low-achieving schools the researcher controlled for background items such as years of teaching experience, years working with current principal, education degree attained and the subject(s) area taught. An ANOVA was run to identify if there were any statistically

significant differences. The means and standard deviations for the different variables are reported in Table 9.

For the variables, years teaching and years working with the current principal, the data was analyzed by looking at three years or less experience and four years or more experience to have enough sample size for each cell. When looking at a teacher's years of experience the two-way analysis of variance did not yield a significant difference between being a high- or low-achieving school (F=.004, p>.05), the main effect for years of experience (F=1.16, p>.05) or the interaction effect between the invitational quotient and years of teaching experience (F=2.30, p>.05). This means that regardless of years of experience or type of school (high- or low-achieving) teachers rated their principals as being highly inviting leaders. This information is presented in Table 10.

Table 10

High- and Low-Achieving School Principal Invitational Quotients Based on Teachers' Years of Experience

IQ	0-3 Years		>4 Years	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
High	4.39	0.60	4.25	0.68
Low	4.34	0.61	4.29	0.62

Table 11 presents the data for comparing the principal's invitational quotient and the number of years the teacher has worked with the current principal. The 2 X 2 ANOVA did not reveal a statistically significant difference when looking at the principal's invitational quotient when controlling for the number of years teachers worked with their current principal when looking at if the school was high or low performing (F=.004, p>.05), the total years working with their current principal

(F=1.16, p>.05) or the interaction effect between the principal's invitational quotient and years working with the principal (F=2.30, p>.05). Therefore, regardless of the number of years teachers worked with a principal, in a high- or low-achieving school, the teachers rated their principals as having a strong invitational quotient.

Table 11

High- and Low-Achieving School Principal Invitational Quotients Based on Number of Years Teachers Worked with the Principal

IQ	0-3 Years		>4 Years	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
High	4.39	0.60	4.25	0.68
Low	4.34	0.61	4.29	0.62

When analyzing the data regarding level of education of the teachers, it was decided to group responses into bachelor's degree and post-bachelor's degree. This was done (again) to have a reasonable sample size for each cell. The ANOVA was conducted and found that there was no statistically significant difference when comparing high-achieving and low-achieving schools (F=1.64, p>.05), the main effect for highest degree attained (F=0.78, p>.05) or for the interaction effect between the principal's invitational quotient and the level of education attained (F=1.75, p>.05). Table 12 presents this information. The table shows that invitational quotients for high- and low- achieving school principals is the same irrespective of school achievement and degree(s) attained.

Table 12

High- and Low-Achieving School Principal Invitational Quotients Based on Level of Teacher Education

IQ	Bachelor Degree		Graduate Degree	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*

High	4.42	0.52	4.23	0.69
Low	4.31	0.72	4.33	0.47

When analyzing principal invitational quotient and controlling for the subject(s) the researcher investigated, only responses from teachers in the core subjects (math, literacy, science and social studies) were used because the sample sizes for the other curriculum areas were too small to extrapolate and make any correlations. Table 13 (below) contains the mean and standard deviations for different subject areas. In the area of math no statistically significant difference was found $F(3, 236)= 1.59$, $p>.05$. Regarding literacy teachers there were no significant differences discovered between high- and low-achieving principals' invitational quotient, $F(3, 236)= 1.24$, $p>.05$. Additionally, amongst social studies teachers there were no statistically significant differences between high- and low-achieving principals' invitational quotients.

Table 13

Comparing Mean Invitational Quotients for High- & Low-Achieving Schools by Subject

IQ	High		Low		*F*
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	
Math	4.35	0.61	4.21	0.67	1.59
Literacy	4.34	0.62	4.54	0.38	1.24
Social Studies	4.34	0.61	4.24	0.58	0.65
Science	4.35	0.61	4.18	0.34	2.35

No significant main effect was found based on school achievement and the principal's invitational quotient (given by teachers), $F(3,236)=.139$, $p>.05$, but a significant effect was found for self-reported teachers of science, $F(3, 236)=4.00$, $p < .05$. Additionally, the two-way interaction was found to be significant when looking at science

and school achievement, $F(3,236)= 5.58$, $p < .05$. The graph of the interaction is presented in Figure 6. Simple effects analysis indicated that the invitational quotient assigned to principals by teachers who taught science in low-achieving schools was lower than the invitational quotient that was assigned to principals by teachers that taught other subjects in low-achieving schools. For low-achieving schools, the invitational quotient for other subjects ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.34$) is significantly higher than that for science ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.68$), $t\ (74) = 2.77$, $p = .007$. For high-achieving schools, the invitational quotient for other subjects ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 0.66$) is not significantly higher than that for science ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.61$), $t\ (162) = -0.32$, $p = .75$. Additionally, simple effects analysis found that the teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness for high-achieving schools ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.71$) is significantly higher than that for science at low-achieving schools ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.82$), $t\ (235) = 2.53$, $p = .012$.

