A CASE STUDY EXPLORING
TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION AND TEACHER RETENTION ISSUES IN A LARGE
URBAN OKLAHOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT.

A thesis presented
by
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And just like that, I placed a period in the very last sentence, of the final paragraph, of the final chapter, of a very long journey. But then a thought stirred in my soul and spoke to me. It said, you are not finished, this is only the beginning.
Dedication

To my mother, you are my rock, and I am forever grateful for all that you are and the man that you taught me to become.
Acknowledgments

This dissertation comprised of four years at Northeastern University. During this time, I spilled much sweat, plenty of tears, and an abundance of prayer. As a result of this journey, I am embarking on a new journey. I am grateful to all the colleagues and dear friends that I have made as well as the memorable moments that will stick with me forever. In particular, I would like to thank my advisor Dr. Kelly Conn, who gave me the academic freedom and trust to explore my interests. I was fortunate to also have Dr. Sara Ewell on my dissertation committee, whom I thank for providing me with much-needed encouragement, insight, and knowledge. Next, I want to express gratitude to Dr. Delilah Joiner for providing her personal assistance, time and commitment. Last, I would like to thank my editor, Dr. Leslie Wirpsa at Rampart Solutions for her watchful eye, advice, and endless support. Throughout the doctoral program, I profited from the knowledge of many more instructors at Northeastern. I especially want to thank Dr. Nena Stracuzzi, Dr. Elizabeth Mahler, Dr. Margaret Gorman, Dr. Tova Sanders, Dr. Kristen Costa, Dr. Billye Sankofa Waters, Dr. Nancy Young, and Dr. Claire Jackson. Thank you for guiding me along my doctoral journey, and shaping my thinking and my approach to scholarly research.

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To a man that is no longer on this Earth, I would like to say thank you to my grandfather, John Kenneth Lewis. He was a man of few words but had an abundance of understanding, goodness, and wisdom. At a very young age, my grandfather taught me to embrace knowledge. Oh, how I would love to have another opportunity to have a cup of coffee with my grandpa and tell him about my journey. I know he would be proud of me.

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Abstract

Oklahoma City Public Schools have battled teacher shortage issues for nearly two decades. Although previous research suggests that teacher attrition and retention correlates with a teacher’s perception of overall job satisfaction, there is insufficient understanding of teachers’ circumstances for leaving the Oklahoma City Public Schools district and the job satisfaction variables that led to their resignation. If policy makers and school leaders were better informed of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence teacher job satisfaction within school districts, such as Oklahoma City Public Schools, then administrators might be better equipped to meet the needs of teachers, and thus reduce teacher attrition and inform how best to create conditions to attract new educators into the system. Therefore, the purpose of this descriptive, single case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, describe their experience of job satisfaction. Using the Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory (a/k/a Two-Factor Theory), this study sought to answer the following central research question: How do teachers, who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction? Two-factor theory suggests that an individual’s job satisfaction is influenced by two factors: motivators or factors that contribute to one’s intrinsic growth and hygienes or factors that contribute to one’s extrinsic growth. This case study found: (a) OKCPS teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect, (b) OKCPS teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility, (c) OKCPS teachers’ greatest achievement is finding success in their students, (d) OKCPS teachers find motivation in the work itself, (e) OKCPS teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication, (f) OKCPS teachers are grossly underpaid; but money is not a motivator, (g) OKCPS teachers are dissatisfied over district policies, (h) OKCPS fosters a non-
supportive working environment for teachers, and (i) OKCPS teachers believe the State of Oklahoma has failed them. From these findings, this study concluded that the research participants experienced low motivation and low hygiene as former teachers and employees of Oklahoma City Public Schools.

*Keywords: Job satisfaction, job motivation, teacher turnover, teacher retention, Two-factor Theory, Herzberg, leadership, administration, Oklahoma City*
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Chapter One: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

As the 2016-17 school year approached in Oklahoma, public school teachers could be seen organizing their classrooms, preparing lesson plans, and adjusting nameplates above their classroom door to get ready for students on their first day of school. However, many Oklahoma schools were forced to lock classrooms because administrators found it difficult to hire and retain qualified teachers. As a result, and within days before the first day of school, newspapers and the local nightly news posted headlines warning of a critical state-wide teacher shortage: “State superintendent calls teacher shortage a crisis” (Dougherty, 2015). “Emergency certifications issued to ease Oklahoma teacher shortage” (Brilbeck, 2016). “Low pay sends teachers out of Oklahoma, profession” (Felder, 2016). “Teacher colleges see declining number of education majors” (Price, 2016).

The headlines are not an exaggeration. The teacher workforce problems that has transpired in Oklahoma has entered into an acute situation. Oklahoma’s public school districts have battled teacher shortage issues for nearly two decades, but by 2010, the workforce issue reached a tipping point (Berg-Jacobson & Levin, 2015). In fact, between 2010 and 2015, more Oklahoma teachers resigned from the profession than joined it (Oklahoma Education Coalition [OEC], 2015). By 2016, Oklahoma’s teacher shortage reached a severe stage, which forced the Oklahoma State Department of Education to raise its teacher workforce condition to its highest and most critical level (Dougherty, 2015; Hendricks, 2015). Despite the fact that chronic cycles of teacher turnover continue in Oklahoma’s public schools, politicians, policymakers, and administrators have been unable to resolve the state’s teacher shortage crisis.
A large body of research rooted in theoretical foundations focused on teacher attrition, teacher recruitment, and teacher job satisfaction already exists. However, there is a dearth in research advancing knowledge of teacher job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, specifically for teachers and administrators concerned with Oklahoma school districts. This study sought to fill that gap in scholarship by examining and describing the experiences of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of K-12 public school teachers who recently resigned from a large Oklahoma City public school district.

The purpose of this study was to describe the natural phenomena of the case (teacher attrition, retention, and recruitment issues) and to provide a clear picture of what teachers are experiencing (job satisfaction / job dissatisfaction). Specifically, the purpose of this descriptive, single case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, describe their experience of job satisfaction. While the case study focuses on teachers who have recently resigned from the Oklahoma City Public Schools District, additional data sources, such as newspaper articles, broadcast interviews, and policy papers, were utilized to explore the different facets of a complex problem that impacted the district.

The problem of practice that prompted this study was the decrease of job satisfaction among public school teachers who have resigned within a timespan of five years from a large urban school district in Oklahoma City; in particular, the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. The hemorrhaging of teachers has reached a point of crisis for Oklahoma City Public Schools, a district trying hard to recruit and retain quality educators. The absence of understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors impacting teachers within the Oklahoma public schools, makes it difficult for school district administrators and other policy makers to develop effective teacher recruitment and
teacher retention strategies. During a time when Oklahoma’s school districts are facing a teacher shortage crisis, this situation is particularly problematic.

The recruiting, retaining, and turnover of teachers has been a central topic for education policymakers for over a half century (Bolin, 2007; Ingersoll, 2014, Walker 2015). Throughout this period, researchers have investigated various factors related to the recruitment, retention, and turnover of teachers. De Simone, Cicotto, & Lampis (2016) concluded that influences such as increased stress, poor workplace conditions, inadequate leadership, and low salaries are common areas of research when investigating teacher retention. For example, Sargent and Hannum (2005) found that teacher motivation is closely related to commitment to the teaching profession. Zimbardo (2010) discovered that teachers, when exposed to chronic stressors, can experience negative attitudes toward work and job burnout. Shapira-Lishchinsky (2010) concluded teachers might engage in withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism, lateness, and intent to leave in order to cope with negative aspects of the job. Finally, Aldridge and Fraser (2016) shows school (organizational) climate factors such as inadequate resources or lack of leadership support contribute significantly to the self-efficacy of teachers. Thus, while the connection between teacher retention issues and teacher turnover are well established in scholarly literature, the question remains what are the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of job satisfaction that influenced teachers to resign from a large public school district in Oklahoma City.

After conducting a ScholarOne Search as well as a ProQuest search, this researcher found several studies investigating teachers and their intent to leave the job. Nonetheless, it would appear that there are no investigative studies exists focusing on contemporary issues related to job satisfaction of Oklahoma City public school teachers, more specifically, the factors that
describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence teachers’ job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Given the significance that recruiting, retaining, and turnover of teachers play in the educational system, policymakers in Oklahoma and elsewhere may find interest in knowing the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that compel teachers to stay or leave the school, the district, or the profession altogether. Therefore, this study sought to address the question of how do teachers, who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction?

Prior academic investigations argue that the problems of recruiting, retaining, and turnover of teachers in public schools are driven by job dissatisfaction and motivations to leave the profession. However, if there is a dearth of studies investigating the job satisfaction and motivations among teachers working in specifically in the Oklahoma City Public School District, which is a critical aspect of recruiting and retaining teachers as well as organizational success, then the result is a gap in the knowledge. Therefore, more should be known about job-related attitudes of public school teachers working for Oklahoma City Public Schools, particularly the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of secondary teachers and the circumstances that led to their resignation.

**Significance of Research Problem**

This study sought to expand the existing body of knowledge by focusing specifically on the job satisfaction of teachers who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS), a large school district in central Oklahoma. While teacher attrition and teacher turnover is problematic across the United States, the shortage of qualified teachers has become a crisis for residents of Oklahoma City. In years 2016-2017, the average teacher turnover rate in the United States is about 8% per year, while those schools in poor, urban districts in the U.S.
may reach as high as 20 percent annually (Sutcher et al, 2016; Stover, 2017). However, several
schools within the OKCPS district reported only retaining from 15 to 60 percent of their teachers
(Learning Policy Institute, 2017; Willert, 2017). Therefore, there was a critical need for scholarly
research to be conducted to unearth the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that serve
as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to stay in the profession, migrate to other districts,
migrate to another state, or leave the profession altogether. By having a deeper understanding of
what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers working in the OKCPS district, school
administrators and other policy makers may be able to glean information from this research to
better prepare teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies. The findings of this thesis
aimed to assist school and district leaders in aligning future recruitment and teacher retention
strategies with key teacher job satisfaction factors.

Through this study, policymakers and administrators may gain a better understanding of
the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of factors of secondary teachers
that recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools. By studying the attitude or emotional
disposition about how teachers feel about work, or job satisfaction, this dissertation could have
implications for understanding how to retain and recruit teachers to the profession for longer
periods of tenure. This researcher envisions that the outcome of this dissertation informs
policymakers and administrators about the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job
satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers. Therefore, the outcome of this dissertation may assist
leaders in aligning future teacher recruitment and teacher retention strategies with key teacher
job satisfaction factors.
Research Questions

Maxwell (2013) explains that the research questions are perhaps one of the most important aspects of the research design, as they serve multiple purposes: (a) the research questions help focus the study, (b) research questions offer guidance on how to conduct the study, and (c) research questions inform the reader of the principal goal of the research. Creswell (2013) recommends that the dissertation be guided by a broad question that explores the central phenomenon and framed as such that it is consistent with the research methodology used in the investigation. The research study used an established method of research known as a case study, a qualitative research design that provides “a logical plan from getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions about these questions” (Yin, 2003, p. 20). The researcher’s interest in the framework of job satisfaction framed the research questions as to better define the selection and parameters of the case (Agee, 2009). In consideration of the framework guiding this study, relevant literature, and the research methodology used in this analysis, this study attempted to answer the following research questions.

Central Research Question.

How do teachers, who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction?

Research sub-questions:

1. What extrinsic (hygiene) factors do teachers identify as important?
2. What intrinsic (motivation) factors do teachers identify as important?
3. Why are teachers motivated to leave as a teacher in the school district?
4. Does the job satisfaction of teachers relate to their decision to resign from the school district? If so, how does a teacher’s job satisfaction influence a teacher to resign from the district?

**Positionality Statement**

Creswell (2007, 2009, 2012, 2013) explains that qualitative researchers approach their research with a particular world-view or positionality that can influence the research process. However, to limit my personal beliefs or bias from influencing the outcome of the research, I engaged in the practice of bracketing. Through bracketing, the researcher made every attempt to suspend preconceptions, presuppositions, judgments, and bias temporally, so that he could focus on the data presented in the interviews and transcript data (Husserl, 1999). Therefore, this researcher regarded self-reflexivity as an essential process and that he should clearly articulate and convey his positionality, which casted light on how his world-view has been shaped.

**Motivations.** First, I was motivated to conduct this study because organizational challenges, such as the problem of practice noted in this case study, closely related to my educational background. Prior to my doctorate, I earned a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership, as well as a master's degree in nonprofit management. Both degrees informed me on how to identify organizational bottlenecks, solve workforce challenges, understand organizational culture and adhere to best practices for organizational leadership and management.

Secondly, I derived motivation from my professional experience. For 17 years, I had worked for a commercial real estate firm in the Southwest United States. As manager of the firm's associates, and throughout my tenure with the company, the organization had done well by being an inclusionary employer, hiring individuals from diverse cultures, races, genders, and
ages. Throughout my professional career, I have dealt with organizational problems in the workplace, such as issues related to organizational change, organizational conflict, as well as job satisfaction and engagement. Therefore, I have great respect for the challenges that can emerge as well as the organizational theory that aims to solve such problems.

Last, my sister, and several of my friends work as teachers. Frequently, these individuals have shared their personal experiences, opinions, and concerns with me about their profession. Each of these teachers suggests that they experience overwhelming joy in their role as a teacher. Despite their intrinsic attitude about their career choice, they still have expressed deep concerns about being a teacher. In my conversations with these teachers, I heard concerns such as poor salaries, failing leadership, low morale, teacher stress, minimal autonomy, and poor student behavior. The teacher shortage crisis impacting Oklahoma’s schools has been at the center of our conversations. For these teachers, the notion of receiving higher wages would help improve their attitude of teaching. However, the teachers quick to remind me that although they may receive higher wages, many of the underlying problems will remain unless policy makers and administrators are made aware of their concerns. For this reason, I was also motivated to unearth the driving factors that satisfy and dissatisfy teachers in Oklahoma.

**Positionality.** Based on my education, research, and personal experiences, I arrived to this study with the perception or bias that an employee’s attitude toward work can result in both positive and negative outcomes for the organization. Specifically, if teachers are intrinsically or extrinsically dissatisfied with their workplace, their profession, or other related factors, school administrators will find it difficult to retain them. Furthermore, it is the belief of this researcher that lawmakers and administrators should be cautious to assume that higher wages alone will not
serve as a panacea for Oklahoma’s teacher retention and recruitment issues, as there are several factors that drive satisfaction and dissatisfaction for teachers.

**Reflexivity.** Banks (2016) wrote, “the culture, context, and the positionality of researchers influence their assumptions, questions, findings, and interpretations” (p. 144). Thus, I approached this study as a consultant, manager, student, researcher, relative, and colleague. My interests, education, and experiences bring certain assumptions and beliefs that inform the way I perform as an investigator and my understandings of being a scholar in practice. When taking a concentrated look at events or experiences in my life, I have gained a better understanding of what shapes my worldview. As I engaged in reflexivity on my observations, and the experiences I have encountered, I began to see how events can shape one's identity, influence positionality, as well as influence the context of research. As with most researchers, I entered this research study with beliefs, opinions, biases, and ideologies. These ideologies are mostly constructed by personal experience, observations, and through education. Therefore, I made every attempt to avoid “individualized notions of self” (Fennell & Arnot, 2008, p. 534) throughout the research process of this topic.

By revealing my positionality, I made an effort to circumvent any influence on my observations, interviews, analysis, and interpretations. My overarching goal throughout this study was to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of teachers that recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools. Through careful introspection and rationally identifying and confronting my personal views (Machi & McEvoy, 2012, p. 30), I believed as a researcher; I could control my personal bias and opinion, commit to being open-minded, and be considerate of research data. “In research, the positionality of researchers and the researched are pertinent” (Carlton-Parsons, 2008, p. 1129).
Through extensive scholarly research and after broad examination, I believe I will discover evidence that will support my predisposition.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical frameworks provide an “empirical or quasi-empirical theory of social and/or psychological processes, at a variety of levels, that apply to the understanding of phenomena” (Anfara & Mertz, 2006, p. xxvii). Furthermore, a theoretical framework is “the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding [of] its logic and criteria” (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The study falls under the broad theoretical area of motivation and workplace behavior.

**Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman’s Two-Factor Theory.** Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959), a theoretical authority in human behavior, human motivation, and job satisfaction (Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003), was used to examine the identified problem of declining job satisfaction for public school teachers in an Oklahoma City public school district (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2017). As a decline in job satisfaction is the leading cause for teachers to exit their jobs, Two-Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction is a practical approach to address the problem of practice identified in this study, which is to examine teacher job satisfaction and the intrinsic and extrinsic antecedents that motivate teachers to leave exit or stay in their jobs.
Two-Factor Theory is a deceptively simple concept explaining that an individual’s motivation to work exists across two dimensions (Herzberg, et al., 1959). Herzberg et al. (1959) referred to this dichotomy as a ‘two need system’. Herzberg et al. (1959) maintains individuals need factors that encourage job enrichment to increase worker effectiveness and job satisfaction, meanwhile, need to avoid factors that provoke discomfort and job dissatisfaction. This concept paved the way for Herzberg, et al.’s (1959) Two-Factor Theory, which categorizes variables that affect a worker’s job satisfaction into two dimensions: motivating factors and hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 1959). Herzberg reported that workers participating in the study frequently described motivators as satisfying work experiences, and intrinsic or less tangible to the job itself (Herzberg et al., 1959; Porter et al., 2003). On the other hand, Herzberg reported that workers
described hygienes or dissatisfying experiences as largely non-job related factors, less tangible or extrinsic to the job itself (Herzberg et al., 1959; Porter et al., 2003).

As shown in figure 1, Herzberg (1959, 1968) found six ‘motivators’ contributing to job satisfaction, which includes: achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Conversely, Herzberg (1959, 1968) found ten factors that, if inadequate, can lead an individual to experience job dissatisfaction. Job dissatisfiers or ‘hygiene factors’ include company policy; supervision; workplace relationships with supervisors, workplace conditions; salary; workplace relationships with coworkers and peers, personal life, workplace relationships with subordinates, status; and job security (Herzberg, 1959, 1968). Herzberg (1968) reminds researchers investigating job satisfaction in the workplace that satisfiers (motivators) and dissatisfiers (hygienes) are not opposite of each other on the same continuum. Instead, Herzberg (1968) maintains these two concepts exists in two different dimensions. Herzberg (1968) explains, “the opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but rather, no job satisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction” (p. 91). Herzberg (1968) clarifies this statement by suggesting that if an individual satisfies one or all of the hygiene (dissatisfiers) factors it can prevent dissatisfaction and poor performance, however, the individual must satisfy one or all of the motivators (satisfiers) to bring about sustained job satisfaction.

Although there is a wide range of explanations and theories that contribute to the study of job satisfaction, Two-Factor Theory (1959) is considered one of the most influential and widely known theories explaining what elicits workers to feel satisfied and dissatisfied about their jobs (Cohen, 1974; Miner, 2005). Using Two-Factor Theory as the lens for this study permits the researcher to look closely at the intrinsic/internal and extrinsic/external factors that play in the
job attitudes and job satisfaction of public school teachers. As this research seeks to understand the lived experiences of teachers and how those experiences affect their job satisfaction, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory framework will inform this study when examining the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for the research participants. The theory will be discussed further in chapter two.

**Definition of Key Terms**

Several terms used throughout this study are recent additions to our daily vernacular. Therefore, such terminology, as well as relevant terminology that are vernacularly common is clarified for understanding and consistency. This study will refer to the following definitions:

- **Environmental/external job factors.** Variables which affect the work environment of teachers’ jobs, including supervision, workplace relationships, status, policy, and salary/benefits.

- **Extrinsic motivation.** The performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome (Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003, p. 54)

- **Hygiene factors.** Dissatisfying experiences related to work; dissatisfaction (Porter et al., 2003).

- **Intrinsic motivation.** Doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity (Porter et al., 2003, p. 54).

- **Job satisfaction.** A pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job as achieving or facilitating one’s job values (Locke, 1969, p. 317).

- **Motivation.** A set of independent/dependent variable relationships that explain the direction, amplitude, and persistence of an individual’s behavior, holding constant the effects of aptitude, skill, and understanding of the task, and the constraints operating in the environment (Campbell & Pritchard, 1976, cited in Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003, p. 1).
Motivators. Factors there are intrinsic to the content of the job itself; Satisfaction (Porter et al., 2003, p. 9).

Motivational/Internal job factors. Intrinsic variables which affect teachers, such as the work itself, achievement, and recognition.

Teacher attrition. Teachers who leave the profession; “leavers” (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 503).

Teacher induction. A one to five-year period of a teacher’s career that commences upon hire; a professional development program dedicated to beginning teachers (Ingersoll, 2012).

Teacher migration. Teachers who migrate from school district to school district; “movers” (Ingersoll, 2001).

Teacher retention. The ability to attract teachers to the job, meanwhile mitigating teacher attrition and teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2001).

Teacher turnover. Teachers who transfer or move to a different teaching jobs in other schools or districts; “stayers” (Ingersoll, 2001).

Work motivation. A set of energetic principles that originate both within as well as beyond as individual’s being to initiate work-related behavior, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration (Pander, 2008, p. 11).
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Machi and McEvoy (2012) define a literature review as “a written document that presents a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study” (p. 4). Meanwhile, the Educational Resources Information Center (1982) describes a literature review as an “information analysis and synthesis, focusing on findings and not simply bibliographic citations, summarizing the substance of the literature and drawing conclusions from it” (p. 85). Hart (2014) adds that the literature review is an important component of a thesis or a dissertation “because without it, one will not acquire an understanding of the topic, of what has already been done on it, how it has been researched, and what the key issues are” (p. 1).

Literature Review Organization

The Educational Resources Information Center (1982) reminds researchers of the following steps toward conducting literature reviews:“(a) rationale for conducting the review; (b) research questions or hypotheses that guide the research; (c) an explicit plan for collecting data, including how units will be chosen; (d) an explicit plan for analyzing data; and (e) a plan for presenting data” (p. 4). Chapter One illustrated the rationale for conducting the review centralizes on the need to understand further the variables that influence teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. For this literature review, the research question guiding the review was: *From the previous literature, what are the central theories applied to explain teacher attrition and retention issues?* The primary goal of collecting data for the literature review is to collect “an exhaustive, semi-exhaustive, representative, or pivotal set of relevant articles” (Randolph, 2009, p. 6). For this review, the researcher began an electronic search via the Internet in
academic databases, such as the Northeastern University Library, ERIC, JSTOR, PubPsych, and ProQuest. After electronically retrieving the articles, the researcher read the articles and queried the articles reference list to determine if more relevant articles should be added to the data collection. Also, the author included literary sources such as policy reports, research reports, and news articles. The collection of data was then evaluated to determine its relevancy based on the focus and goal of the literature review. The reviewer then coded the relevant articles and organized each article in an Excel spreadsheet. Next, the researcher analyzed the data by reviewing the relevant articles to make sense of the literature. Finally, the researcher determined which articles were most important and adhered to the focus and goal of the literature review and presented the articles by providing an analysis and synthesis of the findings.

To that end, this literature review focuses on research theories, outcomes, and practices and applications (Cooper, 1988). Three separate bodies of literature are reviewed: job satisfaction, teacher turnover in the United States, and Oklahoma’s teacher shortage crisis. First, this literature review focuses on the history and seminal roots of job satisfaction theory, specifically, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman’s Two-Factor Theory (1959). The scope of this literature review was limited. Job satisfaction literature is very diverse and has many applications. Therefore, the first section of the literature review provides a general definition of job satisfaction, evolution of the theory, the theoretical frameworks guiding this study, as well as how job satisfaction has been studied concerning public school teachers. The second body of literature focused on providing an overview of national trends in teacher retention and recruitment efforts, in addition to a more focused examination of such trends unfolding in the State of Oklahoma. Third, this review examined Oklahoma’s teacher shortage crisis.
Job Satisfaction

The American Psychological Association (Weir, 2013) suggests that one of the first things a person may ask you upon meeting you for the first time is What do you do? These four words may seem meaningless, but when this question is incorporated into a full equation of variables such as life, work, family, values, happiness, and meaningfulness the question is quite powerful, as one realizes how much influence the job we do has on our lives, during work and away from work. The Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2016) conducted a nationwide study focused on United States employees reported overall job satisfaction. The SHRM (2016) study concluded that 88% of those investigated reported being satisfied with their current job. However nearly half (45%) of those surveyed indicated that they would be likely or very likely to look for a job outside of their current organization with one year (SHRM, 2016). The SHRM (2016) survey further details the top ten contributors to employee job satisfaction: (1) the respectful treatment of all employees at all levels; (2) overall compensation; (3) overall benefits; (4) job security; (5) trust between employees and managers; (6) opportunities to use skills and abilities in your work; (7) organization’s financial stability; (8) relationship with immediate supervisor; (9) feeling safe in your work environment; and (10) Supervisor’s respect for employee ideas.

Job satisfaction is an important factor for employers as it likely will determine the rate of turnover, retention, recruitment, productivity, and loyalty (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974; Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Shields & Ward, 2001). The results of the SHRM (2016) study serves as a warning to organizations, to take note that employees (a) value the organizations culture, (b) compensation is becoming an increasing
importance, (c) employees want to feel valued, and (d) employees feel the need to be included (p. 9).

Defining job satisfaction. An expansive search of job satisfaction returns several closely related, but different definitions of job satisfaction. There is not a consensus definition because different authors or researchers approach defining job satisfaction from various perspectives based on the nature and importance of work. Furthermore, Vroom (1964) argues that some versions of job satisfaction use terms interchangeably such as job attitudes, workplace satisfaction, employee morale, which may explain why there is not a uniform definition of job satisfaction. The following definitions of job satisfaction are derived from the research of the most respected organizational thinkers in the 20th century.

Hoppock (1935) defines job satisfaction as “any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that causes a person to say, ‘I am satisfied with my job’” (p. 47). Vroom (1995) refers to job satisfaction as “affective orientations on the part of individuals toward work roles that they are presently occupying. Positive attitudes toward the job are conceptually equivalent to job satisfaction and negative attitudes toward the job are equivalent to job dissatisfaction” (p. 115). Similarly, Cranny, Smith, and Stone (1992) define job satisfaction as “an affective (that is, emotional) reaction to a job that results from the incumbent’s comparison of actual outcomes with those what are desired (expected, deserved, and so on)” (p. 1). Weiss (2002) contends that one’s experience with job satisfaction is an attitude shaped by “positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one’s job or job situation” (p. 175). Judge, Hulin, and Dalal (2009) follow in the same vein as Weiss and define job satisfaction as “multidimensional psychological responses to one’s job. These responses have cognitive (evaluative) and affective (emotional) components” (p. 5). Judge et al. (2009) continue
their definition by suggesting that job satisfaction refers to “internal evaluation of the favorability of one’s job. These evaluations are revealed by outward (i.e., verbalized) and inward (i.e., felt) emotion responses” (p. 5). Locke (1976) submits the most cited and perhaps the most simply stated definition of job satisfaction, “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experience” (p. 1300). Despite the various perspectives of the authors or the similar or interchangeable use of words, each of these definitions emphasizes that cognitive evaluation as well as emotional or affective behaviors play a significant role in shaping the attitudes of employees and thus their meaning of job satisfaction.

**The history of human motivation and job satisfaction.** Factors that motivate people have preoccupied thinkers, leaders, and managers for as far back as ancient Eastern history. One of the earliest accounts of labor relations takes place in ancient Egypt during the construction of the many pyramids and Egyptian cities. For example, during the reign of Ramses II (1278-1237 BCE), King Ramses II is noted as being knowledgeable of his worker’s needs; providing workers with days off and along with storehouses of food, supplies, and water for their well-being (Desroches Noblecourt, 1999). Cotterell, Lowe, and Shaw (2006) note that during King Wuling’s reign in ancient China (340 BCE), Wuling is credited for not only investigating his enemy, but also examining what motivates his army toward achieving higher performance. While workplace conditions have changed dramatically from the times of ancient Egypt and ancient China, the lessons learned parallel what researchers discovered in the 20th-century American workforce. Since the 1930’s, organizational leaders have been troubled by how the performance of the American worker may be influenced by the employee’s attitudes toward the workplace. Specifically, leaders have expressed concern about what are the driving factors that determine job satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the workplace. These concerns have given rise to
empirical research focused on the needs and attitudes of workers as well as the job satisfaction of employees.

Following World War II, the United States became an industrial powerhouse, producing fifty percent of the world’s manufactured commodities (Montoya, Belmonte, Guarneri, Hackel, and Hartigan-O’Connor, 2016). Post-war, organizational thinkers began setting their focus on the performance of workers, specifically on what drives and motivates them. The term motivation, Latin for the word movere, is defined by Campbell and Pritchard (1976) as having to do with:

A set of independent/dependent variable relationships that explain the direction, amplitude, and persistence of an individual’s behavior, holding constant the effects of aptitude, skill, and understanding of the task, and the constraints operating in the environment (p. 65).

Frederick Taylor and scientific management. One of the earliest researchers of organizational science was Frederick Taylor. While the rest of the business world focused on production, Taylor was more concerned with efficiency (1903). Taylor (1903) sought to increase production through scientific methods, such as deconstructing work processes into skill-reducing work units. During his studies, Taylor (1911) recognized workers were motivated by different variables or incentives; Taylor described salary and wages as the most important factor in motivating employees (Taylor, 1911). As if Taylor foresaw the elements of Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman’s Two-Factor Theory (1959), Taylor lists several motivating strategies aimed to inspire workers.

… the hope of rapid promotion or advancement; higher wages, either in the form of generous piece-work prices or of a premium or bonus of some kind for good and rapid
work; shorter hours of labor; better surroundings and working conditions than are ordinarily given, etc., and, above all, this special incentive should be accompanied by that personal consideration for, and friendly contact with, his workmen which comes only from a genuine and kindly interest in the welfare of those under him (Taylor, 1911, p. 12).

Taylor’s Scientific Management did not escape criticism. Workers argued that the new work process exploited employees and placed extreme pressure on the employee to work faster (Hobson, 1914). Commons (1911) indicated that Scientific Management leads to intense standardization. Hoxie (1916) asserts that ‘Taylorism’ results in strict time constraints and therefore employees who fail to meet preferred times would be viewed negatively. Thus, Commons (1911), Hobson (1914), and Hoxie (1916) warned that Scientific Management would lead to high levels of conflict between employee and employer.

**Elton Mayo’s and the Hawthorne studies.** Well informed by prior studies conducted by Frederick Taylor, Mayo, Roethlisberger, and Dickson helped define a new paradigm in industrial-organizational psychology, as well as the human relations movement. In 1924, Roethlisberger and Dickson were invited by the Western Electric Company to study worker productivity, job satisfaction, and workplace organization with the aim of increasing performance and productivity (Locke, 1976; Gillespie, 1988). The study took place at Western Electric’s Hawthorne Plant. Roethlisberger and Dickson applied several different approaches including changing certain aspects of the working environment, such as room temperature, room humidity, and illumination levels (Locke, 1976). After three years of research, Roethlisberger and Dickson’s experiments were inconclusive.
Elton Mayo was asked to join the research team in 1927. Mayo's contribution changed the team's approach as well as how the team defined the goal of the research (Locke, 1976). The new goal was to investigate the social-psychological aspects of human behavior in organizations. The new approach permitted the Mayo team to conclude that workers were not reacting to lighting or workplace conditions, rather workers were responding to being observed by the research team (Locke, 1976). When employees are aware of being observed or measured, and productivity rises is today known as the Hawthorne Effect.

Once Elton Mayo and his team realized that psychological and social factors were central to the research, more experiments were conducted. By the end of the study, Mayo concluded that worker incentives, such as wages and good working conditions, are eclipsed by the needs and desire of the employee to feel appreciated, having a sense of belongingness to a group, and to feel inclusion in the decision-making processes at work (Locke, 1976). Mayo argues that when an employee feels such appreciation and inclusion internal job satisfaction increases and as a result increased productivity, thus, a happy worker is a productive worker (Locke, 1976).

Despite being a very influential study during its time, the Hawthorne Studies were heavily criticized by peers and the business world. Since its publication, Elton Mayo and his team have been subject to disparaging comments alluding to a lack of integrity, misinterpretation of the data, and a lack of rigor in the research process (Landsberger, 1958; Frake & Kaul, 1978). Carey (1967) wrote that the evidence reported by Mayo and his team was “devoid of scientific merit, and conclusion so little supported by evidence” (p. 403). Most recently, Jones (1992) application of statistical analysis using the experimental data used in the Hawthorne experiments suggests the evidential data is inadequate to interpret or make a conclusion.
Robert Hoppock. On the heels of Taylor and Mayo, Robert Hoppock, a researcher in the field of industrial-organizational psychology, provided the first intensive study focused on job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). In his seminal research for his dissertation, Hoppock (1935) conducted two separate, but related studies focused on the job satisfaction of workers. First, Hoppock (1935) investigated 80 individuals, half of which were employed and the other half unemployed. Hoppock would question what participants liked and disliked about their work. Furthermore, Hoppock inquired about how specific aspects of work, such as pay, benefits, and supervision, influence an employee’s level of job satisfaction. Hoppock found that social status, job autonomy, and meaningful interpersonal relationship with one’s supervisors and coworkers as potential causes of job satisfaction. In his second study, Hoppock (1936) investigated 500 teachers throughout the northeastern United States and was able to identify the 100 most satisfied and 100 least satisfied teachers among his sample. By implementing a job satisfaction measurement, Hoppock (1935, 1936) found six factors that may determine job satisfaction: (a) how an individual reacts to unpleasant situations; (b) how an employee behaves when interacting with colleagues; (c) how an individual identifies in social and economic status; (d) how an individual relates to the nature of work bases on their abilities, interests, and preparation; (e) security; and (f) one’s loyalty to the organization. Hoppock (1935) further found that among the most satisfied, teachers were typically older, report low levels of work monotony, and have meaningful interpersonal relations with work colleagues and supervisors. Hoppock (1935) concluded that job satisfaction is defined as “any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that causes a person to say, ‘I am satisfied with my job’” (p. 47). In a 1978 study to test the relevancy of Hoppock’s survey instrument, McNichols, Stahl, and
Manley (1978) determined that Hoppock’s job satisfaction measure have significant utility in modern research, despite its age.

**Theories of Job Satisfaction**

The prior discussion of this literature review has provided a definition for job satisfaction based on the study and research of several key theorists. The previous section has also provided an evolutionary history of job satisfaction. The groundwork laid by Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo, as well as the seminal research conducted by Robert Hoppock, sheds light on the variables that motivate workers. This section provides an overview of the most cited job satisfaction theories, which include Discrepancy Theory, Job Characteristics Model, and Maslow’s Hierarchy Theory of Needs.

**Discrepancy Theory.** Discrepancy theory (1969) suggests that if performance exceeds expectations, the discrepancy or gap exists will be disconfirmed or satisfied. However, if performance fails to meet expectations, the discrepancy or gap perceived by individuals will be negatively disconfirmed or dissatisfied (Locke, 1969; Oliver 1981; Clinton & Wellington, 2013). Clinton and Wellington (2013) clarifies this description by adding that “positive disconfirmation leads to increased satisfaction, with negative disconfirmation having the opposite effect, while zero disconfirmation occurs when performance matches expectations” (p. 51). Therefore, discrepancy theory research focuses on the gap or the difference between expectations and experiences.

Jiang, Klein, and Saunders (2011) make the assertion that differences or discrepancies “can result in a number of reactions that are emotive or active, including adjustment or dismissal of the anchor, a change in the perception of accomplishment, or a resulting belief that leads to a particular attitude or action” (p. 358). Discrepancy theory has been applied across a broad
spectrum of topics including issues related to working relationships (Boyd, Glandon, & Glandon, 2011), learning disabilities in education (Callinan, Cunningham, and Theiler, 2013), and personality and individual differences (Barnett & Womack, 2015). In the study of job satisfaction, Porter (1961) examined Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, specifically, the discrepancy between the highest order of needs (e.g., esteem and self-actualization) and lesser human needs (e.g. physiological, safety, and love). Porter’s (1961) study focused on bottom and middle managers and concluded that among management, “higher-order needs are not being well-satisfied as the lower order needs” (p. 8). There are several areas of criticism for discrepancy theory. However, the overarching criticism deals with poor application of the theory, meaning the theory presents unique issues when measuring competing components (Locke, 1976; Jiang et al., 2011)

**Hackman and Oldham’s job characteristics model.** The central takeaway of Hackman and Oldham’s (1974, 1976) model is the key to employee motivation is the task itself. The Job Characteristics Model (JCM) suggests the following five core job dimensions are positively related to job satisfaction: autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance (Hackman & Oldham, 1974). As a result, Hackman and Oldham’s (1974) assert the five characteristics impact three psychological states: meaningfulness of work, responsibility, and knowledge of outcomes. Jobs that are routine, monotonous, or boring are prone to stifle employee motivation. Whereas when the characteristic of the job provides variety, challenge, autonomy the employee will find meaning and motivation.