This indicates that the invitational quotient and the principal effectiveness assigned to principals by teachers who taught science in low-achieving schools was lower than the invitational quotient that was assigned to principals by teachers that taught other subjects in low-achieving schools.

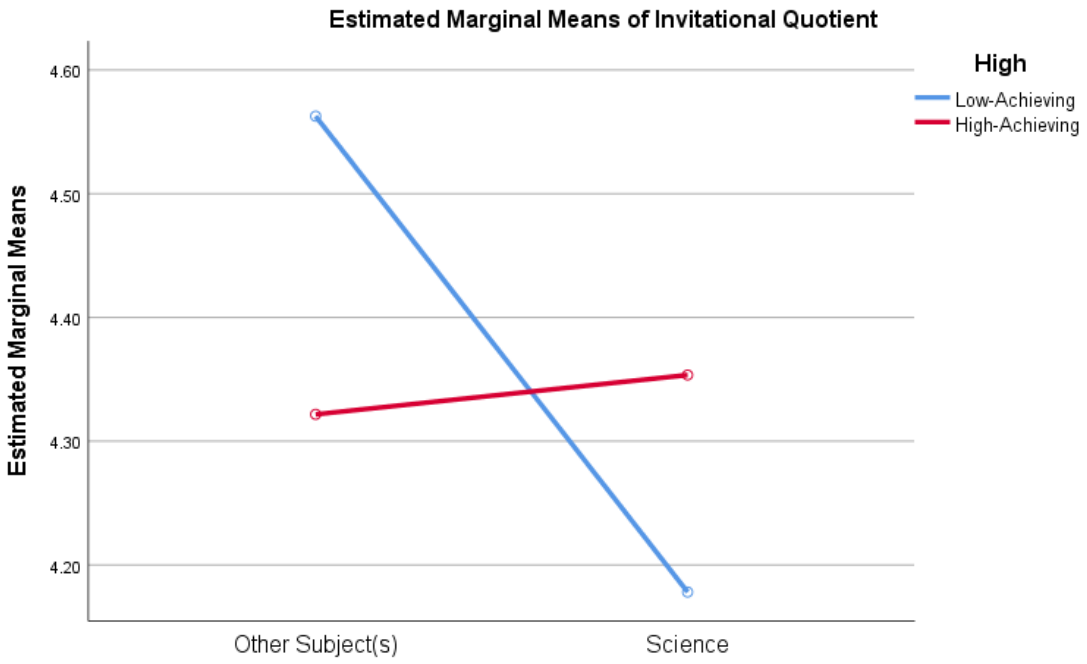

Figure 6. Graph of the interaction of the Estimated Marginal Means of Invitational Quotient for teachers who taught science.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate if Invitational Leadership behaviors correlate to the overall success of rural public elementary schools in North Carolina. Chapter Four presented the results of the study. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted to answer the research questions.

Results of the study indicate that there was no statistically significant difference between a principals' invitational quotient in high- and low-performing rural, North Carolina public schools. Additionally, the teachers at the high and low-performing schools reported similar rates of teacher satisfaction, yielding no statistically significant differences between the types of schools. However, there was a medium difference as it related to the teachers' perceptions of the principal's effectiveness, with teachers at high-

performing schools rating their principals' effectiveness higher than their low-performing school peers. Finally, this research found that there was a statistically significant difference between the invitational quotients assigned to principals by teachers in low-achieving schools who taught science. The invitational quotient assigned by science teachers in low-achieving schools was lower than the invitational quotient assigned to principals in low-achieving schools by those teachers that taught other subjects (besides science).

This research analysis offers support for the validity of the instrument, but we cannot state this with certainty because there is inconsistency with the finding of this research as compared to similar research that used Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey. This information will be explained more thoroughly in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter five presents an overview of the study, findings, implications, recommendations and conclusions. The study was conducted through the lens of William Purkey's Invitational Leadership Theory. A Leadership Survey developed by Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) was used to provide principals an invitational quotient based on their teachers' responses to the survey items which measure Invitational Leadership behaviors. The findings were used to determine if there were differences between a principals' inviting behaviors, teacher satisfaction and principal effectiveness as perceived by teachers at high and low achieving rural Title I North Carolina public schools.