The Job Characteristics Model has been useful for organizations to determine or predict levels of job satisfaction based on these key components of the design of the job as well as job enrichment. The Hackman and Oldham’s (1974) model is the central theory in measurement
devices such as the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS), Job Rating Form (JRF) and the Motivating Potential Score (MPS). The Job Characteristics Model has been the subject of several empirical studies confirming Hackman and Oldham’s (1974) findings (Anderson, 1984; Colarelli, Dean, & Konstans, 1987; Fried & Ferris; 1987). While the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) is widely applied, Roberts and Glick’s (1981) extensive literature review found the Job Characteristics Model to be ambiguous and unclear, and several variables were overlooked, which suggests that the JCM has yet to move out of the exploratory phase. Fried and Ferris (1987) also argue that there is “much discussion, controversy, and criticism [involving] the relationship between objective and perceived job characteristics…Because not all of the reliable variance in job perceptions is explained by objective job conditions…the JCM approach have overstated their respective case” (p. 309).

**Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs.** Porter, Bigley, and Steers (2003) notes that the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is perhaps the most widely known theory focused on individual needs and motivation. Following his research for what motivates humans to achieve particular needs, and needs more important than others, Abraham Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Human Needs, a five-stage model, to explain why the human personality grows and manifests over time and how people satisfy personal needs (Maslow, 1943, 1954). Maslow (1943, 1954) introduced the hierarchy of needs (see figure 2) to business literature and argues that humans have five basic needs: physiological (e.g. air, food, water, sleep), safety (e.g. security, employment, salary, health), love (e.g. belongingness, friendship, family), ‘esteem (e.g. confidence, self-esteem, respect), and self-actualization (e.g. morality, creativity, problem solving).
Maslow (1943, 1954) designed the hierarchy of needs in the shape of a pyramid because he suggests that each of the basic needs is related, however they are arranged in a hierarchical model based on prepotency. Maslow’s (1943, 1954) model suggests that lesser human needs, (e.g. physiological, safety, and belonging/love) must be achieved or minimized in a sequential fashion, moving from the bottom to the top of the pyramid, before higher prepotent needs (e.g. esteem and self-actualization) can emerge.

Figure 2. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943, 1954).

Maslow (1970) explains that higher needs have more preconditions and offer more gratification. Needs that are satisfied do not motivate, whereas the unsatisfied needs serve as motivators (Maslow, 1954). For example, humans require or need the most basic needs identified as physiological needs of water, food, and shelter. Maslow (1943) contends that humans are consumed with these needs until they reach a point of satisfaction. One the basic needs are satisfied, one will sequential advance to the needs for safety, which include needs such as security, stability, and pay. When the needs of safety have been met, the individual will look
ahead to achieving acceptance, affection, relationships, and love or the need of belonging. After achieving the three basic levels of needs, one will need to satisfy their esteem, which is commonly referred to as status or ego. Maslow (1943, 1954) posits that humans find motivation in our desire to achieve such basic satisfaction or in our effort to maintain the conditions upon which basic satisfactions exist. As human achieve the basic of needs, the individual is also achieving fulfillment and growth (Maslow, 1943, 1954). When the four lowest human needs are met, the individual reaches a satisfaction point of self-actualization. In other words, the individual has achieved fulfillment and achieved everything they have ever desired (Maslow, 1943, 1954). Maslow (1943) argues self-actualization:

Refers to the person’s desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially…The specific form that these needs will take will of course vary greatly from person to person. In one individual it may take the form of the desire to be an ideal mother, in another it may be expressed athletically, and in still another it may be expressed in painting pictures or in inventions (Maslow, 1943, p. 382–383).

Maslow (1970) conducted a study of public and historical figures to gain a better understanding of characteristics of self-actualized individuals. Maslow’s (1970) identified fifteen characteristics of a self-actualized person:

1. Ability to detect dishonesty and judge people correctly;
2. Acceptance of self, others, and nature;
3. Spontaneous in behavior;
4. Problem-centered;
5. Have a need for privacy;
6. Autonomous;
7. Capacity to appreciate;
8. Peak experiences;
9. Desire to help others;
10. Profound interpersonal relationships;
11. Democratic mindset;
12. Have strong moral and ethical standards;
13. Sense of humor;
14. Creative;
15. Resistance to enculturation;

Maslow (1970) found that one may not be representative of all fifteen of the self-actualization characteristics to be self-actualized, as self-actualization may occur at any time one reaches their full potential. Maslow (1970) argues less than two-percent of the population achieved self-actualization. Thus, Maslow (1970) contends that man is a “wanting animal and rarely reaches a state of complete satisfaction except for a short time. As one desire is satisfied, another pops up to take its place” (p. 24).

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs met criticism based on a broad range of issues including its application across cultures, the prepotency of sex within the hierarchy, and its application across various age groups. Geert Hofstede (1936), notable researcher in cultural studies, argues that Maslow’s theory is ethnocentric, suggesting the model has cultural limitations. For example, Maslow’s theory is rooted in value choice. Hofstede maintains “Maslow’s hierarchy reflects individualistic values, putting self-actualization and autonomy on top. Values prevalent in collectivist cultures, such as harmony or family support, do not even appear in the hierarchy” (p.
Maslow’s inclusion of sex as a physiological need has received much criticism. Kenrick, Griskevicius, Neuberg, and Schaller (2010) argues that sex is individualistic that not all humans desire or have a need for sex (e.g. asexual). Kenrick et al. (2010) further suggest that although self-actualization plays a significant role in a human’s psychological makeup, self-actualization is not fundamental, as it is an “unlikely distinct human need” (para. 5). Maslow’s hierarchy of needs also fell short when applied to individuals across various age groups. In an empirical study conducted by Goebel and Brown (1981), the research concludes that the “results give statistically significant evidence of age differences in motivation for all needs except security” (p. 812). Goebel and Brown (1981) further adds that Maslow’s model fails to address “that there is a regression in need satisfaction during old age…[which] raises the question as to the ability of a growth model to explain life-span motivational development” (p. 812).

**Theoretical Framework for the Present Study: Motivation-Hygiene Theory**

Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman (1959) first discussed their research in the book *The Motivation to Work*. The authors identified their theoretical approach to job satisfaction as Motivation-Hygiene Theory, which is commonly referred to as Two-Factor Theory. The Two-factor theory is widely cited as a prominent framework studying job satisfaction and serving as a foundation for research in the fields of human resource development, industrial-psychology, and management (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Herzberg, 1987; Gawel, 1997; Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003).

Two-factor theory attempts to identify the two sets of factors that impact upon an individual’s feeling of satisfaction while at work (Herzberg et al., 1959). The work of Herzberg et al. (1959) maintains that job satisfaction exists in one dimension, while job dissatisfaction exists in a separate dimension (see figure 3). As such, and as the theory’s name suggests,
motivation and hygiene factors are divided into two dimensions or categories. The first category contributes to those factors that foster job satisfaction (e.g., satisfiers), which are called, “motivators.” The second category is factors that contribute to job dissatisfaction (e.g., dissatisfiers), which are called, “hygienes.” Hygiene factors are referred to as so because these are factors that can be avoided or prevented. When hygiene factors are high, job satisfaction is high. However, when hygiene factors are low, employees are dissatisfied. Herzberg (1959) also explains that motivational and hygiene factors are independent variables. Therefore, it is plausible that employees can be neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, but neutral.

Figure 3. Herzberg’s Two Dimensions of Satisfaction (1959)

Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory was the outcome of a five-year research program on job attitudes made possible by a grant from The Buhl Foundation (Herzberg et al, 1959). At the time, 1950’s, there was great concern about how job dissatisfaction factors such as union strikes, furloughs, factory slow-downs, and worker grievances would impact employee’s attitudes of work (Herzberg et al., 1959). The Herzberg team commenced the study by conducting an intensive literature review of over 2,000 articles published between 1900 and 1955. The research paved the way for Herzberg and his colleagues to make two distinct assumptions. Herzberg et al.
(1959, p. 45-49) found several “Level One” factors that are capable of influencing the job attitude of workers:

1. Recognition – can derive from anyone; may be positive or negative.

2. Achievement – related to successfully completing a job, finding solutions, actualization of one’s work. The opposite of failure.

3. Possibility of Growth – opportunity for one to advance, learn a new skill, or reach or break through a glass ceiling. This factor can also have a negative effect on satisfaction, for example, if one neglects to find an opportunity to advance.

4. Advancement – an expected or unexpected change in job status or position, not a lateral move. This factor can also have a negative effect on job satisfaction if one is demoted or reassigned.

5. Salary – includes all sequences of events in which compensation play a role. An increase in salary foster a positive effect, while a decrease in salary fosters a negative effect.

6. Interpersonal Relations – there are three levels of relationships: superior, subordinate, and peers, all of which have a series of subcategories within each. Some may be purely social while others are work related. This category can result in positive and negative effects.

7. Supervision – these factors deal with the characteristics of interpersonal relationships with one’s supervisor form his behavior carrying out his job. This category can result in positive and negative effects.
8. Responsibility – workers derive satisfaction from being given responsibility for his own work for the work of others, or being given new responsibility. A lack of responsibility may foster a loss of satisfaction.

9. Company Policy and Administration – this category describe those components of a sequence of events in which some over-all aspect of the company was a factor. This may involve adequacy or inadequacy of company organization and management, or the harmfulness or beneficial effects of the company’s policies.

10. Working Conditions – this entails the physical conditions of work, the amount of work, or facilities available for doing work.

11. Work Itself – the good or bad feelings related to the actual doing of the job or the tasks of the job.

12. Factors of Personal Life – Situations in which some aspect of the job affected personal life in such a way that the effect was a factor in the worker’s feelings about his/her job.

13. Status – if status is a factor in feelings about the job.

14. Job Security – if it reflects in some objective way on job security, such as tenure considerations or the company’s stability or instability.

After additional research, Herzberg et al. (1959) added a second level of related factors as some people are inclined to find job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction based on emotional disposition or “feelings.” Judge and Larsen (2001) found strong evidence the worker’s attitudes or moods originates from an internal state of mind exhibited by one’s feelings of positive emotional experience or negative emotional experience. Herzberg’s (1959, p. 49) Level Two factors include:
1. Feelings of recognition
2. Feelings of achievement
3. Feelings of positive growth (or blocks to growth)
4. Feelings of responsibility (or lack of or diminished responsibility)
5. Group feelings (Belongingness or feelings of isolation)
6. Feelings of interest or lack of interest in the performance of the job
7. Feelings of increased or decreased status
8. Feelings of increased or decreased job security
9. Feelings of fairness or unfairness
10. Feelings of pride or of inadequacy or guilt
11. Feelings about salary

From the review of the literature, Herzberg et al. (1959) were able to find a wide variety of research designs, methodologies, and theoretical concepts focused on job attitudes. Herzberg’s (1959) core assumptions included: there was enough evidence to identify relationships between job attitudes and productivity, there was enough data to identify key characteristics of work dissatisfaction, and there was sufficient evidence to identify factors related to job attitudes. The literature review produced enough data for Herzberg et al. (1959) to make core assumption for their hypotheses and research design.

In their book, *The Motivation to Work*, the Herzberg team indicates their initial hypothesis for the study was that job satisfaction, and dissatisfaction cannot be reliably measured on the same continuum (Herzberg et al, 1959). After conducting an empirical test, followed by two pilot programs, the Herzberg team adjusted the design of the study and restated the hypothesis to read, factors that lead to positive attitudes and those leading to negative attitudes.
will differ. The team added a second hypothesis, which states, factors and effects involved in a long-range sequence of events will differ from those in short-range (Herzberg et al., 1959).

Herzberg et al. (1959) utilized a qualitative methodology and applied a critical incident technique as a research design. Flanagan (1954) indicates that a critical incident technique consists of “a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles” (p. 327).

The study involved 203 research participants across nine different sites located in the Pittsburg, Philadelphia metropolitan area. Semi-structured interviews, as well as a questionnaire, informed the study about how the research participants felt about their job. The research team’s collection process was described as follows:

Briefly, we asked our respondents to describe periods in their lives when they were exceedingly happy and unhappy with their jobs. Each respondent gave as many "sequences of events" as he could that met certain criteria, including a marked change in feeling, a beginning, and an end, and contained some substantive description other than feelings and interpretations (Herzberg, 1964, p. 3).

The participants were asked to rate their job experience on a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 to 21, with 21 having the most impact on their feelings and 1 indicating hardly any effect on their feelings. Therefore, high sequences represented a high impact on job attitude and low sequences represented low impact on job attitude (Herzberg, 1959; 1964). Herzberg (1959) discovered that only a small number of factors fostered positive or good feelings about a job, all of which are intrinsic factors of the job or the job itself. The research results demonstrated a stark contrast
between the two concepts, particularly, that job dissatisfaction can be fostered by many factors and situations (Herzberg, 1959; Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Herzberg (1959; 1964) and his colleagues concluded the motivators or factors leading to satisfaction, such as achievement, intrinsic work interests, responsibility, and advancement foster minimal job dissatisfaction. In general, one who experiences job satisfaction is an employee that is pleased and committed to their work and career (Martin, 2002; Robinson & Garton, 2006). While, hygiene factors, or dissatisfiers leading to job dissatisfaction, such as company policy, administrative practices, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and salary, foster or contribute to minimal job satisfaction. In general, one who is dissatisfied are less effective, less productive, and are less committed to their work and career (Martin, 2002; Robinson & Garton, 2006; Kitchel et al., 2012). The outcome of their research verified the initial hypothesis presented by Herzberg (1964). Furthermore, Herzberg’s (1964) research suggest that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are not polar opposites existing on the same continuum. Rather, Herzberg (1987) holds the view that:

The factors involved in producing job satisfaction (and motivation) are separate and distinct from the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction … Each of these two feelings are not opposites of each other. The opposite of job satisfaction in not job dissatisfaction, but rather, no job dissatisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction (p. 9).

In their 2005 study of Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, Bassett-Jones and Lloyd (2005) conclude that, “Money and recognition do not appear to be primary sources of motivation in stimulating employees to contribute ideas. Which follows Herzberg’s notion that factors associated with intrinsic satisfaction play a more important role” (p. 929). Furnham (2006)
argues that money, in fact, is an important motivator for employees. Nevertheless, he adds, “the effect of a pay rise will very soon wear off as people adapt to their new conditions. Any improvements are therefore to be temporary. Money can be an effective motivator, but you need a great deal of it to stop adaptation effects” (p. 26). Herzberg (1987) acknowledges that such language can be considered a play on semantics. However, Herzberg makes the assertion that humans are motivated by two sets of work-related stimuli; growth factors intrinsic to the job (e.g., achievement, responsibility, the work itself) and factors extrinsic to the job (e.g., supervision, salary, working conditions). “A job will enhance work motivation and satisfaction only to the degree that motivators are designed into the work itself. Changes that deal solely with hygiene factors should not lead to increases in employee satisfaction” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 251).

**Work-related stimuli: defining job attitude factors.** Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that “to be motivated means to be motivated to do something” (p. 54). Meanwhile, Porter et al., (2003) assert that “motivation concerns energy, direction, persistence, and equifinality – all aspects of activation and intention” (p. 50). The biologic, cognitive, and social drivers that make up work-related stimuli that motivate employees have been central to investigators from fields in industrial-psychology and management (Porter et al., 2003). As noted, Herzberg (1987) asserts that workers are motivated by work-related stimuli deriving from two different dimensions. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that “intrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently interesting or enjoyable, and extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it leads to a separable outcome” (p. 55).

**Intrinsic factors.** The construct of intrinsic motivation is finding an inherent joy or pleasure in doing an activity. Therefore, employees have been linked to finding intrinsic
motivation simply by doing the characteristics of the job. For example, a school teacher may find the task of teaching children an inherently enjoyable and rewarding. Herzberg (1959; 1966) two-dimension model found that workers were most intrinsically motivated by factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, growth, and the work itself. Herzberg et al. (1993) list the six intrinsic motivation factors as follows:

*Achievement.* Successful completion of a job, solutions to problems, vindication, and seeing the results of one’s work. However, if the employee is not able to complete the task, the satisfaction level may decrease (p. 45).

*Recognition.* Some act of notice, praise, or blame (p. 45). For example, if an employee receives a job-well-done, he or she may feel job satisfaction. However, if an employee receives criticism for his or her work, the employee attitude toward job satisfaction may decrease.

*Responsibility.* The likelihood that the individual would be able to move onward and upward. Also, able to advance in his own skills and in his profession (45-46). For example, if the employee is given more liberty to take on responsibility in his profession then his or her job satisfaction may increase. If the employee finds that that certain job-related responsibilities have been taken from him or her, then the employee’s attitude toward job satisfaction may decrease. Interestingly, researchers have found that too much responsibility can have adverse effects on workers, causing demotivation and perhaps dissatisfaction (Locke, 1973; Knoop, 1994; Wang & Lee, 2009).

*Advancement.* A situation where the individual experienced an actual change in status or position in the company (p. 46). However, in the case of negative advancements, such as demotion or not receiving an expected promotion, may foster a decreased level of job satisfaction.
Possibility of Growth. Herzberg (1959, 1966) maintains that while advancement pertains to actual change, growth is central to the opportunity for vertical or horizontal mobility. When the window of opportunity to grow within the company, an employee can experience job dissatisfaction.

The Work Itself. The actual doing of the job or the tasks of the job as a source of good, or bad feelings about it (p. 48). Public service employees such as police, firefighters, and teacher often find an intrinsic good about the work they are hired to do. However, employees may experience decreased levels of job satisfaction if the job gets boring, stressful (burnout), or less challenging.

Extrinsic factors. The construct of extrinsic motivation “refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome” (Porter et al., 2003, p. 54). Unlike intrinsic motivation, people become extrinsically motivated by external rewards, where quid pro quo yields certain behaviors and outcomes. For example, a school teacher may find an extrinsic motivation to extend his or her employment with the school district because of a new college tuition reimbursement program. In this example, the teacher perceives the tuition reimbursement as a reward in exchange for his or her service. Although employers often utilize extrinsic factors to motivate workers, Herzberg (1959, 1966) maintains extrinsic motivators do not foster satisfaction, however, the absence of such extrinsic factors may serve as a source of job dissatisfaction. The eight extrinsic motivation factors are listed as follows:

Supervision. Sequence of events that revolve around an employee’s attitude about his/her immediate supervisor, such as competence or incompetence, fairness or unfairness, willingness or unwillingness to delegate responsibility, or willingness or unwillingness to teach (train) (Herzberg et al., 1993, p. 46).
Workplace Conditions. The state of the physical conditions of the workplace, the amount of work, or the facilities available for doing the work (Herzberg, et al. 1993, p. 48). For example, Perie and Baker (1997) found that a teacher’s workplace conditions may also include administrative support, school climate, and student behavior.

Co-Workers (Interpersonal Relations). The quality of interpersonal relationships between the employee and his or her co-workers. Such relationship, when positive, can foster motivation, reduce the opportunity of one’s intent to quit, and reduce absenteeism (Herzberg et al., 1959; Harris, Winkowski, & Engdahl, 2007).

Pay/Salary. The pay/salary factor is the most debated among all of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors presented by Herzberg. Pay and salary include all sequences of events in which compensation plays a role and “involves wage or salary increases, or unfulfilled expectation of salary increases” (Herzberg et al., 1993, p. 46). Herzberg (1976) states that money falls under hygiene factors. While, Furnham (2006) agrees with Herzberg and suggests that perceived low compensation fosters job dissatisfaction and demotivation, at the same time, he posits the motivation that follows a salary increase can be temporary, as employees may quickly adapt to a new reality that the pay increase was not enough or they are not equitably or fairly paid. Furnham (2006) advises employers that pay increases are not “everything,” but rather evidence shows employees would be more motivated by time off, job security, or rewards. Miner (2015) objects to Herzberg’s notion that money is strictly a dissatisfier and argues, “[salary] clearly operates as a source of satisfaction in many cases … whether or not these factors yield satisfaction or not depends very much on the individual” (p. 73)

Policies and Administration. The adequacy or inadequacy of company organization and management. The harmfulness or beneficial effects of the company’s policies. (p. 48). For
example, the employee may perceive the organization’s policies are unfair. Darling-Hammond (1995) adds a contributing factor to a teacher’s workplace satisfaction is the organization’s administrative support or leadership.

*Job Security.* Herzberg (1959, 1966) as well as Ronan (1970) suggests this factor is concerned with the objective consideration that could impact one’s stability or tenure at work.

*Status.* The sequence of events that increases a worker’s sense of importance or responsibility at work (Herzberg, 1959; 1966)

*Personal Life.* Sequence of events involving some aspect of the job effecting the personal life of the employee, in such a way that the effect was a factor in the respondent’s feelings about this job (p. 48).

**The significance of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction.** Herzberg (1959) makes the assertion that absence of extrinsic (hygiene) factors are the drivers of job dissatisfaction among workers. Whereas, the presence of satisfiers or intrinsic (motivators) factors are the drivers of job satisfaction among workers. The attitudes and beliefs that drive these two concepts result in the employee’s well-being while at work, thus job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are linked to several variables including job performance, employee absenteeism, and employee turnover.

**Employee performance.** Interest in the connection between job performance and job satisfaction extends back to the Hawthorne Studies in 1939 (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). The Hawthorne Studies concluded that workers’ attitudes could vary depending upon workplace factors, and thus job satisfaction can impact the worker’s performance on the job (Locke, 1976). The research of Brayfield and Crockett (1955) countered the results of the Hawthorne Studies and suggested there is “minimal or no relationship” (p. 405) between one job
satisfaction and job performance. A similar opinion was later published by Lawler and Porter (1967) who cited that there is a lack of empirical evidence.

However, Cummings (1970) suggests an alternative opinion, finding that three significant relationships exist when discussing job satisfaction and job performance: job satisfaction results in performance; performance results in job satisfaction, and rewards results in both job performance and job satisfaction. Christen, Iyler, and Soberman (2005) find job satisfaction and performance are linked as well and argue that prior studies define effort as part of the job performance construct. Rather “from the perspective of the employee, job performance and effort are different. Effort is an input to work, and job performance is an output from this effort” (Christen et al., 2005, p. 139). The researchers explain, if the worker neglects to receive compensation for the effort exerted, the worker will likely develop a negative attitude toward the job/employer, which one can assume that future job performance will decline (i.e., effort or quality) (Christen et al., 2005). The research of Christen et al. (2005) challenges earlier conclusions about the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance, as Christen et al. found a “positive effect on job performance on job satisfaction” (p. 146).

**Employee absenteeism.** An important factor for all employers is the attendance behavior of their workers. From the perspective of the employer, employees that are present and willing to fulfill the duties of the job can lead to productivity and profitability. On the other hand, employees that are excessively absent and unwilling to fulfill the duties of the job can lead to bottlenecks, loss of production, frustration among other workers, and loss of revenue. Thus, employees neglecting to show up for work when scheduled can lead to problems for managers and the organization.
For the above reasons, employee absenteeism continues to be a popular research topic in the field of Industrial Psychology, Management, and Human Resource Management (Cheloha & Farr, 1980). Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) argue that problematic absenteeism is the result of negative changes impacting the employee. One of these changes, which has been cited by multiple researchers, is a change in an employee’s attitude or job satisfaction toward the workplace (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Steers, Porter & Bigley, 1996; Judge & Church, 2000; George & Jones, 2002; Dugguh & Ayaga, 2014). When employees experience positive dispositional attitudes toward work, such as meaningfulness and increased responsibility, negative outcomes such as problematic absenteeism will be reduced (McShane, 1984; Dugguh & Ayaga, 2014). Conversely, when employees experience negative dispositional attitudes toward work, such as lack of intrinsic motivation, problematic absenteeism will be more likely to occur (McShane, 1984; Dugguh & Ayaga, 2014).

**Employee turnover.** According to Saari and Judge (2004), “numerous studies have shown that dissatisfied employees are more likely to quit their jobs: (p. 399). Employees can experience negative dispositional attitudes toward work that can lead employee turnover (Judge & Church, 2000). The work of Hacket and Guion (1985), Hulin, Roznowski, and Hachiya (1985), and Saari and Judge (2004) suggest there is a high correlation between dissatisfied employees and withdrawal behaviors, such as employee turnover, because of various influences effecting the attitude of the employee. For example, Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) found that workers who experience emotional situations while at work (which in turn can foster job satisfaction/job dissatisfaction) can develop dispositional attitudes toward work. Meanwhile, Judge and Church (2000) posit that the work itself or related intrinsic job characteristics can foster work situation influences in terms of job satisfaction.
One obvious factor affecting turnover is age, for example, a public school teacher that has high levels of intrinsic job satisfaction is approaching retirement age (65 or older), therefore, despite being fond of his or her job, the teacher may feel it is time to retire or may be asked to retire by the school district. On the other hand, a public school teacher that has low levels of extrinsic job satisfaction may resign from his or her position because of reasons such as poor workplace conditions, student behavior, or low salary. Individuals with high levels of intrinsic job satisfaction are more likely to stay with an employer (Herzberg et al. 1959; Herzberg, 1966).

Figure 4. Factors leading to job satisfaction (Herzberg, et al., 1959).

Summary of Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory Main Principles:

1. The theory suggests an individual’s job satisfaction are influenced by two factors:
   
   Motivators factors contribute to intrinsic growth (i.e., personal growth, self-achievement, and psychological growth). Hygiene factors contribute to extrinsic growth (i.e., salary, work conditions, and job security).

2. Motivation factors are needed to ensure that an employee is motivated and works at a high performance. Hygiene factors are needed to ensure that an employee is not subject to dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors do not exist to make an employee feel satisfied, rather,
hygiene factors, if removed, decreases an employee efficiency and increases job dissatisfaction.

3. High Motivation + High Hygiene: Ideal situation; Employees are highly motivated and have few complaints.

4. High Motivation + Low Hygiene: Employees are motivated, but have concerns and complaints.

5. Low Motivation + High Hygiene: Employees have few concerns and complaints, however not very motivated.

6. Low Motivation + Low Hygiene: Worst situation; Employees lack motivation and express many complaints.

**Criticisms of Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Two-Factor Theory).** To this day, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (1959), remains a heavily cited and utilized theoretical framework for explaining issues related to job satisfaction. When it was first presented, there were several studies replicating Herzberg’s methods, demonstrating high rates of success and generalizability (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). Nonetheless, over the course of 58 years, Herzberg’s theory has been the focus of critics. King (1970) and Schneider and Locke (1971) voiced criticism that both factors in both dimensions cause both satisfaction as well as dissatisfaction. Other disapproving comments about Herzberg’s theory include that the framework was faulty, ambiguous, and inadequate (Vroom, 1964; Locke, 1976). Locke (1976) contends that two-factor theory neglects to recognize that there are different sources of job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, such as an individual’s bodily needs as well as an individual’s physical and psychological needs. Some researchers have criticized two-factor theory because they argue that money (e.g., salary, benefits) can be a motivating factor (Bassett-
Jones & Lloyd, 2005) and that Herzberg’s motivating and hygiene factors can foster a range of variables such as one’s personality (Evans and McKee, 1970) and social desirability bias (Wall, 1972).

Vroom’s (1964) criticisms of Herzberg (1959) created the most controversy among industrial psychologist. First, Vroom contends that two-factor theory is methodologically bound to the theory because the critical incident technique was used in the seminal research. Second, Vroom maintains that an individual’s ego may play a factor, such as providing feedback that makes the respondent look good or favorable. Vroom (1964) states:

Persons may be likely to attribute the causes of satisfaction to their own achievements and accomplishments on the job. On the other hand, they may be more likely to attribute their dissatisfaction not to personal inadequacies or deficiencies, but to factors in the work environment (i.e., obstacles presents by company policies or supervision) (p. 129).

Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976) seminal researchers and authors of the Job Characteristics Model and contributors to job enrichment theory argued that Herzberg’s (1959) theory neglect to take into account individual differences among employees. Although the Job Characteristics Model is consistent in many ways with Herzberg’s two-factor theory, Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976) provides a way to measure job satisfaction and job enrichment by examining psychological processes of the job and the employee in greater detail.

**Contemporary Thinkers of Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Two-Factor Theory).** In 2017, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory continues to be central to many research articles and dissertations. Oh (2011) utilized two-factor theory to examine the characteristics and motivations of people who provide health-related information on online environments. In 2012, Bohm employed Herzberg’s two-factor theory to evaluate patient satisfaction with health care. Smith
and Shields (2013) employed Herzberg’s theory to investigate the job satisfaction of social service workers. Herzberg’s model was successful in determining that tourism contribute to the well-being of social tourists (McCabe & Johnson, 2013). Park and Ryoo (2013) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the motivations and intentions of informational technology end-users based on two-factor theory. The research of Kinicki, McKee-Ryan, Schrieshmein and Carson (2002, as cited in Miner, 2015) maintains that after review, Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory continues to uphold its position.

When researching contemporary thinkers of Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, the researcher conducted a keyword search using Google Scholar© and ScholarOne Search© within a customized time range between 2012 and 2017 (past five years). A Google Scholar© query returned 2,130 results when searching for “motivation-hygiene theory” and 5,510 results when searching for “two-factor theory.” A ScholarOne© search resulted in 1,899 articles when searching for “two-factor theory,” and 618 articles when searching for “motivation-hygiene theory.” Although Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory was first published in 1959, modern thinkers and researchers, such as the most recent researchers utilizing two-factor theory, continue to consider the two-factor theory relevant for explaining or investigating contemporary organizational problems related to satisfaction and dissatisfaction.

The Job Satisfaction and Dissatisfaction of Teachers

Arguably, teachers represent one of the most important groups of professionals for America’s future (Bishay, 1996; Duncan, 2015). Unfortunately, teachers also represent one of the most dissatisfied groups of professionals in America (Ingersoll, 2014). In fact, a survey headed by Richard Ingersoll investigating why teachers leave their profession, 48 percent of the teachers surveyed selected job dissatisfaction over options such as family or personal reasons, to
pursue other jobs, school staffing action, or retirement (Walker, 2015). The job satisfaction (and
dissatisfaction) of teachers has been an issue of concern for nearly sixty years (Bolin, 2007;
Ingersoll, 2014, Walker 2015). The increased demands for teacher assessments and teacher
accountability coupled with the occupational difficulties such as increased workloads, poor
working conditions, low salary, and poor student behavior have many teachers feeling high
levels of stress, occupational burnout, and low job satisfaction (Walker, 2015; De Simone,
Cicotto, & Lampis, 2016). As more teachers experience low levels of job satisfaction and job
dissatisfaction, school districts across the United States are reporting problems with teacher
Gardner (2010) warns that as cases of teacher job dissatisfaction persist, an imminent teacher
shortage is aiming for many school districts throughout the United States.

Chapman and Lowther (1982) conducted one of the first published studies focused on
teacher job satisfaction. By carrying out a survey of 542 college graduates that continued into the
teaching profession, Chapman and Lowther found that female teachers experienced higher levels
of job satisfaction as opposed to their male counterparts. Motivation factors such as recognition
from supervisors, principals, and other leaders contributed to increased job satisfaction. In an
article conducted by Gawel (1999), the author argues that Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory was
only applicable to those in “business world.” However, there are two problems with Gawel’s
argument; First, Herzberg’s seminal theory was not based on the business profession, rather it
was first studied in an industrial setting (Herzberg et al., 1959). Second, since Herzberg’s
seminal theory was published in 1959, the model or framework has been applied with high levels
of success across many professions including fields such as social work, technology, and tourism
In their book, *Educational Administration: Concepts and Practices*, Lunenburg and Ornsten (2008) mention three teacher job satisfaction studies. The Sergiovanni study found that teachers find the “elements of the job inherently less satisfying” and “teaching offers little opportunity for advancement as it is currently structured” (Lunenburg & Ornsten, 2008, p. 99). The second study, conducted by Miskel, found that “teachers have a lower tolerance for work pressure than to principals” and “teachers have a greater desire for job security” (Lunenburg & Ornsten, 2008, p. 99). In another study by Miskel, the researcher found that dissatisfied teachers may “weaken the educational program” (Lunenburg & Ornsten, 2008, p. 99).

By utilizing data provided by the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), Belfield and Heywood (2008) discovered that by conducting a profit analysis, the researchers were able to determine that male teachers, that were members of the teacher union, experienced low job satisfaction than other teachers. The study further found that while performance pay increases teacher earning, job satisfaction remains low despite the financial rewards.

Liu and Ramsey (2008) also refers to the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) as well as the Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) to examine what factors contribute to teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. The researchers found that declining workplace conditions and low salary were common factors leading dissatisfaction among teachers. Liu and Ramsey also discovered that race, gender, tenure, and career status might have a significant influence on the job satisfaction of teachers.

Kitchel et al. (2012) examined high school teachers across six states to determine the relationship between social comparison and job satisfaction among high school agricultural teachers. The researchers found that agricultural teachers experienced low levels of stress or burnout when it comes to depersonalization and personal accomplishment. However, the
teachers demonstrate moderate levels of stress or burnout when it comes to emotional exhaustion. Kitchel et al. concluded that while the participant teachers were not alienated from their profession at this point, they are likely experiencing emotional implications of a complex career.

The prior research demonstrates the dichotomy in the job-related attitudes produced by teachers. Locke (1969) supports these findings and explains that job satisfaction gives an individual a sense of gratification when working in an occupation. Herzberg et al. (1959) also suggest factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself fosters job satisfaction. Nevertheless, Herzberg et al. (1959) add that individuals may experience dissatisfaction with their profession because of factors related to salary, workplace conditions, job security, and organizational policy. So the definition of job satisfaction of teachers parallels definitions submitted by Herzberg (1959) and Locke (1976). Although, as teaching is a unique field or occupation, Collie, Shapka, and Perry (2012) found that teacher stress, teacher efficacy, and school climate can also play significant roles in a teacher’s attitude toward work and perception of job satisfaction.

**Status of teacher preparation and teacher recruitment programs.** In 2014 a nonprofit think tank, Thirdway.org (Hiler & Hatalsky, 2014), conducted a survey of teachers and found that job dissatisfaction levels of teachers are disconcerting, and school leaders should also be concerned about how job dissatisfaction among teachers is creating an unfavorable impression on those college students planning a career choice. The survey correlates with a 2016 report issued by The Center for Public Education (2016), which depicts a steady decrease in the number of enrollees and number of program completers (see figure 5). The results of the Thirdway.org
survey found that the teaching profession has a significant image problem, as college students’
perceive the teaching profession as very unfavorable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Enrollees</th>
<th>Total Number of Completers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014 (AY 2012-2013)</td>
<td>499,800</td>
<td>192,459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 (AY 2011-2012)</td>
<td>623,190</td>
<td>204,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 (AY 2010-2011)</td>
<td>684,801</td>
<td>217,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 (AY 2009-2010)</td>
<td>725,518</td>
<td>241,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 (AY 2008-2009)</td>
<td>719,081</td>
<td>232,707</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. College teacher preparation program enrollment numbers (The Center for Public
Education, 2016).

A majority of the college students surveyed indicated that education is one of the easiest
majors and that it was a profession geared for average people. The survey also suggests that low
and stagnated wages, poor working conditions, and few opportunities for upward mobility have
college students reconsidering the teaching profession, which are compelling factors that can
sway an individual from choosing to become a teacher. The report issued by The Center for
Public Education (2016) indicated the following in regards to Oklahoma:

- Oklahoma has recruitment and retention challenges. Between 2005–06 and 2013–14, completion
  rates at educator preparation-programs in the state dropped 24 percent, and that it is expected to
  keep dropping. Most students who attend Oklahoma colleges and study education typically do
  not stick around the state or profession after graduation (p. 20).

- The employment health of America’s teachers. In 2015, Adams et al. (2015)
  researched the mental health of teachers and found that teachers are commonly using coping
  mechanisms to deal with occupational stress and teacher burnout. Out of the 366 teachers and
  education staff members responding to the survey, 17% of the participants coped by resigning
  from the profession. Adams et al.’s findings are very close to the 14.2 percent of teachers
(national percentage) and the 17.9 percent teachers (Oklahoma average) who moved schools or left the teaching profession between 2011 and 2013 (Learning Policy Institute, 2016). In fact, the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (2013) reported that teacher job satisfaction fell from 62 percent to just 39 percent, dropping 23 percentage points in just four years. The MetLife Survey (2013, p. 48) indicates teachers that are dissatisfied or have low job satisfaction are:

- More than twice as likely to feel under great stress several days a week or more.
- More likely to be a mid-career teacher (six to twenty years’ experience).
- Less likely to be a new teacher.
- More than likely to teach in schools with two-thirds or more low income students.
- More likely to say that their school’s budget has decreased in the past 12 months.
- Less likely to rate the job of their principal is doing excellent.
- More likely to say it is very challenging or challenging for a school’s leader to maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers.