Overview and Purpose of the Study

In recent years additional accountability measures have accompanied the introduction of *No Child Left Behind* (2001) and the newest reauthorization, referred to as the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (2015), which requires states to test students every year in grades three through eight in reading and math, and once in high school in specified subjects. Since 2001, mandated accountability standards have been thrust upon schools, teachers and students (Burns & Martin, 2010; Camera, 2015; Partee & Sammon, 2001; Stecher & Kirby, 2004). Consequently, current educational leaders have seen the advent of the Common Core Standards and more accountability around academic achievement as measured by standardized test scores than educational leaders in previous decades (Aldridge, 2003; Byun-Kitayama, 2012).

With all these changes and with the number of leadership models that have been developed over the years in high-poverty areas we still consistently see major achievement gaps in education (Boykin & Noguera, 2011; McKnight, 2013; Starks, 2013). This research focused on a less well-known theory of education leadership, Invitational Leadership.

Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) study looked at the basic assumptions of Invitational Education Theory as applied to elementary school principals. The research focused on the study of the principal-teacher relationships based on the tenets of Invitational Education. Although the concept of being an "Invitational Leader" was developed in the 1990's and Asbill and Gonzalez's study actually predates Purkey and Siegel's (2003) release of, "*Becoming an Invitational Leader: A New Approach to Professional and Personal Success*"; Purkey and Siegel's (2003) work which was developed as a holistic approach to teach leadership, not as a series of isolated events, is considered the seminal model and theoretical framework for Invitational Leadership. The conceptual framework for this study is Purkey and Siegel's (2003) Invitational Leadership Theory. Invitational Leadership focuses on sending inviting and welcoming messages to people that make them feel valued, appreciated and able (Purkey & Siegel, 2003)

The purpose of this study was to examine if there was a correlation between Invitational Leadership, perceptions of principal effectiveness by their teachers, teacher job satisfaction and ultimately to examine if there is a relationship between a principal's invitational behaviors and academic achievement in a rural public-school setting. The Leadership Survey designed by Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) was used to rate the inviting

behaviors of principals and was distributed to rural North Carolina public school teachers and analyzed to answer the research questions. A total of 23 schools were included in the study, 15 of them were designated as high-achieving schools and 8 of them were designated as low-achieving schools based on their North Carolina Report Cards. Surveys were emailed to 276 teachers and 240 completed responses came from the participating schools.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in this section are based on the analysis of the data received by the teachers completing the Leadership Survey and using IBM SPSS to examine if there were any differences between leadership qualities of high- and low-performing schools. The responses from the teachers, including facilitators and coaches, at 23 schools, 15 of which were designated as high-achieving and eight of which were designated as low-achieving schools, were downloaded into IBM SPSS for data analysis; the appropriate items were reverse scored and responses were spot checked for errors.

Regarding the first research question, "What are the evidences of reliability and validity of responses to Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey of Invitational Leadership?", this research revealed that the survey items were internally consistent, revealing a strong Alpha for each variable and thus the Leadership Survey was found to be reliable. This coincides with Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) original research on their Leadership Survey.

This dissertation research offers evidence to support the validity of the instrument, but due to some inconsistency with previous findings from prior research that used the Leadership Survey the researcher cannot not say that it is completely valid. Similar to

previous research Asbill and Gonzalez (2000), Burns and Martin (2010), Egley (2003) and Nivens (2006), this research found a positive relationship between a principal's invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction and a positive relationship between a principal's invitational quotient and principal effectiveness as perceived by their teachers. Furthermore, this study provided additional evidence that principal effectiveness ratings for principals at the high-achieving schools were significantly higher than those ratings for principals at the schools identified as low-achieving (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Burns & Martin, 2010; Egley, 2003; Nivens, 2006).

This dissertation research did diverge from some previous research in relation to finding a correlation between the principals' invitational quotient and student achievement. Nivens' (2006) study found there was a significant difference between the invitational quotients of high- and low-achieving schools; principals at high-achieving schools had a high invitational quotient. One noteworthy difference between this research and Dr. Nivens' research is that this research focused solely on rural schools; whereas, Dr. Nivens' looked at a sample of 14 schools from rural, suburban and urban areas. Burns and Martin's (2010) data was similar to Nivens (2006) regarding invitational quotients being higher at the high-achieving schools. In their research, Burns and Martin looked at a cross-section of schools and did not focus on Title I schools (2010). Again, this research was not consistent with Egley's research relating to achievement and principal invitational quotient (2003). Egley (2003) considered students success based on the Missouri School Performance Index only and did not take into account if schools were high-poverty or not. Furthermore, Egley did not include any schools that were "Agricultural Schools" (2003).