In the 2017 Educator Quality of Work Life Survey (American Federation of Teachers, 2017), teachers across the United States indicated that they experience a high amount of stress and dissatisfaction while in the school house. According to the American Federation of Teachers (AFA) (2017), stressful work environments can lead to low student achievement and low educator effectiveness. The AFA (2017) survey concluded that (a) teachers lack respect from elected officials and their school boards; (b) teacher believe they have little influence and control on policy decisions that directly matter in the classroom; (c) educators experience workplace bullying more than three times than other occupations; (d) teacher report having 11 or more days per month of poor mental health – twice the rate of the general U.S. workforce.; and (e) teacher
stress is often compounded by deficient building conditions, equipment, staff shortages, and inefficient time to prepare and plan.

**The outcome of teacher job dissatisfaction.** Sargent and Hannum (2005) maintain that the job satisfaction of teachers is closely related to teacher motivation and their commitment to the teaching profession. As teachers experience hygiene factors (dissatisfier), they are likely to develop negative attitudes toward their workplace, which may influence the individual’s job satisfaction (Trehan & Paul, 2014). As noted, factors associated with job dissatisfaction (e.g., policy, supervision, workplace conditions, salary, etc.) are followed by variable negative outcomes.

**Teacher stress and burnout.** The teaching professions can be stressful. Teachers exposed to chronic stressors, such as excessive work hours; occupational demands; relationships with colleagues, administrators, parents, and students; ineffective forms of leadership from administrators; or difficult student behaviors can experience extreme stress (Zimbardo 2010; McKinley-Thompson, 2015). While most teachers cope with stress with minimal problems, some teachers experience chronic cases that can lead to mental health issues identified as emotional exhaustion (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016), or teacher burnout (Roloff & Brown, 2011). In cases of emotional exhaustion or burnout, teachers will typically demonstrate low self-esteem, low morale, emotional and physical exhaustion, and cynicism toward work (Royloff & Brown, 2011; Malinen & Savolainen, 2016).

**Withdrawal behaviors.** According to Shapira-Lishchinsky (2010), teachers that engage in withdrawal behaviors do so to cope with the negative aspects related to their job, workplace, or profession. “Withdrawal behaviors refer to a set of attitudes and behaviors used by employees when they stay at the job but for some reason decide to be less participative” (p. 309). Shapia-
Lishchinsky (2010) adds, withdrawal behaviors “may give employees a needed break from job
dissatisfaction and stress, and such behaviors might be expected in response to wide range of
noxious aspects of the work role. Thus, by withdrawing, teachers may return to work with higher
motivation, which in turn, can ultimately increase organizational effectiveness” (p. 308). Three
common signs of withdrawal are lateness, absence, and intent to leave work. Koslowsky (2000)
describes lateness as an employee arriving to work later than he or she is scheduled or leaving
work earlier than what is scheduled. Absenteeism, a common form of withdrawal behavior for
employees experiencing job dissatisfaction, is defined as “the lack of physical presences at a
behavior setting when and where one is expected to be” (Harrison & Price, 2003, p. 204). One’s
intent to leave the job is the most significant determinant of actual employee turnover (Dane &
Brummel, 2013).

**Teacher Self-Efficacy.** The self-efficacy of the teacher is concerned with the “teacher’s
personal judgment or belief about his or her capabilities” (Aldridge & Fraser, 2016, p. 292).
Aldridge and Fraser (2016) explain that self-efficacy is native to Bandura’s social cognitive
theory, as such, self-efficacy “shapes one’s goals, behaviors, and actions and is influenced by
conditions within the environment” (p. 292). According to Aldridge and Fraser (2016), school
climate factors such as occupations stress, adequacy of resources, leadership support, and
affiliation are predictors of teacher self-efficacy. In their research, Aldridge and Fraser (2016)
found the affiliation between teacher and the administration contributed heavily to the overall
climate of the school as well as the self-efficacy of the teacher.

**Job Commitment.** As teacher experience, work-related problems such as stress, burnout,
withdrawal behaviors, and decreases in self-efficacy, March and Simon (1958) asserts that job
satisfaction determines job commitments. Frasko, Kfir, and Nassar (1997) posit that the teacher
may experience reduced job commitment fostered by job dissatisfaction. As job commitment decreases in the individual, the employer can anticipate the employee to exhibit the intent to quit or to quit altogether (Deneire, Vanhoof, Faddar, Gijbels & Van Petegem, 2014). However, as the employee experiences high levels of job satisfaction and motivation, their job commitment increases as well (Herzberg, et al., 1959).

**Overview of Teacher Attrition and Turnover in the United States**

In the United States, the shortage of teachers in public schools is not a unique problem. For nearly three decades, public school districts across the United States have reported high rates of teacher attrition (Heim, 2016). The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF, 2016) warns that unlike other professional occupations, teaching has evolved into a revolving door occupation. In order to counter the adverse effects of the short supply of teachers, administrators are forced to issue emergency teaching certificates and offer teaching positions to untrained or less than qualified individuals (Hendricks, 2015; Marton & Mulvhill, 2016). In 2016, The Learning Policy Institute reported that teacher demand is on the rise from a national perspective due to an anticipated increase in student enrollment and high levels of teacher attrition (8% of annual workforce) (Sutcher, Darling-Hammon, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). The authors described the current trend in teacher demand as a “leaky bucket,” as the workforce loses hundreds of qualified teachers each year (Sutcher, Darling-Hammon, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). The report further predicts that 2016 will represent the “lowest number of available teachers in 10 years – between 180,000 and 212,000 teachers” (Sutcher, Darling-Hammon, & Carver-Thomas, 2016, para. 11).

As human resource departments grow bewildered and scramble to fill a deficient supply of teachers, school district leaders recognize the cost of teacher attrition is substantial.
Policymakers and administrators, have discovered that when public school systems sustain teacher attrition and teacher turnover, school districts are forced to spend hours and dollars on attracting new teachers, interviewing and hiring candidates, as well as teacher preparation and mentoring processes (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Ingersoll et al., 2014; Hendricks, 2015). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2014) suggests the economic loss attributed to teacher turnover and teacher attrition costs the education industry as much as $2.2 billion annually, which places a significant burden on school district budgets.

Teacher attrition is a serious problem and its fallout is more damaging and far-reaching than the administrative task of filling teacher positions and the economic challenges that follow. Rather, The National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research (Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff, 2015) suggests the most concerning effect of teacher turnover is on student achievement as elevated rates of teacher turnover can have deleterious effects on student’s test scores, specifically in core areas such as reading and math. Conversely, a study conducted by the Research Alliance for New York City Schools at New York University found that as schools decreased levels of teacher turnover, students’ achievement scores increased (Harrison, 2016). The Research Alliance suggests the chronic cycle of teacher turnover has a direct impact on school climate, which effects malleable dimensions within the school such as leadership, academic expectations of students, and teacher relationships and collaboration (Harrison, 2016).

Oklahoma’s Teacher Recruitment and Retention Issues

According to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the continuous cycle of teacher attrition impacting public school districts throughout the state has reached a critical juncture. According to a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, Oklahoma’s teacher turnover rate (movers and leavers) is 17.9%, while the national average is
less than 16% (The Learning Policy Institute, 2016). Although teacher shortage issues have trouble Oklahoma’s schools for several years, teacher attrition has evolved into a crisis beginning in 2015 and remains unchanged as of the published data of this dissertation. (Eger & Habib, 2015; Learning Policy Institute, 2016; Eger, 2016; Willert, 2017). In fact, the Oklahoma State School Board Association (2016) reports that the teacher shortage crisis in Oklahoma is showing evidence of expansion.

There are several reasons why teachers move or leave their positions, however, most factors are associated with job satisfaction. Low job satisfaction across Oklahoma’s public schools have been linked to high levels of teacher attrition and teacher turnover, which has posed a significant challenge for state and district education leaders (OSDE, 2015; OSDE, 2015). Today’s youngest corps of teachers, those 38 and under, are indicating that they are dissatisfied with their job, and others have suggested they have become disinterested with the entire teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll et al., 2014; OSDE, 2014; Hendricks, 2015). Studies have shown that among the youngest teachers currently in service, job dissatisfaction is a significant cause for leaving the school district or the profession altogether (Coggshall, Ott, Behrstock, & Lasagna, 2010; Hiler & Hatalsky, 2014; Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Reports of dissatisfaction among young teachers is happening at the same time that many Oklahoma school districts are forced to issue emergency or alternative teaching certificates because administrators are having difficulty retaining and attracting qualified teachers (Ingersoll et al., 2014; OSDE, 2014; Berg-Jacobson & Levin, 2015; Hendricks, 2015; Barth et al., 2016). According to a report issued by the Oklahoma State Department of Education’s Teacher Shortage Task Force (2016), only 46% of new teachers entering Oklahoma’s public school districts were qualified to be issued standard teaching certificates, meanwhile 54% of all new
teachers were accepted based on a provisional, alternative, or emergency certification. For Oklahoma’s central region, which includes Oklahoma City Public Schools, less than 20% of new teachers were considered for standard certification (OSDE, 2016). While school administrators may fill employment gaps through alternative or emergency certification of teachers, Redding and Smith (2016) warn that alternatively credentialed teachers leave the profession at a higher rate than traditionally certified teachers, which exacerbates the current teacher shortage.

Oklahoma’s State School Superintendent echoed this concern, saying “nearly half of all new teachers exit the profession within the first five years. That’s a lot of turnover. And then you add to it where you don’t have people applying for (those) open positions. That’s not good for kids” (Felder, 2017, para. 20).

While a bulk of the nation suffers from teacher shortage issues, Oklahoma’s teacher crisis is a well-documented epidemic. A Google© search looking specifically for Oklahoma teacher crisis produced 2,390 results. When the Google© search was narrowed to news related posts, the search produced 244 results, each depicting an account of Oklahoma teachers finding it difficult to navigate low teacher salaries, poor pupil funding, and a lack of educator support. For example, a Tulsa teacher said that as a result of legislative and school district budget cuts, she resorted to panhandling along a busy intersection in search of donations to help raise money for the upcoming school year (Queery, 2017). Martin (2017) reported that John Hazell, Oklahoma’s 2017 Teacher of the Year, moved to Texas in search of an increase in salary and better working conditions. Meanwhile, officials from states near and far, such as Texas and North Carolina, are poaching qualified teachers from Oklahoma, luring them away with attractive employment packages that includes an increase in pay, better benefits, and often improved work conditions (Adger, 2017; Botari, 2017). In an interview with Oklahoma’s 2016 Teacher of the Year, Shawn
Sheehan, indicates that non-competitive wages are a major source of teacher dissatisfaction in Oklahoma, however it is also factors such as workplace conditions (Martin, 2017). Sheehan says:

“It is difficult watching programs being cut… We have lost resources. We have not had any text books in years. We are going digital, but we have not had access to digital resources. And class sizes, I was pushing 36 [students]. That [becomes] crowd control at that point” (Martin, 2017, 3:40).

Such stories provide a small example of why Oklahoma’s teachers are dissatisfied with their occupation and why Oklahoma’s school districts struggle to retain and recruit educators.

The teacher shortage crisis happening across Oklahoma, including Oklahoma City, has forced districts to look for solutions such as closing classrooms, overcrowding classrooms, reducing or eliminating critical academic programs, and hiring unqualified teachers (Hendricks, 2015). All of which threatens the education success of thousands of school children attending public schools in Oklahoma (Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll, 2014). The Oklahoma State School Boards Association (2016) conducted a teacher shortage survey and revealed the following key findings:

- Oklahoma school districts collectively report 542 teaching vacancies (as of 8/1/2016).
- Oklahoma school districts collectively report eliminating 1,530 teaching positions since 2015.
- Oklahoma school districts collectively report eliminating 1,530 support positions since 2015.
- More than half of school leaders across Oklahoma say hiring teachers was more difficult this year compared to last year.
• Half of the school districts in Oklahoma anticipate increased class sizes.

• Nearly all of the state’s largest school districts are projecting class sizes of 26 or more students in middle and high school.

• More than fifty percent of the state’s school districts are projecting elementary class sizes of 23 or more students – above the 20-student class limit mandated by Oklahoma law. However, the state mandate has been waived because of Oklahoma’s teacher staffing woes and budget struggles.

• Teacher vacancies are widespread, regardless of the district’s size, location, and subject area.

• More than half of all Oklahoma’s school districts anticipate needing to seek emergency teaching certificates to fill vacancies.

• 34% of school leaders said their schools would offer fewer courses this school year.

• STEM and special education teaching positions are the most difficult to fill.

• School leaders are concerned that the lack of quality of teaching applicants is having a detrimental impact on student achievement.

The teacher shortage crisis has forced the state’s policy makers and school administrators to unearth solutions. The Oklahoma Business and Education Coalition’s (OBEC, 2015) analysis of the teacher shortage announced the following key findings:

• Among new teachers, about 35% leave the school district after their initial year on the job.

• Approximately 29% of all newly certified teachers exit their district after their initial year on the job. Meanwhile about 17% of all newly certified teachers will exit Oklahoma’s public school system entirely after their initial year on the job.
• Teacher salaries in Oklahoma are approximately 16% lower than teacher salaries in Texas and 20% lower than the median salaries for similar workers in Oklahoma’s private sector.

• Teacher attrition rates in Oklahoma are higher than in Texas. About 8 out of 100 teachers exit Texas Public Schools each year compared to 11 out of 100 in Oklahoma.

• Within Oklahoma public schools, teacher attrition is highest in low-income school and schools located in urban areas.

• Low-income schools tend to be staffed by less experienced teachers. As a result, low-income schools employ less productive teachers on average.

• Teacher productivity in Oklahoma would likely increase if the state increased teacher salaries.

The Center for Public Education (2016) published a harsh assessment of Oklahoma’s teacher shortage crisis, indicating that the state’s lawmakers have provided an inadequate investment in the state’s education program. Perry (2017) argues “Oklahoma has led the nation in cuts to state funding of K-12 schools by reducing state aid by 26.9 percent since 2008” (Para. 1). The Center for Public Education (2016) report further argues the following:

What the teacher shortage has made glaringly obvious is that Oklahoma need not worry about competing with other states throughout the country; Oklahoma can’t even compete with its own private sector or the teacher labor market in neighboring states. Between 2010 and 2015, more Oklahoma educators left the profession than joined it, according to a study commissioned by Oklahoma lawmakers. Even districts in Oklahoma’s most affluent and academically successful communities have been forced to seek emergency certifications to fill open teaching positions. Texas is easily Oklahoma’s biggest
competitor in the teacher labor market. A 2015 study from the Oklahoma State School Boards Association and the Oklahoma Business and Education Coalition found that Oklahoma teacher salaries are about 16 percent lower than in Texas and that Texas is much more successful at retaining teachers. Oklahoma has significant turnover among novice teachers, and low-income schools have the most difficult time finding experienced teachers (p. 20).

Root Causes Behind Oklahoma’s Teacher Retention and Recruitment Woes.

In response to the growing teacher shortage crisis in Oklahoma, the Huffington Post stated, “Oklahoma has become the poster child for a system that can’t recruit or retain talent” (Thompson, 2017). In an effort to unearth equity gaps among teachers, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE, 2014) for the United States Department of Education, found that the root causes to Oklahoma’s teacher crisis was due to a) devalued educational culture, b) poor school climate, c) teacher shortage, d) a lack of support for teachers and (e) ineffective teacher retention policies and strategies. In a press release issued by Oklahoma’s State Superintendent of Education (2015), Joy Hofmeister stated:

It’s no secret that Oklahoma teachers are woefully underpaid and classrooms are overcrowded. Schools are understaffed. A combination of low teacher salary, and declining job satisfaction is driving teachers out of the profession or to other states. If we want higher student outcomes, we need to ensure we attract and retain top talent in Oklahoma classrooms” (para. 5).

In response to a 2018 survey on Oklahoma’s teacher shortage crisis, Hofmeister stated via Twitter “there is no doubt that pay alone will not solve [Oklahoma’s] teacher shortage or other challenges facing Oklahoma education, but we’re not in the ballgame at all if we’re not offering
our teachers regionally competitive pay” (OKSDE, 2018, Jan 22). From the array of reports studying the Oklahoma teacher shortage crisis, three common issues seem to emerge. First, the State of Oklahoma undervalues education. Second, Oklahoma’s teachers are woefully underpaid compared to competing states in the region. Third, elements such as the culture of education in Oklahoma, the school’s climate, poor and challenging workplace conditions, and low salary all foster dissatisfaction or low job satisfaction among teachers in Oklahoma. Despite the call for several improvements to move toward Oklahoma’s educational system, many policymakers and administrators believe higher salaries for teachers should be the objective to turnaround the teacher shortage crisis in Oklahoma. In 2017, Oklahoma’s two largest school district called on the state’s lawmakers to give teachers a pay raise (Willert, 2017). According to Stewart (2017), several different bills have been presented to the Oklahoma Senate Subcommittee on Education, one bill recommended a raise of $10,000 over a period of four years and another bill suggested a flat raise of $3,000 per year, raising the starting teacher’s salary in Oklahoma from $31,600 to $36,600, which is still below the starting salary for Texas teachers, which is $38,091 (Learning Policy Institute, 2016). In his 2015 analysis of Oklahoma’s teacher salaries, Hendricks (2015) makes the assertion an approximate 11.9 percent pay raise or $3,760, would achieve parity with the State of Texas. Hendricks (2014) further argues that base pay increases targeted to less experienced teachers and/or a flat salary schedule would reduce turnover rates. Hendricks (2014) also suggest that such a pay increase scheme would improve student achievement because as teachers continue to increase their teaching experience, students will perform better because of such value-added knowledge. However, while there is a push to raise teacher salaries in Oklahoma, lawmakers must face the challenge of navigating a near $900 million budget shortfall (Carroll, 2016). The lack of state funding makes it difficult for school district’s across the state
to offer competitive teacher salaries, which impacts teacher recruitment and retention efforts. the state’s revenues are heavily depleted, which will force lawmakers to make cuts to the existing budget in order to raise teacher salaries or continue to debate the issue without any real action (Talley, 2017). It should be noted that House Bill 1114 advanced out of the subcommittee, which would incrementally raise the minimum teacher salary schedule by $6,000 over three years (Denwalt, 2017). However, due to the state’s sizeable budget shortfall, House Bill 1114 died as legislators were unable to agree on how to fund an increase in teacher salaries (Carroll, 2016). Felton (2017) argues decisions produced by Oklahoma’s legislative body places the state at risk as being the worst state in the union for K-12 education.

**Sources of teacher dissatisfaction within Oklahoma City Public School District.**

In an interview published in The Washington Times (Houston, 2016) the Chief Human Resources Office for Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS) lamented over recent concerns born from the teacher shortage crisis. The Oklahoma City Public Schools district is one of the most affected by the teacher shortage. According to OKCPS School Superintendent Aurora Lora, at the beginning of the 2015 academic year, OKCPS were understaffed by 100 teachers, which dropped to 35 teacher vacancies in 2016 and further reduced to 28 vacancies in 2017 (KOCO, 2017, 19:25). Although teacher vacancies have dropped significantly since the beginning of the 2015 school year, the situation at OKCPS has challenged school district leaders, which were forced to lay off more than 200 teachers since the 2015 school year, meanwhile managing a consistent flow of teacher resignations.

Houston (2016) indicates that when the district asks teachers why they are resigning, most teacher cite they are resigning because of employment elsewhere or they are resigning because of personal reasons. The superintendent of the OKCPS district touts that teacher vacancy
rates are declining, however, the superintendent also points such vacancies are being absorbed by a record number of emergency teacher certifications (NewsOk.com, 2017). Although, the Oklahoma City Public School District is among the most reliant on state emergency teaching certificates to fill teacher vacancies, 94 percent of the teacher workforce are traditionally certified educators (Daily Oklahoman, 2017, para. 7).

Despite the significant loss of teachers across the Oklahoma City Public School District, there has been minimal public discourse focused on why teachers OKCPS teachers are dissatisfied or leaving the district. Over the past five years, local newspapers and television news station have focused their attention on low teacher salary as a prevailing reason behind the teacher shortage taking place in Oklahoma. However, Oklahoma City Public School Superintendent Aurora Lora and Chief Human Resources Officer Janis Perrault suggested that teachers find it difficult to stay in the district when good leadership is not present. Lora said, the “best principals are the ones who work to keep, hire, and retain their best teachers…people aren’t running away from great principals just to teach in a different neighborhood” (Dickerson, 2017).

In 2017, Oklahoma City Public Schools hired Urban Schools Human Capital Academy (USHCA), a paid consulting firm, to review the district’s human capital situation. Board members of the Oklahoma City Public Schools learned that several human resource challenges existed with Oklahoma City Public Schools:

- Low teacher salaries when compared to neighboring states.
- Teacher shortage challenges across the state year-after-year
- Human resource department in need of improved human capital strategies and reform efforts.
- In efficient technology to track and analyze key data.
• Lack of performance differentiation.
• Customer service and operational efficiency bottlenecks.

OKCPS board members learned from USHCA (2017) that effective principal leadership can curb retention issues. USHCA (2017) recommended the following strategic methods to increase teacher retention:

• Establish efficient hiring and onboarding practices.
• Establish a robust mentoring and induction program for teachers
• Have mutual consent hiring to make best use of talent.
• Establish compensation based factors tied to teacher quality and student impact; decouple compensation tied to professional development and advanced degrees.
• Align and differentiate professional development based on evaluation findings.
• Human capital decision should be based on multiple measures that focus on support and growth.
• Recruitment forecasting should focus on highly effective talent pools.

The USHCA (2017) examines human resource and highlights the apparent need to increase teacher salary, however, overlooks the perspectives and opinions of OKCPS teachers in their recommendations to OKCPS board members. However, a survey conducted by the Oklahoma City American Federation of Teachers (2017) found that Oklahoma City teachers are significantly stressed by policy, administrators, and student behavior related issues. The survey revealed the following:

• 56% of those teachers surveyed suggest that Oklahoma City Public Schools is declining.
• Failure to comply with classroom rules (80%), disruptive outbursts (71%), aggressive behavior toward another student (55%), aggressive behavior against teacher (25%), physical violence against a student (33%), and physical violence against a teacher (9%) are some of the most contemptable student behavior displayed in the classroom.

• 47% of teachers find the amount and frequency of offending behavior has increased slightly or more.

• 81% of teachers indicate that based on the district’s student code of conduct, the teacher is responsible for administering the majority of the discipline.

• Nearly half of all teachers surveyed reported having a student with chronic discipline problems who should not be in a classroom.

• 63% of teachers surveyed indicate they do not have adequate planning time to meet instructional and non-instructional requirements.

• Only 31% of teachers surveyed agree that Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) methods are an effective discipline tool.

• When asked what can the district do to make teachers more effective, the top answers were: greater enforcement of traditional discipline methods of offensive behavior, greater amount of planning time, and more support from school administrators.

• 49% of those teachers surveyed indicate that every student in their classroom have a textbook for core subjects.

• While a majority of teachers agree that benchmark testing is needed to determine student growth, nearly half of those teachers surveyed indicate that benchmark testing “wastes a day that could be used for instruction.”
• Only 18% of those teachers surveyed find the district’s Instructional Coach Program valuable and improving instruction.

In response to the survey conducted by the Oklahoma City American Federation of Teachers, Oklahoma City Superintendent Lora stated that as a result of growing class sizes, Oklahoma City teachers are increasingly challenged by issues such as offending and aggressive student behavior. OKCPS officials said, that the district has “been working on a transformational mindset shifting away from ‘punishing’ students and toward helping students develop discipline and self-control” (Price, 2017, para. 7). Oklahoma City Public Schools’ current policy on student behavior centers around a strategy identified as Positive Behavior Interventions and Support or PBIS (OKCPS, 2016). According to OKCPS Office of School Climate and Student Discipline, the district trains school personnel in PBIS, which is a “proactive strategy for defining, teaching, and supporting appropriate student behaviors to create positive school environments” (2016, para. 1). Oklahoma City Public School’s decision to implement PBIS was the result a 2016 civil rights complaint against Oklahoma City Public School District, which claimed that OKCPS disproportionately disciplined African-American students (USDE, 2016). Oklahoma City Public Schools reached a settlement with the United States Department of Education, which aims to correct OKCPS student discipline practices (USDE, 2016). Part of the settlement agreement between OKCPS and USDE requires OKCPS to provide teachers and administrators the necessary training to support positive student behavior practices and requires OKCPS teachers to “employ a range of corrective measures before referring a student to disciplinary authorities” (USDE, 2016, para. 7). According to a survey conducted by the Oklahoma City American Federation of Teachers (2017), only 33% of OKCPS find positive student behavior methods as an effective tool to treat offending student discipline.
The turnover and retention challenge is a large problem for the district. However, another organizational problem is a lack of consistent leadership. On January 30, 2018, Aurora Lora resigned from her post as superintendent of OKCPS, following a social media post made by Lora about a disagreement she had with the OKCPS school board (Willert, 2018). According to Willert (2018), prior to Lora’s social media rant, OKCPS school board members had publicly questioned her skill set and abilities as a superintendent and had considered moving in a new direction (Willert, 2018). As of the date of this dissertation, the OKCPS school board continues to the search for their eleventh district superintendent since 2000 (Willert, 2018).

**Facts about the Oklahoma City Public School District**

The Oklahoma City Public School district (OKCPS, 2016) is located in central Oklahoma serving an area of 135.5 square miles. The school district comprises of 87 schools, which includes 54 elementary schools, 16 secondary schools, 2 alternative schools, and 15 public charter schools. The district employs 4,600 certified personnel and support employees of which 2,494 are considered full-time educators. Enrolling nearly 46,000 students annually, the OKCPS District is the largest school district in Oklahoma (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2017).

**Summary**

This literature provides an overview of job satisfaction theory, in particular Herzberg’s et al. (1959) Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. The literature review unveils specific areas of intrinsic motivation as well as extrinsic motivation. The facts presented demonstrates several variables that can influence teacher’s motivations and teacher’s job satisfaction. The review further described a teacher shortage problem impacting the United States, particularly in the State of Oklahoma. Inarguably, the data presented in the literature review demonstrates that
teachers in Oklahoma are well underpaid, which can be a specific source of job dissatisfaction. However, the literature review posits that teacher job satisfaction or dissatisfaction can also be linked to factors associated with policy, management, poor workplace conditions, poor student behavior, and other external factors.

According to the literature, the current and proposed teacher retention and recruitment strategies utilized by policymakers and school administrators have fostered low teacher morale, teacher stress, and teacher burnout. The data suggests that teachers in their first five years of service, as well as teachers with five years or more of service, are feeling these negative dispositional affects. In fact, school administrators are struggling to retain teachers after their first five years of service. The build-up of these negative emotions has led to high rates of teacher turnover or teachers leaving the profession altogether.

The present study aims to examine and describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variable that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of teachers that recently resigned from a large public school district in Oklahoma City. By studying teachers’ perceptions of the job and aspects of the career, a deeper understanding of teachers will emerge as well as the factors describe the needs of teacher and what satisfies and dissatisfies this group of professionals. Clearly, additional research is required. Before the research phase of this study commences, it is important to outline what steps the researcher will utilize to collect and analyze the data. The following chapter will explain the research tradition, methodological approach, and research design this dissertation will employ.
Chapter Three: Methodology

This chapter described the methodology of the study, beginning with the purpose statement and research questions. Next, this chapter provided an explanation of the chosen research tradition and an overview of the research methodology. This is followed by a review of the research design, protection of human subjects, data collection, data analysis, and data storage. Chapter Three concludes with a discussion of limitations, trustworthiness, researcher’s positionality, and a chapter summary.

Purpose and Research Questions

As Chapter Two illustrated, schools across Oklahoma City were hemorrhaging valuable and talented teachers to school districts in competing states as well as to other careers. The literature review further demonstrated that there is a need to gain a better understanding of the experiences of public school teachers, in particular, teacher job satisfaction and why teachers are leaving their district? Public school districts across Oklahoma, including the Oklahoma City Public Schools district – as presented in this study, are experiencing high levels of teacher attrition and teacher turnover, resulting in a critical statewide teacher shortage (Hendricks, 2015; Hofmeister, 2015; Eger & Habib, 2016; Stewart, 2017). Teacher unions, policy groups, and lawmakers are advocating for a teacher pay increase (Stewart, 2017) as a solution to mitigate or reverse teacher shortage and increase satisfaction among teachers and prospective teachers. Although salary meets a human need (Maslow, 1943), a salary increase may only play a small role in retaining employees in their job and increasing satisfaction in workers (Herzberg, 1959; Furnham, 2006; Judge et al., 2010). While teachers may be motivated, Maslow’s (1943) three highest stages and what Herzberg describes as the intrinsic nature of educating children or the work itself, Ingersoll (2011) suggests that administrators should begin by recognizing teachers as
professionals. Meaning, teachers are motivated by the same career packages that other professionals (e.g. bankers, engineers, lawyers) desire in a job. The purpose of this case study is to describe the natural phenomena of the case (teacher attrition, retention, and recruitment issues) and to provide a clear picture of what teachers are experiencing (job satisfaction / job dissatisfaction).

In consideration of the framework guiding this study, relevant literature, and the research methodology used in this analysis, this study attempted to answer the following research questions:

**The central research question.** How do teachers, who recently resigned from OKCPS, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction?

**Research sub-questions.**

1. What extrinsic (hygiene) factors do teachers identify as important?
2. What intrinsic (motivation) factors do teachers identify as important?
3. Why are teachers motivated to leave as a teacher in the school district?
4. Does the job satisfaction of teachers relate to their decision to resign from the school district? If so, how does a teacher’s job satisfaction influence a teacher to resign from the district?

The theoretical framework, known as Herzberg’s Motivator-Hygiene Theory (1959), informed the development and analysis of the research questions. Creswell (2009) suggests broadly stated central questions are necessary to explore and understand the phenomenon or concept of the study. Creswell (2009) further states that research questions serve as “working guidelines rather than truths to be proven” (p. 130). This study will focus on five central questions, which permits different perspectives about job satisfaction to emerge.
Research Design

This study sought to capture all of the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that drive positive and negative attitudes or emotional dispositions public school teachers may gain from work or through aspects of work. Furthermore, this study aimed to achieve a deep understanding of the issue and provide research participants the opportunity to describe their experiences in the world in which they live. Considering the goals of this investigation and the research questions, which focus on how public school teachers experience job satisfaction, this study used qualitative methods.

Qualitative methods are useful when “a problem or an issue needs to be explored” (Creswell, 2007, p. 35), the researcher seeks intimate answers that are “constructed [from the] nature of reality” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 8), and when individual uniqueness cannot be explained through surveys and statistical analysis (Creswell, 2007). By asking research participants to recall intimate perspectives that trigger particular memories, attitudes, or emotions, the researcher will produce “thick” descriptions of the participant’s experiences. Experiences, that Berg (2001) argues, “cannot be meaningfully expressed by numbers” (p. 3).

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) further state qualitative researchers “study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people brings to them” (p. 3). Accordingly, qualitative researchers are viewed as bricoleurs or a quilt maker collecting pieces of experiences together to form a patchwork that explains a complex situation through different notions of interpretation, understanding, and representation (Weinstein & Weinstein, 1991; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Hence, this study was further influenced by a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm to better understand the meanings and experiences of those experiencing the phenomena (Ponterotto, 2005).
Research Paradigm

The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm aligns with qualitative research methods, which allows this researcher to explore and describe the experiences of multiple public school teachers through their own words and perceptions (Ponterotto, 2005; Butin, 2010). The constructivist-interpretivist paradigm recognizes that multiple realities exist, as opposed to one true reality recognized by a positivistic paradigm (Ponterotto, 2005). Through this perspective, reality is subjective or socially constructed often influenced by individuals lived experiences. This study embraced the multiple, socially constructed realities of each participant as they speak about their lived experience as a public school teacher. Epistemologically, the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm recognizes that the researcher plays an interactive role (Ponterotto, 2005). Therefore, as reality can be influenced by the interaction between the participant and the researcher, the researcher was sensitive and valued the exchange with each participant in order to produce a deep and honest outcome.

Creswell (2007) posits that there are five situations where a researcher may engage in a qualitative study. First, the researcher may wish to conduct a narrative inquiry where participant(s) narrate a biography, autobiography, or a life history. Second, the researcher may wish to conduct a phenomenological investigation to unearth the lived experiences of a phenomenon. Third, the research may want to develop a theory based on the experiences of the participants. Fourth, the research may wish to examine the shared experiences and culture of a group of individuals identified as ethnographic research. Last, researchers may want to engage in case study research, where the researcher studies a single case or multiple cases comprehensively. The methodology that best supports the constructivist-interpretivist paradigm and the purpose of this research is a case study approach (Stake, 1995; Ponterotto, 2005).
Research Tradition

This study employed a descriptive case study method. Bromley (1990) defines a case study as a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (p. 302). Gerring (2006) makes the assertion that case study research is an “intensive study of a single unit or a small number of units (the cases), for the purpose of understanding a larger class of similar units (a population of cases)” (p. 37). Meanwhile Yin (2009) defines a case study as, “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 18). Despite the multiple definitions and understandings of case study research, the common thread is that case studies are an empirical study focused on describing and understanding a complex phenomenon.

Yin (2013) and Merriam (2009, 2014) state that case study is a research strategy. Yin (2013) states that researchers benefit from applying case study methodology to their research design when their focus is to explain how an event or phenomenon works. Also, case studies are equally effective in answering why certain complex phenomena occur (Yin, 2013). Yin (2013) further explains that case study is a valid research strategy when researchers pose how or why research questions. This is because case study approach permits the researcher to glean rich data and deep understanding (Yin, 2013; Merriam, 2014). Yin (2013) emphasizes that case studies should exhibit clear boundaries around a specific case. Bounding of the case is explained by Mills, Wiebe, and Durepos (2010) to mean that case studies should be bound by theory, methodology, as well as commonsense, or the “documentation and critical investigation of the way in which research subject themselves experience and enact the boundaries surrounding the case phenomenon under study” (p. 58).
There are different types of case studies at the researcher’s disposal. Stake (2003) posits that one variation of case study research is the intrinsic case study, which is used to examine a specific individual, location, process, or event. In an intrinsic case study, “the case itself is of interest … it involves the researcher wanting to better understand a particular case” (Stake, 2003, p. 136). Stake’s (2003) second type of case study research is the single instrumental case study, which is used to study a specific individual, location, process, or event to gain a better understanding before the selected case study topic can be conducted. Instrumental case studies are often used for pilot studies (Stake, 2003).

In contrast, Yin (2003, 2013) identifies three case study strategies: explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. Yin’s (2013) explanatory case study serves to answer why individuals, locations, processes, or events are as they are. Whereas exploratory case studies (Yin, 2013) “investigates distinct phenomena characterized by a lack of detailed preliminary research … often used a preliminary step of an overall causal or explanatory research design” (Mills, Wiebe, & Durepos, 2010, p. 372). Explanatory case studies are very similar to Stake’s (2003) instrumental case study as they are often used in pilot studies. The third strategy in case study research, and the present strategy applied for this dissertation is a descriptive case study, which aims to:

(a) Depict the relatively incontrovertible details of the people, place, events, transactions, and processes of the case – a descriptive that others would likely make if they had been there; (b) to give a clear picture of what is happening without making judgments – an organized and coherent presentation of the phenomenon; and (c) to develop and expand on relative concepts (Mills, Wiebe, & Durepos, 2010, p. 288).
Proponents of descriptive case studies argue that the descriptive nature of the strategy permits the researcher to penetrate specific individuals, locations, processes, or events to glean pertinent understandings of the case to build upon existing theory. Thus, the nature of the study is aligned with the tradition of case study research, as it endeavored to examine and describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variable that influence teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction of teachers. The study aims to explore a contemporary problem of practice through the use of how and why research questions. Furthermore, the researcher had no control over individuals, locations, processes, or events central to the study.

Stake (2000) maintains a case study can be, “singular, but it [may have] subsections (e.g. production, marketing, sales departments), groups (e.g. students, teachers, parents), occasions (e.g. workdays, holidays, days near holidays), a concentration of domains – many so complex that at best they can only be sampled. Holistic case study calls for the examination of these complexities” (p. 240). Therefore, this dissertation is a single case study identified as teacher attrition, retention, and recruitment issues. This case study is bound to an independent charter school located in Oklahoma City, which employs many teachers that recently resigned from OKCPS. The case study is situated within these interlocking contexts. Through qualitative research methods, constructivist-interpretivist principles, the contexts of the bounded case, and answering the posed research questions, a deep understanding of the lived experiences of teachers and their perspective of job satisfaction will emerge.

Site and Participants

The site of the case study was an independent charter school located in Oklahoma City. The charter school employed over 200 certified teachers, many of which were former teachers of the OKCPS District (Palmer, 2017). The site (independent charter school) was Oklahoma’s 14th
largest school system with approximately 9,100 enrollees, of which about 6,000 was considered secondary level students (Ogle, 2017). While the independent charter school served all 77 counties in Oklahoma, the greatest number of enrollees originated from the Oklahoma City metro area.