Relating to the second research question, “What is the relationship between professionally inviting principal behaviors and teacher job satisfaction in rural schools?”, the research found that based on the teacher perceptions there was a positive correlation between the teachers’ job satisfaction and the inviting behavior or invitational quotient of the principals. This suggests that when the principals were creating a welcoming and inviting school environment as perceived by their teachers, then teachers were happy with their jobs. This supports the concept that creating a more welcoming environment makes teachers feel valued and helps them find satisfaction in their work (Purkey & Novak, 2008; Purkey & Siegel, 2003). These studies were similar to Berry and Fuller (2007) who found that the amount of support and empowerment that administrators provide is related to whether a teacher will return to a school or leave. This suggest a more satisfied staff can lead to improved teacher retention even in high-poverty, Title I, schools.

However, when the data was analyzed by comparing the teachers’ satisfaction from high and low achieving schools no statistical differences were found. This differed from other research including the *North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey* (2015) findings that showed that North Carolina teachers’ satisfaction with their working conditions, which included school leadership as one measure, is related to proficiency and achievement. Studies that specifically focused on Invitational Leadership also supported the premise that teacher job satisfaction was related to school performance (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Burns & Martin, 2010; Egley, 2003; Nivens, 2006).

One reason this research may differ from previous research, is that the invitational quotient based on the number of years teachers worked with the principals was not

statistically different from that of the teachers in low-achieving schools worked with their principals (See Table 11). This may have allowed teachers to better know their job expectations and guidelines from a principal they are more familiar with. This may increase teacher satisfaction with their jobs; whereas, when people begin working with new leadership it takes time to build trust and know expectations which could negatively affect a teacher's job satisfaction. Perhaps, some of these low-achieving rural school principals are able to build relationships with teachers and stakeholders by working at the same school longer creating a stronger community which supports teacher retention and satisfaction (Berry & Fuller, 2007; Ingersoll, 2001; Strom, Strom, & Beckert, 2011).

Previous research has shown there is a connection between teacher satisfaction and having a positive efficacy (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Woolfolk, 2003). With a hallmark of Invitational Education Theory and Invitational Leadership being optimism and creating an environment that supports the development of one's potential and belief in themselves (Purkey & Siegel, 2003), which is similar to a positive self-efficacy, it can be hypothesized that the teachers at the low-achieving schools who assigned a high invitational quotient for their principals may have an enhanced self-efficacy based on the fact that their principals' inviting behaviors support their belief in themselves.

When quantitatively analyzing the third research question, "What is the relationship between the principals' invitational quotient and effectiveness from the teachers' perspectives?", there was a positive correlation between the principal invitational quotient and how the teacher viewed the principals' effectiveness. This information highlights the idea that the principal's inviting qualities impact how teachers perceive their principals to be as leaders. This supports the notion that using inviting

behaviors can create positive feelings within the school. One of the hallmarks of Invitational Education Theory (IET) is to create conditions in schools and classrooms that support a productive work and learning environment (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Brandt, 2003; Purkey & Stanley, 1991). As Purkey (1978) explained, schools that are collaborative, where everybody is treated as a valued individual and people are seen as responsible with the ability to be successful, leads to more productive employees. Several other studies found that Invitational Leadership behaviors and teacher job satisfaction are strongly correlated (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Egley, 2003; Niven, 2006; Burns & Martin, 2010).

Additional analysis discovered that there was a difference when looking at teachers' perception of the principals' effectiveness. However, when comparing the principals' invitational quotient, teachers' satisfaction and teachers' perceptions of principal effectiveness on the basis of being a high- or low-achieving school it must be stressed that this study found no statistically significant differences relating to the principals' invitational quotient or the teachers' satisfaction. This seems incongruent and begs the question, why is there a difference in perceived principal effectiveness when teachers feel the principals have similarly rated inviting behaviors and when they are satisfied with their jobs? The researcher can only hypothesize (and recommend further research in this area) that it may have something to do with their North Carolina Report Card grades and perhaps prior histories of the schools. Teachers at the high-achieving schools, perhaps, rated their principals higher because of some internalization of the school letter grade and that teachers at the lower achieving school rated their principals' effectiveness lower because they, too, internalized their lower grade achievement.

Finally, the research investigated, “Is there a difference in the invitational quotient of rural principals between high-achieving and low-achieving schools?” There was no difference between the invitational quotient of the principals at the high- and low-achieving schools. This contrasts with what the researcher hypothesized would be found prior to conducting the surveys and analyzing the data. It is also in contrast to other research (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Burns & Martin, 2010; Egley, 2003; Nivens, 2006).

Although this was surprising, there are a few differences in this research that may account for some of the variances. For this study, the researcher focused on rural elementary schools only and frequently rural schools and rural school districts tend to be smaller. Johnson et al., (2014) said that nearly 50% of rural school districts are considered small and the median size of a rural school district is 533 students. In this research study, the vast majority of the schools that participated each had less than 30 teaching staff members. This may better allow principals, regardless of working at a high- or low-achieving school, to better get to know their staff and create a more personal and welcoming learning environment which relates to creating an invitational environment (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2000; Purkey, 1978; Purkey & Novak, 2008, Purkey & Siegel, 2013).