The purpose of this descriptive case study was to describe the natural phenomena of the case (teacher attrition, retention, and recruitment issues) and to provide a clear picture of what teachers are experiencing (job satisfaction / job dissatisfaction). The OKCPS District is representative of the phenomena under study as OKCPS is one of the most affected districts in Oklahoma in terms of teacher shortage (Houston, 2016). By utilizing the independent charter school as the site of this case study, it served to access teachers, who have recently resigned from OKCPS. Furthermore, by accessing former OKCPS teachers, it permitted the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences that lead to teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Specifically, the data helped to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence teachers’ job satisfaction, describe how these public school teachers make sense of job satisfaction, and describe the circumstances that led to their resignation.

**Selection of participants.** The overarching aim of this study was to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction variables that influence teachers’ job satisfaction and the circumstances that led to their resignation from a large Oklahoma City public school district. Many sampling strategies were considered, however, Merriam (2009) explains that forms of non-probabilistic sampling, such as purposeful sampling are commonly used in qualitative studies as it participants or cases are chosen based on answering the research question. Moreover, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understanding, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be
learned” (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). Therefore, considering the purpose of the case study and the aims of the researcher, purposeful sampling was deemed most appropriate for this research (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 2009).

In order to develop a detailed analysis and answer the research questions, the researcher used a common strategy of purposeful selection identified as criterion sampling. According to Patton (2001), “the logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance, a strategy common in quality assurance efforts” (p. 238). In essence, criterion sampling permits the researcher to choose cases or participants that are information rich and may reveal significant points of strength or weakness in a system and unearth where such systems can be exploited or improved (Patton, 2001). For this study, each interview participant must be a (1) certified Oklahoma teacher and (2) have resigned from the OKCPS district within the past five years. As criterion sampling is a nonprobability-sampling method, generalization from the sample population will not be drawn (Merriam, 2009).

Research participant recruitment. In order to commence an investigation and obtain access to participants, the researcher first acquired the approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Northeastern University (Appendix A). The researcher also sought a letter of support from the superintendent of the research site (Appendix B). After obtaining approval to conduct the study from the IRB, the researcher will commence a participant recruitment plan. As suggested by Merriam (2009), the independent charter school and its’ staff member served as a gateway or a first point of contact for the study because of their vast resource capability. The first step in the recruitment plan was to solicit interview participants. The researcher, with the assistance of the charter school staff member, posted a message in the charter school’s private web-based forum as well as the private member-only Facebook© page, which notified charter
school teachers of the case study and a solicitation for their participation. Keeping within the tradition of criterion sampling, the criteria for interview participants requires that each respondent be a (1) certified Oklahoma teacher (2) have resigned from the OKCPS district within the past five years, and (3) be currently employed at the research site. The solicitation for interview participants was posted twice within a 60-day period in order to achieve an adequate sample of respondents.

The participant recruitment plan produced eleven potential candidates for the case study. After developing a list of potential candidates and their contact information, the researcher emailed each potential candidate explaining the purpose of the research and requesting their participation in a one-on-one interview (Appendix C). A week after sending the request email, a follow-up email (Appendix D) was sent seeking his or her participation and again providing a brief overview of the purpose of the research. After one week, six of the eleven candidates agreed to participate in the study. Next, the researcher emailed each candidate a consent form (Appendix F & G), which informed each participant of their rights as a research participant.

Next, the researcher e-mailed each research participant an intake questionnaire (Appendix H), which allowed the researcher to learn more detail about the research participant (i.e., demographics, tenure, etc.). After each participant completed the intake questionnaire, the researcher followed-up with the participant via e-mail inviting them to partake in the study (Appendix E).

Access. The site of this case study, is an independent charter school located in Oklahoma City. The charter school teaches children in grades K-12 and employs several former teachers that have resigned from OKCPS. The research site does not have a formal IRB or research evaluation process. Nevertheless, the researcher contacted the superintendent at the research site
to receive a letter of support as well as permission to gain access and conduct research with its teachers (Appendix B). The researcher only contacted and engaged with research participant teachers via email, Google Hangout© or Facetime©. Therefore, the researcher did not seek a request to access the site’s buildings, observe classrooms, or interview employees on-site or on-duty. This decision is based on the conditions that this case study did not involve or require on-site observation of teachers and their practices, processes, procedures.

**Overview of the research participant teachers.** The criteria for this study required participants to be (1) certified teachers with the State of Oklahoma, (2) have resigned from the OKCPS District within the past five years, and be (3) currently employed at the research site. The participants were purposefully chosen because they have direct experience of being a teacher, residing in Oklahoma, and was recently employed by OKCPS. Furthermore, as teachers residing and working in Oklahoma, the participants are the most qualified and relevant population to investigate workplace attitudes of teachers, specifically, the factors that drive job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction for public school teachers. The ability to answer the proposed research questions rested on the work attitudes of public school teachers and their perspective on teacher job satisfaction. The research design planned for a minimum of six participant teachers.

As shown in Table 1, the participants were narrowed to six individuals. These participants ranged in ages from 29 to 49 years old and comprised of five Caucasian females and one Caucasian male, and have worked as a career teacher between 3 and 28 years. Lastly, three teachers acknowledge working in elementary schools, while three teachers acknowledge working in high schools. Chapter four will provide a more detailed profile of each participating teacher.
Table 1: Overview of Study’s Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range of age:</th>
<th>25 years to 49 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>5 female, 1 male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race:</td>
<td>6 Caucasian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years employed as a career educator:</td>
<td>3 years to 28 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School type:</td>
<td>3 elementary, 3 high school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Protection of Human Subjects and Ethics

In accordance with the guidelines and regulations established by Northeastern University and to ensure the protection of participants in this study, the approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the Office of Human Subjects’ Research Protection (OHSRP) at Northeastern University was sought prior to the recruitment and access stage of research. Prior to commencing this thesis, the researcher completed the Protecting Human Research Participant Training course provided by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which the certificate of completion was placed on file with the Northeastern University IRB. All IRB stamped documents will be provided in the Appendix of this study. In addition, the Appendix contains a copy of the recruitment letters (Appendix C, Appendix D, Appendix E), informed consent forms (Appendix F, Appendix G), intake questionnaire (Appendix H), and the interview protocol and questions (Appendix I) used or obtained for the purpose of this study.

When asked to participate in this study, participants were informed of the intent of the study: to investigate the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors of public school teachers. Following their consent, the researcher asked permission to record the interview through audio or visual means so that the most accurate data can be collected. This researcher did not foresee the potential for risk to the participant’s physical or mental health. However, if research participants felt the need to seize the research process, the participant were informed, prior to the interview,
that they could quit at any time. As professionals in their field, teachers must feel secure that their professional reputations and personal and professional relationships are unharmed as a result of this study. Therefore, the researcher ensured all research participants that their anonymity will be protected throughout the study and into perpetuity. The perspectives shared by the research participants were also protected through “member checking,” or allowing participants to review the transcripts of their interview (Creswell, 2012). Member checking permits participants the opportunity to amend or clarify comments made in the initial interview (Creswell, 2012).

As previously stated, the researcher did not contact the case study site for a request to access to their buildings, observe classrooms, or interview employees on-site or on-duty. This decision is based on the conditions that this case study did not involve on-site observation of teachers and their practices, processes, procedures. Also, the researcher only contacted and engaged with participating teachers via email, Google Hangout© or Facetime©.

**Data Collection**

The researcher began collecting data from research participants only after explicit permission from Northeastern University’s Institutional Review Board. Yin (2003; 2013) explains that an effective case study relies on multiple source of evidence. According to Yin (2003) and Creswell (2012), there are several possible sources of evidence for qualitative researchers including observations, interviews and questionnaires, documents, and audiovisual materials. The primary actions of this researcher relative to data collection are to inquire about the thoughts and feelings of the study’s participants (public school teachers) by conducting questionnaires and open-ended interviews (Creswell, 2012). The researchers’ actions also included the examination and analysis of documents, field notes, as well as audiovisual materials
(Creswell, 2012). Thus, this study utilized four primary forms of data: participant intake questionnaires (Appendix H), interview questions (Appendix I), documents, and field notes.

**Participant intake questionnaire.** Once interview participants were identified, and prior to the interview session, the researcher collected participant intake forms from the research participants (Appendix H). The participant intake questionnaire comprised of questions focused on demographics and opinions. The participant intake form was distributed to participants as an electronic questionnaire designed in www.stellarsurvey.com.

**Interviews.** The primary source of data for this study was the interview sessions, which take place between the researcher and the participants (teachers). Yin (2003, 2013) makes the assertion that interviews are a significant resource in case study research. Patton, as cited in Merriam (2009), adds that interviews with research participants will produce valuable information or, “qualitative data consisting of direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinion, feelings, and knowledge” (p. 87).

The researcher followed Creswell’s (2012) approach to interviewing. This case study utilized semi-structured interviews when engaging with research participants (Appendix I). The interviews took place one-on-one (face to face), via Google Hangout© or Facetime© (Creswell, 2012). Merriam (2009) notes that semi-structured interviews are most common in qualitative research, “they are guided by a set of questions and issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor the order of questions is predetermined” (p. 114).

Prior to interacting with the participant, Creswell (2012) advises the researcher to obtain participant consent (Appendix F and Appendix G). Therefore, prior to the interview, the researcher first obtained consent from the interviewee and discussed the purpose of the study with the participant. Furthermore, an interview form was be developed, which comprised of a list
of open-ended questions, which enabled the researcher “to probe for further information, elaboration, and clarification of responses, while maintaining a ‘feeling of openness’ to the participant’s responses” (Creswell, 2012, p. 17). Throughout the interview, the researcher was a strong listener, as well as respectful and courteous (Creswell, 2012). For the purpose of clarity, recollection, quality assurance, and analysis the researcher took field notes as well as electronically recorded the interviews with a digital recorder (Berg & Lune, 2012; Creswell, 2012). In addition, the electronically recorded interview data will be uploaded to Rev.com, a professional transcription service.

Documents. Merriam (2009) explains that documents are “printed or other materials relevant to a study, including public records, personal documents, popular culture and visual documents, and physical artifacts” (p. 86). Such documents are considered a “valuable source of information in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012, p. 223). For this study, the researcher relied on newspaper articles, news broadcasts, historical accounts, policy papers, as well as state government materials to serve as a rich source of background data for this case study. A list of such documents is provided in the reference section of this study.

Creswell (2012) asserts that documents also include the private documents of the researcher, such as personal journals, notes, and jottings. Throughout the investigation phase of this study, the researcher kept a journal and will took copious amounts of notes and memos during the interviews. The researcher also took notes while reviewing documents and while reflecting on interviews.

Data Analysis

Data analysis requires the researcher to sort through volumes of information obtained from participant intake questionnaires, interviews, documents, and other various memoranda. As
recommended, this researcher was diligent in keeping all qualitative data organized throughout the time frame of the case study. Organization comprised of (a) physical file system located in a locked file cabinet in the researcher’s home office as well as (b) electronic files located on the researcher’s laptop and backup drive.

To begin, Creswell (2012) calls on researchers to engage in a process identified as *in vivo coding* to initially code the interview transcripts and other forms of data. Throughout the case study, the amount of qualitative data was voluminous, and as a result, combing through transcribed interviews, mining documents, taking notes, analysis, and coding was an arduous undertaking. It is suggested that a systematic process of data analysis be conducted (Saldana, 2009, Creswell, 2012). Stake (1995) calls for data review or “the *review of raw data* under various possible interpretations” (p. 53), while Creswell (2012) suggested that case study researchers should begin by reading, re-reading, and reviewing all raw data and draw meaning and interpretation. This researcher relied on three different software programs for organizing, condensing, analyzing data. The second phase of data analysis is identified as *pattern coding*. Stake (1995) and Creswell (2012) maintain that case study researchers take the next step of establishing patterns by searching for patterns of commentary, reaction, and emotion across the data sources. The process of discovering relationships or links between documents, literature, and qualitative data, the researcher employed the use of concept mapping. Also, the researcher utilized software such as word clouding to find common or frequently used words, terms, or phrases among interviewees. In the final step of data analysis, the researcher will call upon *a priori coding*, which is an inductive approach of connecting common links, patterns, and themes to the theoretical framework (Saldaña, 2009).
For coding analysis, the researcher employed the use of qualitative computer programs (Saldaña, 2009; Creswell, 2012), which permits the researcher to upload transcribed documents as well as audio and image files into the program for (a) organization and categorization; (b) reading and reviewing documents and images; (c) make notes and highlights on transcribed documents; (d) code documents; and (e) code analysis (Creswell, 2012). For this study, the researcher utilized Dedoose©, a secure cloud-based qualitative program, for qualitative analysis. Dedoose© will be utilized to (a) prepare and organize text and audio files; (b) assign qualitative coding; (c) make notes and highlights on transcribed documents, and (d) develop qualitative themes and patterns. For the last step in the data analysis, Stake (1995) suggests that case study researchers should begin drawing tentative conclusions and generalization about the data collected.

The researcher aimed to achieve high-quality analysis. Yin (2003; 2009) suggests that researchers follow four principles that underlie all good qualitative research:

1. Analysis should demonstrate that you attended to all evidence
2. Analysis should address, if possible, all major contradictions.
3. Analysis should address the most significant aspects of the case study
4. Researcher should use own prior expert knowledge in the case study

Yin (2009) explains the overarching goal for researchers is to “demonstrate awareness of current thinking and discourse about the study topic” (p. 161). In order to ensure a high-quality analysis, Yin’s (2009) four principles will be considered and built into the study’s research design.

Data Storage

All of the physical data collected throughout the case study will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home office. All digital recordings obtained from the personal
interviews will be downloaded and secured on the researcher’s laptop. All electronic data collected will be stored on the researcher’s laptop, which is password protected. For protection, the researcher created backup files of all electronic data stored on the personal laptop in the event of loss, damage, accident, or theft. The backup hard drive will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher’s home office.

**Trustworthiness**

Merriam (2009) and Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) argue the rigor of qualitative research is highly dependent on the researcher ability to confirm findings. This researcher assumes the burden of adopting certain strategies that ensure that the findings and interpretations reflect accuracy and credibility (Creswell, 2012). Saldana (2009) recommends that the researcher (a) periodically check his interpretations with the participants; (b) establish codes while transcribing qualitative data, and (c) take copious detailed notes. Creswell (2007; 2012) adds that the application of member checking and triangulation increases credibility. Miles et al., (2014) explains that the process of triangulation involves qualitative researchers gathering in-depth, information rich data from different sources and different methods to enhance validity and reliability. By combining multiple different research sources, methods, and techniques, triangulation cross-checks the data to reduce weakness, overcome biases, and increase confirmation (Yeasmin & Rahman, 2012). This investigator will rely on three strategies to increase the trustworthiness of the study’s outcome: (a) member checking; (b) triangulation; and (c) rich, thick descriptions (Stake, 1995; Merriam 2009; Saldana, 2009; Creswell, 2012).

As a first step toward increasing trustworthiness, the research engaged in member checking. Merriam (2009) asserts that member checking is an effective strategy for ensuring the study’s credibility. *Member checking* involves the researcher soliciting feedback from
interviewees, which allowing interviewees the opportunity to review, clarify, or edit interview transcriptions. Stake (1995) maintains that member checking plays an important role in triangulating the researcher’s notes, observations, and interpretations. *Triangulation* is “the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in descriptions and themes in qualitative research” (Creswell, 2012, p. 259). Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014) further state that triangulation is achieved when at least three independent measures agree or do not contradict it. The researcher’s triangulation strategy includes: participant interview data, research field notes, and secondary data sources such as newspaper articles, third party surveys, news broadcasts, and/or government reports to triangulate the interview responses. The three sources of data were acquired for triangulation purposes to assist in maintaining the accuracy of the data collected and analyzed. Last, to increase the possibility that this qualitative study is transferrable, the investigator will use rich, *thick description*. By reporting qualitative research with thick, rich description, this researcher aims to reveal “the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals” (Denzin, as cited in Ponterotto & Grieger, 2007, p. 416).

**Limitations**

As this research focused on a small sample of research participants within a single school district, the researcher’s ability to make generalized claims about the outcome of this study beyond the case is limited (Maxwell, 2009). In other words, findings extrapolated from this study cannot be transferred to teachers or educators in other schools or school districts.

**Chapter Summary**

As described, this qualitative study employed a descriptive single case study design. The focus of this research is to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence teachers’
job satisfaction. This study aimed to shed light on the experience of public school teachers that recently resigned from the OKCPS District and describe how these public school teachers make sense of job satisfaction. The study is framed by the tenets of Herzberg’s, et al. Motivator-Hygiene Theory (1959). Adhering to the traditions of qualitative research as well as guidelines established for case study research, this study was conducted by collecting and analyzing multiple forms of data, including participant interviews, intake questionnaires, and documents. Qualitative data will be coded to identify relationships and themes. The researcher employed the use of qualitative software for analysis. The researcher made every attempt to take the appropriate steps to protect research participants from any potential harm and to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.
Chapter Four: Research Findings and Analysis

This chapter presents findings, triangulated from participant interviews, research field notes, and secondary data, about the experiences of teachers formerly employed by a large school district in Oklahoma City. The goal of this study was to gain a greater understanding of the factors that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction for teachers working in the Oklahoma City Public School (OKCPS) district, and how such factors contribute to teachers resigning from the district. Six teachers participated in the interviews. They were selected according to the following criteria: each participant was: (1) a certified teacher with the State of Oklahoma, (2) have resigned from the OKCPS District within the past five years, and be (3) currently employed at the research site. To this end, this study employed a qualitative data collection method of semi-structured interviews focused on understanding the job satisfaction experience of former OKCPS teachers and their reasons for leaving the district. The research questions probed included:

The Central Research Question: How do teachers, who recently resigned from OKCPS, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction?

Research sub-questions:

1. What extrinsic (hygiene) factors do teachers identify as important?
2. What intrinsic (motivation) factors do teachers identify as important?
3. Why are teachers motivated to leave as a teacher in the school district?
4. Does the job satisfaction of teachers relate to their decision to resign from the school district? If so, how does a teacher’s job satisfaction influence a teacher to resign from the district?
The chapter begins with a thick description of the research context and a reintroduction of the research problem. Afterward, a description of the research participants provides a brief biography of the interviewees. Next, the chapter discusses the findings derived from the data analysis.

**Research Context**

Oklahoma City Public Schools is situated within an urban district located in central Oklahoma, serving an area of 135.5 square miles. The school district comprises of 87 schools, which includes 54 elementary schools, 16 secondary schools, two alternative schools, and 15 public charter schools. The school district enrolls approximately 46,000 students annually. The district’s demographics can be summarized as 52% Hispanic, 24% African American, 15% Caucasian, 3% Native American, and 2% Asian. In addition, 33% of the student body are English Language Learners (ELLs). The OKCPS district employs 4,600 certified personnel annually and support employees of which 2,494 are considered full-time educators. The Oklahoma City Public School District is the largest school district in the state of Oklahoma (OSDE, 2017).