Rural communities often form tight knit bonds in the community and around schools (Coladarci, 2007; D’Amico & Nelson, 2000; Pate, 2012). This bond could contribute to building trust and relationships that are often characterized as part of being an invitational leader (Purkey & Novak, 2008, Purkey & Siegel, 2013).

Moreover, although the high achieving schools’ teachers rate their principals highly, the invitational quotient based on the number of years teachers worked with the

principals was not statistically different from that of the teachers in low-achieving schools (See Table 11). This could impact the relationships built at both high- and low-achieving schools. Some of the high-achieving school principals had less time to work with the teachers which may have allowed less time to cultivate relationships and perhaps some of the principals at the lower achieving schools had additional time to create deeper bonds with their staff.

Analyzing this final question more deeply, tests were conducted around the differences between the teachers' perceptions of the principals' effectiveness and a moderate difference was discovered between the high- and low-achieving schools. Given, the lack of difference between some of the other variables (principal's invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction) and when comparing them, these findings strike the researcher as odd. It beckons the question, why was there a difference between principals' perceived effectiveness at the high- and low-achieving schools when the factors were consistent across the different achievement levels of the schools? This study does not answer this question, but it is possible that it was influenced by the teachers' preconceived notion about their school based on their North Carolina End of Grade test scores, the North Carolina Report Card grades and perhaps the history of the schools. Perhaps, teachers in the high-achieving school naturally assumed their principals were more effective because of the test scores and North Carolina Report Card grades that were higher. Given, the mean score for principal effectiveness at the low-achieving schools was different from the other scores they gave (principal invitational quotient and teacher satisfaction) it is possible that the teachers at the low-achieving schools associated their school scores with their principal being less effective. This contrast is

more perplexing given that the low-achieving teachers were satisfied with their jobs and the inviting behaviors of their principals were statistically the same as their high-achieving counterparts. Perhaps, the inviting behaviors of the principals and the satisfaction of teachers in their job is viewed separately from how effective the teachers feel a principal performs his or her job.

When analyzing results for the principal's invitational quotient based on the subject or subject(s) the teacher taught, there was one area of difference; that was for those teachers who taught science. The Simple Effects analysis indicated that the invitational quotient assigned to principals by teachers who taught science in low-achieving schools was lower than the invitational quotient that was assigned to principals by teachers that taught other subjects in low-achieving schools. This indicates that science teachers did not view the behaviors of their principals as inviting.

Regarding the difference in science (at low-achieving schools) the researcher finds it more challenging to offer a cogent hypothesis for these results. The Center on Education Policy (CEP) published a report explaining that, due to additional focus on testing in subjects such as math and literacy, other subjects including science are seeing decreases in the amount of instructional time and curriculum focus (McMurrer, 2007). In North Carolina science does not have an End of Grade test in elementary school, except in fifth grade. Given the pressures of focusing on tested subjects and the relatively small amount of testing in science (compared to literacy and math), it may lead to principals paying less attention to science as a content by giving less attention, support and perhaps resources to science teachers and departments, thus, creating a dynamic where those

teachers who teach science perceive their principals to be less inviting than their peers who teach other subjects.

Implications for Practice

Past research around principal leadership has focused on more traditional leadership theories and has focused more on urban schools, this study aimed to look at rural schools only and use Invitational Leadership as its conceptual underpinnings to expand the body of knowledge in education leadership. The study specifically focused on rural North Carolina elementary schools and the challenges teachers and administrators face.

The findings of this study show a correlation exists between using Invitational Leadership characteristics and teacher job satisfaction. Therefore, it is recommended that universities and districts provide additional support and teachings based on Invitational Leadership to future and current leaders. A recent *Charlotte Observer* article highlighted the fact that many rural school districts are still short teachers as of October, for the 2017-2018 school year (Linford, 2017) and with job turnover being one of the most pervasive problems in public education, creating a welcoming environment where teachers and staff know that they are cared for as individuals and are believed in by their principals should positively impact teacher retention, thus supporting student achievement. Boyd et al., (2011) argued convincingly that how teachers feel about school administration has the greatest impact on teachers' decision to return.

Research has shown that highly qualified teachers are needed to increase student achievement, specifically in schools where a majority of the students are economically disadvantaged (Guarino, Brown & Wyse, 2011). More specifically, Guarino, Brown and

Wyse's (2011) study of North Carolina schools found that high-poverty schools faced more challenges retaining teachers. Additionally, research supports the notion that teacher turnover rate is negatively impacted by lack of job satisfaction (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010). Lumsden (1998) stresses that principals are vital to creating an environment that is positive and that impacts teacher morale and those teachers who are not happy with their job are less likely to stay. Berry and Fuller (2007) expand upon Lumsden's (1998) notion, by explaining that the amount of support and empowerment administration gives plays a role in whether teachers will return. Prather-Jones (2011) explained that teachers who feel a lack of support from school leadership are more likely to leave their jobs.

Conversely, Prather-Jones (2011) found that positive views about the principal and how they run the school positively impacts teacher retention and decreases teacher turnover. Johnson et al., (2011) found that a positive teaching environment, regardless of other factors such as being considered a high-poverty school, leads to teachers feeling more satisfied with their jobs which increases the likelihood that the teachers will return to teaching (at the school). Ladd's research (2009) supports the idea that teaching and learning conditions predict teacher plans to leave a school, independent of school demographics. Johnson's et al., (2011) research connects to what Ladd (2009) found and expounded on that premise explaining that teachers who have welcoming and caring leadership are satisfied with their jobs regardless of the socioeconomics of the school. This supports the need for developing invitational leaders in our schools to improve satisfaction which in-turn can improve teacher retention, even in our high-poverty schools which could positively impact student achievement.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although this research may have shed some additional light in the field of education research, specifically as it relates to Invitational Leadership and rural education, there are still many more questions that can be answered in this area. The following ideas serve as a potential guide in continuing to enhance this line of study.

1. This study should be replicated in North Carolina, with more of a concentration on D and F schools as low-performing to see if there are more noticeable gaps between the inviting behaviors of principals in high- and low-achieving schools.
2. Replicate this study in other states to determine if the findings in this study are consistent elsewhere.
3. Examine how the principal's invitational quotient is correlated with teacher turnover.
4. Although this study found no statistically significant differences between the teachers' perception of their principals' inviting behaviors and their job satisfaction based on being a high- or low-achieving school, it did find a moderate effect relating to the teachers' perceptions of the principal's effectiveness based on the principals' assigned invitational quotient. Given this information, examining how teachers define principal's effectiveness deserves further study.
5. This research found the invitational quotient assigned to principals by teachers who taught science in low-achieving schools was lower than the invitational quotient that was assigned to principals by teachers that taught other subjects in low-achieving schools. In order to better understand this dynamic, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted in middle and high schools,

where teachers specialize by subject area. This may enable us to understand if teaching certain subject matters impacts how principals are viewed.

6. This study should be replicated to include middle and high schools in rural North Carolina to determine if there are differences between the principals' leadership in secondary schools and the impact on academic achievement in secondary education.
7. Conducting a study that looks at the principals as individuals and assigns scores for invitational quotient, teacher satisfaction and principal effectiveness individually and collectively may provide a statistically significant difference and offer different insights because it can be analyzed how outliers influence the statistical analysis.
8. Replicating the study and have principals rate themselves to compare their invitational quotient to the invitational quotient assigned by their staff. This would be to assure that the results are reliable and valid, to determine the role of extraneous variables and to identify if the principals' ratings correlate to the teachers rating of those same principals.
9. This study focused on high-poverty rural schools; studying different schools' settings and economic statuses would allow for analysis to be done on the effectiveness of Invitational Leadership across educational settings.
10. Adding a qualitative piece to this study could provide further insight into teachers' feelings, allowing data to be triangulated and perhaps expose anomalies that may explain why there were no differences in teacher satisfaction or invitational quotient based on being a high- or low-achieving school.

Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of Invitational Leadership behaviors on teacher satisfaction, teachers' perceptions of the principals' performances and to identify if there was a difference between the inviting behaviors of principals at high- and low-achieving rural North Carolina schools. A total of 23 elementary schools participated in the study, 15 designated as high-achieving schools which were schools that received an A+, A or B according the 2015-2016 North Carolina Report Card (NCDPI, 2016b). Eight schools were designated as low-achieving which were schools that received an F, D or C on the 2015-2016 North Carolina Report Card (NCDPI, 2016b). Asbill and Gonzalez's (2000) Leadership Survey was sent to all teaching staff to measure the invitational quotient which measures the principals' invitational leadership behaviors along with measuring the teachers' job satisfaction and their perception of the principals' effectiveness. Although, the study did not meet all of the researcher's hypotheses and was inconsistent with previous research it is still noteworthy and provides additional information to the growing body of knowledge in the field of education.

Correlations were discovered between teacher job satisfaction and the principals' invitational quotient, and the study showed differences between the teachers' perceptions of their principals' effectiveness based on whether the school was high-achieving or low-achieving, which is consistent with other research. This research did not reveal any differences between the achievement level (high-achieving compared to low-achieving) of the school and the principals' invitational quotient, which does diverge from other research.

The findings from this research supports the need for continued use of inviting behaviors by leaders to support teacher satisfaction. This research, paired with other research, supports the idea that effective principals who focus on building relationships see improved teacher satisfaction and this benefits teacher retention (Boyd et al., 2011; Bruggencate, Luyten, Scheerens, & Sleegers, 2012; Day, Gu & Sammons, 2016; Johnson et al., 2011; Ladd, 2009; Purkey & Novak, 2008). This study highlights the need for future studies around Invitational Leadership and its impact on various types of schools, teacher satisfaction and teacher retention.

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APPENDIX A

Request for Permission from Superintendent

UNC CHARLOTTE
College of Education

Department of Educational Leadership
9201 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
(704) 687-8857, www.uncc.edu

March 20, 2017

Dear <<Superintendent>>:

As an Ed.D. candidate at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, I am conducting a study that measures the strength of correlation between principals' leadership behaviors, teacher job satisfaction, teachers' perception of the principal as an effective leader and the North Carolina Report grade. The main purpose of this study is to determine if principal leadership behaviors are correlated to teacher job satisfaction and student achievement. I am requesting permission for this study to be conducted in the following selected school(s) in your school district:

This study is being conducted in approximately _ North Carolina, rural public elementary schools that have been identified as Title I schools. The research will focus on schools that received a C, D or an F on their North Carolina Report Card and schools that received an A+, A or B on their North Carolina Report Card last year.

The results of this study should prove useful in helping to further build the knowledge base on the specific influence of the behaviors engaged in by educational leaders, in rural schools, that impact teacher job satisfaction and student achievement. I will be using Dr. Kate Asbill's Leadership Survey to assess the teachers' perceptions of their principal's behaviors, the teachers' perceptions of their principal as an effective school leader, and the teachers' levels of job satisfaction. Finally, there will be a comparison between the leadership qualities of the principals who are in A+/A/B schools and the principals in C/D/F schools. All responses will remain confidential, without school names, teacher names, nor principal names revealed in any way.

I hope you will grant permission to conduct the study in your school system. Please complete the information below in order to verify your permission to conduct the survey in your school district and that you are granting me access to teacher email addresses at the above schools. Please **email the response back to me with your email signature included (**myounis@uncc.edu**).** Feel free to contact me with any questions or follow-up steps I need to take to complete the survey in <<District>>. I deeply appreciate your prompt reply. The survey is attached for your viewing.

____ Yes, I give permission for Matthew Younis to conduct the survey in our district.

____ No, I don't give permission for Matthew Younis to conduct the survey in our district.

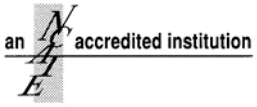
_____ (School District)

_____ (Title)

_____ (Superintendent Name)

Sincerely,

Matthew Younis
Doctoral Candidate
myounis@uncc.edu



APPENDIX B

Leadership Survey

UNC CHARLOTTE
College of Education

Department of Educational Leadership
9201 University City Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
(704) 687-8857, www.uncc.edu

Leadership Survey

Instructions: Please rate your principal by selecting the response for each item which best describes your own perceptions of his/her leadership behaviors.
Mark only one response per item.

For items 1 – 37:
5 = Very Often or Always
4 = Often
3 = Occasionally
2 = Seldom
1 = Very Seldom or Never

1. Demonstrates a belief that faculty and staff members are responsible and capable.	5	4	3	2	1
2. Creates a climate of trust	5	4	3	2	1
3. Makes a special effort to learn names.	5	4	3	2	1
4. Uses sarcasm, name-calling and negative over-statements.	5	4	3	2	1
5. Often causes others to feel stressed.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Facilitates policies and procedures which benefit staff, students, and teachers.	5	4	3	2	1
7. Demonstrates optimism.	5	4	3	2	1
8. Expects high levels of performance from co-workers.	5	4	3	2	1

9. Is resistant to change.	5	4	3	2	1
10. Makes an intentional effort to provide necessary instructional materials.	5	4	3	2	1
11. Creates a climate for improvement through collaboration and shared decision-making.	5	4	3	2	1
12. Keeps informed about important issues.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Encourages cooperation rather than competition.	5	4	3	2	1
14. Assures that all necessary communications reach those concerned.	5	4	3	2	1
15. Treats faculty and staff as through they are irresponsible.	5	4	3	2	1
16. Expresses appreciation for faculty and staff's presence in school.	5	4	3	2	1
17. Provides opportunities for professional growth through meaningful in-service.	5	4	3	2	1
18. Offers constructive feedback for improvement in a respectful manner.	5	4	3	2	1
19. Cares about co-workers.	5	4	3	2	1
20. Takes time to talk with faculty and staff about their out-of-school activities.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Listens to co-workers.	5	4	3	2	1
22. Communicates expectations for high academic performance from students.	5	4	3	2	1
23. Encourages staff members to tap their unrealized potential.	5	4	3	2	1
24. Views mistakes as learning experiences.	5	4	3	2	1
25. Shows insensitivity to the feelings of					

faculty and staff.	5	4	3	2	1
26. Models values, attitudes, and beliefs that encourage others to improve their skills and abilities.	5	4	3	2	1
27. Believes that people are more important than things or results.	5	4	3	2	1
28. Demonstrates a lack of enthusiasm about his/her job as a principal.	5	4	3	2	1
29. Fails to follow through.	5	4	3	2	1
30. Appears to view the principalship as a position of service to others.	5	4	3	2	1
31. Makes an intentional effort to treat others with trust and respect.	5	4	3	2	1
32. Delegates authority and responsibility when appropriate.	5	4	3	2	1
33. Is impolite to others.	5	4	3	2	1
34. Has a sense of mission he/she shares with others.	5	4	3	2	1
35. Delegates responsibilities to provide learning opportunities.	5	4	3	2	1
36. Expresses appreciation for a job well done.	5	4	3	2	1
37. Treats each co-worker as a unique individual.	5	4	3	2	1

For Items 38 – 41:

5 = Very Effective
4 = Effective
3 = Uncertain
2 = Only Slightly Effective
1 = Not Effective

38. How do you classify the overall work effectiveness of your school?	5	4	3	2	1

39. How do you rate this school's effectiveness compared to all other schools you have known?	5	4	3	2	1
40. How do you rate your principal's effectiveness in meeting the job-related needs of the faculty and staff?	5	4	3	2	1
41. How effective has your principal been in positively transforming your school?	5	4	3	2	1

For Items 42 – 44:

5 = Very Satisfied
4 = Fairly Satisfied
3 = Uncertain
2 = Somewhat Dissatisfied
1 = Very Dissatisfied

42. Overall, how do you rate your satisfaction with your principal?	5	4	3	2	1
43. Overall, how do you rate your satisfaction with your job?	5	4	3	2	1
44. In all, how satisfied would you say the other staff members in your building are with their jobs?	5	4	3	2	1

Please fill in the appropriate background information for items 45-49:

45. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

46. How many years have you been teaching?

- ☐ 0-1 year
- ☐ 2-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ 10+ years

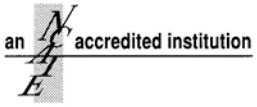
47. How many years have you been working with your current principal?

- ☐ 0-1 year

- ☐ 2-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ 10+ years

48. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
    - ☐ Bachelor Degree
    - ☐ Graduate Degree
    - ☐ Doctorate Degree
    - ☐ Other
49. What subject area(s) do you primarily teach (check all that apply)?
    - ☐ Math
    - ☐ Literacy
    - ☐ Science
    - ☐ Social Studies
    - ☐ Health
    - ☐ Physical Education
    - ☐ Music
    - ☐ Art
    - ☐ Computer Lab or Technology
    - ☐ Media Center or Library
    - ☐ Foreign Language
    - ☐ ELL or ESL
    - ☐ Special Education
    - ☐ Literacy Facilitator or Literacy Coach
    - ☐ Math Facilitator or Math Coach
    - ☐ Talented Development or Gifted
    - ☐ Reading Teacher or Reading Coach

Note: The Leadership Survey was developed by Asbill and Gonzalez (2000) and reprinted with permission.



The UNIVERSITY of NORTH CAROLINA at CHARLOTTE
An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

APPENDIX C

Email Requesting Teachers to Complete the Leadership Survey

May 10th, 2017

Dear Teacher,

My name is Matthew Younis and I am a graduate student at The University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC), pursuing my doctoral degree in educational leadership. I am currently working on a research project entitled *Teachers' Perspectives of the Principals' Invitational Leadership Behaviors, Teacher Job Satisfaction and Principal Effectiveness in High Poverty Rural Elementary Schools*. The purpose of this study is to determine if principal leadership behaviors are related to teacher job satisfaction and student achievement in rural schools. Your responses are important to the successful completion of this research project.

Please take about 10 minutes to complete the Leadership Survey. A link for the survey is below, please use the link to access and complete the survey. As part of completing this survey you may be eligible to earn an incentive. **The first 75 respondents will receive a $10 gift card to Target.** Additionally**, any respondents who complete the survey will have an opportunity to win a $25 gift card to Target.** There will be multiple winners, but **not every participant is guaranteed an incentive.** After completion, please click "Done".

Your candid responses will be sincerely appreciated and will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. Individual teachers or school responses will not be identified. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, but your participation will be greatly appreciated.

At your earliest convenience, please complete by May 26th. Again, thank you for your time and effort.

Survey Link:

Sincerely,

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