**Research Problem**

The purpose of this descriptive, single case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, describe their experience of job satisfaction. The problem of practice prompting this study was the decrease of job satisfaction among public school teachers who have recently resigned from a large urban school district in Oklahoma City. In particular, the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction were explored. The hemorrhaging of teachers, when this study was initiated, had reached a point of crisis for OKCPS, a district trying hard to recruit and retain quality educators. The absence of
understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors impacting teachers within the Oklahoma public schools was creating difficulties for school district administrators and other policymakers to develop effective teacher recruitment and teacher retention strategies. This was occurring during a time when Oklahoma’s school districts are facing a teacher shortage crisis, making high attrition particularly problematic.

Description of the Participants

The participants in this case study had been situated in an independent charter school located in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma (research site). The charter school, at the time of the interviews, was employing more than 200 certified teachers, many of which were former teachers of OKCPS District (Palmer, 2017). The site (an independent charter school) is Oklahoma’s ranked at the time as the state’s 14th largest school system with approximately 9,100 enrollees, of which about 6,000 were considered secondary level students (Ogle, 2017). The independent charter school generally serves all 77 counties in Oklahoma; however, the greatest number of enrollees originate from the Oklahoma City metro area.

As shown in Table 2, the six teachers participating in this case study offered a diverse demographic. The teachers comprised of five women and one man. Chronological Age: The teachers ranged from 29 to 49 years old. Generational Age: The six participants spanned three different generations. Career Stage: The study’s participants identified as either a teacher in their early career stage (one participant), mid-career stage (four participants), or in their late career stage (one participant). Educational Background: Three of the participants, at the time the study was conducted, held bachelor’s degrees in education, while three held master’s degrees in education. Life Events: The participating teachers represent diverse life stages, with two
identifying as single, while four teachers identified as married. Furthermore, five of the teachers indicated they had children. The diverse nature of the participants lends robustness to the study.

In addition to the diverse demographics, Table 2 illustrates that each of the participants had diverse teaching experiences. Each participant was a former teacher of the Oklahoma City Public School district and had taught at schools located in the district with student populations ranging approximately from 450 to 1,700. The demographic composition of the students at the schools where the participants worked was largely “minorities,” ranging from 88 to 96 percent. Each participant acknowledged that their school had been labeled as a Title 1 school, meaning that 65% or more of the student population was receiving free or reduced-price lunches. Below, Table 2 provides more detail about the participants and their backgrounds. Following Table 2, this chapter will provide a brief background of each participant.

Table 2: Demographic overview of research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher ID</th>
<th>Amy</th>
<th>Sara</th>
<th>Valarie</th>
<th>Bob</th>
<th>Regina</th>
<th>Whitney</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generation</td>
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<td>Gen Y</td>
<td>Gen Y</td>
<td>Gen X</td>
<td>Gen Y</td>
<td>Baby Boomer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Married</td>
<td>Single</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Degree Earned</td>
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<td>Masters</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Bachelors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path to Licensure</td>
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<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Stage</td>
<td>Early</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Mid</td>
<td>Late</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years Employed as a Teacher</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years w/ OKCPS</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>9-12</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>1st - 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Population of School</td>
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<td>1740</td>
<td>1740</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population of School</td>
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<td>89%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Amy** (pseudonym) is a female teacher in her early 30’s. After earning her bachelor’s degree in education, she began working for OKCPS. Amy’s three years of teaching started at Garner High School, one of Oklahoma City’s most populated high schools. Amy taught advanced placement English courses for students enrolled in grades 9-12. As an early career teacher, Amy’s insight is valuable when examining teacher job satisfaction, providing a perspective of newly hired teachers.

**Sara** (pseudonym) is a female teacher in her late 20’s. After earning her bachelor’s degree in education, she began working for OKCPS. Sara worked for the district for six years as an English teacher for students enrolled from the ninth to the twelfth grade. While completing her final two years with OKCPS, Sara earned her master’s degree in education. At the time she was interviewed, Sara was continuing her graduate studies, working toward completing courses in a doctoral program focused on education. Sara’s perspective on teacher job satisfaction is important because it provides the experience of mid-career stage teachers.

**Valarie** (pseudonym) is a female teacher in her late 30’s. After earning her bachelor’s degree in education, she began working for OKCPS. Valerie worked for the district for eight years as an advanced placement (AP) English teacher in addition to being a club sponsor, as well as an athletic coach. Within her first three years of teaching, Valerie earned a master’s degree in education. In her final year with OKCPS, Valerie was hired by the district as a college coordinator, thus serving as a liaison between colleges and students aiming to become future teachers. Valarie’s interview provides a perspective of job satisfaction of a mid-career teacher, but she also provides a unique perspective of the district from an administrative level.

**Bob** (pseudonym) is a male teacher in his mid-40’s. Bob earned a bachelor’s degree in education by the age of 21. However, Bob decided to work in the private sector before deciding
to become a teacher at the age of 39. Bob worked for a neighboring school district for approximately five years before he moved to OKCPS. As a special needs teacher, Bob taught fourth graders for four years before leaving the district. Bob’s interview informs this study from multiple perspectives. He described teacher job satisfaction from the standpoint of a mid-career teacher, an elementary teacher, as well as a special needs teacher.

**Regina** (pseudonym) is a female teacher in her late 20’s. Regina earned her bachelor’s degree in a field outside of education. However, Regina stated that she felt compelled to fulfill her dream and therefore went back to graduate school and earned a master’s degree in education. After applying with Teach for America, Regina was placed with OKCPS teaching first grade. Since 2010, Regina had taught for seven years in the district. Regina’s interview informs this study by describing teacher job satisfaction from the perspective of a mid-career teacher as well as an elementary teacher.

**Whitney** (pseudonym) is a female teacher in her late 40’s. Whitney earned her bachelor’s degree in education. In her 28 years of teaching, Whitney has worked in four different states and multiple school districts. For the three years prior to the interview, Whitney had worked for OKCPS teaching first and third-grade students. Whitney’s descriptions of her experiences provides this study with the perspective of a late-career teacher.

**Overview of the Research Findings**

The analysis of the six interviews occurred in three phases. The preliminary inductive analysis was done in vivo and resulted in 391 excerpts and 1,282 initial codes. The second phase of higher level qualitative coding established patterns to eliminate redundancy within the data. The second phase analysis yielded 389 codes and concepts and 7 major categories (Saldana, 2009). During the third phase, the researcher reviewed second phase codes through Herzberg’s et
al. (1959) theoretical lens, which resulted in the codes being classified into one of Herzberg’s fourteen job satisfaction factors and then categorized as one of the following variables: hygiene or motivators. A sample of these codes and categories are located as Appendix L. Table 3, illustrates the major results of the coding analysis describing job satisfaction of former OKCPS teachers. The third phase of data analysis permitted major themes and theoretical connections to emerge (See Table 4).

Table 3: *Major categories and concepts of teacher job satisfaction*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major categories</th>
<th>Associated concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition and respect</td>
<td>Lack of recognition by administrators, feeling of no professional respect, teachers are not valued, no professional autonomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Overwhelmed, kids are in great need, high expectations, many responsibilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement</td>
<td>Academic growth, academic success, overcoming challenges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The work itself</td>
<td>Making a difference, life calling, inherent joy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relationships</td>
<td>Relationships with administrators important, communication issues, trust, favoritism, fracture relations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>Significantly underpaid, financially challenges teachers, frustrating, teachers are not in it for the money, higher salary equals toleration, salary is not a motivator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational policy and administration</td>
<td>Policy issues, teachers not in favor of current student behavior policy, negative organizational climate, low teacher morale, budget crisis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Findings**

As stated, the purpose of this descriptive case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, described their experience of job satisfaction. As
such, this section presents the findings based on teachers’ descriptions of intrinsic (motivation) and extrinsic (hygiene) variables that influenced their job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction while employed at OKCPS. Also, this section reveals the motivations behind teachers’ decisions to resign from the district. The participants’ verbatim passages are provided to respond to each research question.

Table 4: *Theoretical connection between thematic analysis and Two-Factor Theory of Motivation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Motivation (Intrinsic) Factors</strong></th>
<th><strong>Theoretical Connection to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect</td>
<td>Recognition and Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers greatest achievement is finding success in their students</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers find motivation in the work itself</td>
<td>The Work Itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hygiene (Extrinsic) Factors</strong></td>
<td><strong>Theoretical Connection to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication</td>
<td>Interpersonal Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are grossly underpaid: But money is not a motivator</td>
<td>Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are dissatisfied over district policies</td>
<td>Organizational Policy &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City Public Schools foster a non-supportive working environment for teachers</td>
<td>Organizational Policy &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers suggest the State of Oklahoma has failed them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Central Research Question**

How do teachers, who recently resigned from OKCPS, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction? To answer the central research question, the researcher examined the verbatim passages of the research participants. Based on code frequency and code re-occurrence, nine major themes emerged from the qualitative data, which were categorized as intrinsic factors or extrinsic factors (See Table 4). The intrinsic category produced five major themes from the participants’ discussion of the central research question: (a) teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect; (b) teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility; (c) teachers’ greatest achievement is finding success in their
students’ and (d) teachers find motivation in the work itself. Also, participants’ discussion of the central research question, specifically extrinsic variables, four major themes emerged: (a) teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication; (b) teachers are grossly underpaid: but money is not a motivator; (c) teachers are dissatisfied with district policies and the administration; (d) OKCPS fosters a non-supportive working environment for teachers; and (e) teachers suggest that the State of Oklahoma has failed them. Each theme is described below utilizing verbatim passages from the research participants.

**Intrinsic Theme One: Teachers are Deprived of Professional Recognition and Respect**

When the researcher asked the participants if they were routinely recognized for their work or felt respected as a teacher, they commonly answered “no.” When asked if she felt recognized or respected as a teacher, Sara responded by saying, “No…They [school administrators] don’t listen to us or respect us as professionals.” Amy had a similar response when she said, “We are almost treated like the students to some degree.” Sara shared that being undermined as a teacher by the school’s administration was unsatisfying, and she stated, “I am supposed to be a professional. I have all this education. I have been in school forever. To be undermined constantly is frustrating.” The researcher asked Regina, meanwhile, if anyone ever acknowledged her for doing a positive job as a teacher and she said, “Not really.” In fact, Regina explained how one district administrator from OKCPS openly belittled months of hard work that she and her colleagues had been working on in the English Language Learners Department, indicating that their efforts “was just making the process worse.” Bob found that his principal made him “feel like a glorified babysitter.” Whitney agreed that acknowledgment and recognition were difficult to obtain from OKCPS administrators. Whitney stated, “I honestly cannot tell you one teacher that felt supported by OKCPS.”
Sara recalled a problematic moment she experienced between herself, her principal, and a parent. Sara stated that a special education case manager explained to her that when helping IEP (Independent Education Program) students study for state testing, teachers could eliminate options on multiple choice questions. However, under no circumstance, the case manager emphasized, should teachers alter questions and answers in actual state exams. Sara indicated a few weeks later that the principal invited her to a meeting along with the IEP student’s mother. During the meeting, Sara witnessed the parent, and the principal proposing ways to help the student pass state exams; one of the options was to eliminate some of the multiple choice answers. Realizing the principal and the mother were heading down a perhaps unethical path, Sara said she believed it was necessary for her to quote the case manager verbatim about the rules regarding IEP students. Sara then declared to the principal and the mother that she would not make exceptions beyond what the rules established. Sara then stated that the mother and the principal started to confront her more assertively about her statement. Sara said, “In fact, the principal, in front of the parent, in front of the other people in the room, starts to yell at me, screaming at me, about how I should not care about the test, that I should care about the student.” Sara said this caused her to feel embarrassed and disrespected as a professional. As she described this incident, the interviewee (Sara) was visibly shaken.

Amy concurred with her colleagues that teachers lack recognition and respect despite being professionals. However, Amy admitted that, from time to time, she felt a sense of gratitude from some of her students. Amy indicated that “many times student will send her thank you notes…when they do write thank you notes, or say how much they appreciate you, and how much you help them, and when you are reading those notes, whatever they write you, it is really
touching.” Whitney added, “It makes a difference to have somebody say, ‘What can I do for you? What can I take off your plate? You are doing a wonderful job.’”

Valarie shared that her husband, also a teacher, left OKCPS to teach and coach at a neighboring school district. Valarie said:

He was there on his first day…and out in front of the wrestling room, [school personnel] spray painted his name on a parking block. It just said Coach Smith (pseudonym). My husband told me that this school could be the worst place he may ever work, but he will probably stay there until he retires because he immediately felt like he was part of a group, appreciated.

**Intrinsic Theme Two: Teachers are Overwhelmed with Responsibility**

As the researcher interviewed each of the six teachers, he learned that teachers have an overwhelming load of responsibility in the short amount of time they are allowed each day.

When the interviewer asked the participants to describe their responsibilities, the researcher sensed a shift in their attitude about work at OKCPS, as the teachers began to describe some of the responsibilities. For example, Amy, Sara, and Rachel grew visibly stressed and aggravated and, at times, appeared exasperated as they discussed their work. While, Bob and Valarie equally described their experience with OKCPS as demanding, each displayed relief that they are no longer with OKCPS.

Sara felt the responsibility of being a teacher, “sucked the life out of me. It can do that sometimes. You give all of yourself. Not only are you preparing all of these lessons, but emotionally too, the kids, they just need so much.” Sara said she believed that she and many of her colleagues were stressed over the responsibility of trying to overcome student apathy within the district, she said:
They did not want to do anything. At some point I was like, I don’t know how to fix this. I don’t know how to change this. I am doing everything in my power. Every other teacher I talked to was having the same problem. We cannot get anything out of them.

Bob indicated that the job of being a teacher is a tremendous responsibility, and many of his colleagues decided to leave the district because of stress and teacher burnout. Bob shared that people outside the teaching field often do not understand that the role of being teacher goes beyond the lesson plans, he said, “I was a father figure. A counselor. I was a parent sometimes to them trying to teach them right from wrong.” Valarie, whose husband was also a teacher in the OKCPS district, said she had, “two young children at home that I hardly ever saw. It got to the point where my kids had absentee parents because we were up there putting so much of ourselves into the school.” Regina felt equally exhausted and said:

A lot of teachers are forced to work at home. You’re planning time is 40 minutes a day. It is not enough time to plan individualized instruction for all these kids with all these issues, and I absolutely would not pass on any students that were excelling, so I felt the responsibility to push them and the kids that were not doing so well.

Some of this exaggerated responsibility of being a teacher was an obvious source of dissatisfaction for Regina who said she felt overwhelmed by the bureaucracy in Oklahoma City. She stated:

I was given work for the sake of having a paper trail. I also lost two planning periods a week due to mandatory meetings that could have been delivered in an email…It felt like there we were being pulled apart by obligations that did not actually mean anything. It got to the point where all of my work that went towards helping kids, I had to do at home on weekends, and I did not have time for anything else…I felt exhausted. I am bit of a
perfectionist, and so just cutting my losses in certain areas or cutting corners never felt like an option. But, it also felt like that was what my colleagues, everybody, was saying, ‘All right, don’t do this, just do this. Prioritize just these certain kids. These kids will never get this far. Cut your losses. Cut your losses, and I hated that feeling.

**Intrinsic Theme Three: Teachers Greatest Achievement is Finding Success in Their Students**

A significant source of motivation was identified in teachers developing a sense of achievement. When the researcher discussed achievement with the participant teachers, this researcher perceived that, when teachers felt a sense of achievement, it was the equivalent of an investor having a return on their investment or ROI. The participant teachers described their greatest sense of achievement was when they experienced academic growth and academic success in their students.

Valarie stated that as a teacher, “you bring you’re A-game every day to work in Oklahoma City to make a difference. When the kids find success, that is rewarding.” Sara, in her eighth year as a public school teacher, indicated that she felt motivated by perceiving her students’ achievement. She admitted she still has a “romanticized notion of changing the world, one student at a time.” Regina embraced the challenge of being a teacher when she was working in the OKCPS district:

I wanted to really make an impact…I absolutely loved seeing a personal challenge…I know that if I can just hack into how this student thinks, I can get them to grade level in the time that I have…It is a personal and professional challenge, which is a motivating factor.
Amy indicated that when her students grasped the lesson and embraced her teaching, she said, “I know I helped them find their way and think.”

Whitney said she was also motivated when she believed she had achieved success with her students. When the researcher asked her to give an example, he noticed a change in the pitch of her voice, which suggested to the researcher that this question was particularly meaningful to the respondent. Whitney said she believed achievement was a significant source of motivation for her because “it has always been about trying to make growth on the kids who struggle as it is. It is not necessarily about them passing anything, I want to see growth. And I think that motivates me the most because I like to see where they came from.” As a special needs teacher in a Title 1 school, Bob experienced children with hardship and challenges every day in the classroom. For Bob, achievement, as minimal or as significant as it may have been, said he believed experiencing that growth was an important part of him being a teacher. Bob shared that he found motivation by experiencing achievement in the kids, “this is because, so many of them, I knew their disadvantages. For them, I wanted so much more than they had at home.”

**Intrinsic Theme Four: Teachers Find Motivation in the Work Itself**

One the first questions asked during the interview was: What motivates you as a teacher and can the work itself motivate you? All six of the research participants indicated that the inherent joy or the work itself produced the greatest amount of job satisfaction for them as teachers. When the researcher asked the participants to describe what made teaching satisfying for them, Sara replied that “Every year I have students that I connect with on a deep level and they motivate me.” Bob indicated that “teaching is all about the kids.” Regina said, “I have always had a passion for teaching…I am motivated by really working with the kids and pushing them towards success. Valarie stated:
I really feel that to be a teacher; you have to be called to the profession, whether it is a spiritual calling or just something you feel. It is a call or a need to put good into the world.

Amy, similarly, expressed that she loved teaching and was motivated by the inherent work of being a teacher, stating, “You get into the profession as a teacher to make an impact on student’s lives.” Amy then broke from her statement for a moment, bent her head down, then as she lifted her head back up, she wiped a tear from her eye and responded with deep emotion and authenticity: “I want to make them believe that they can do more than they think they can, and are more capable of it.”

**Extrinsic Theme One: Teachers Value Interpersonal Relationships and Organizational Communication**

Effective relationships within an organization can be essential to job efficacy, job commitment, employee turnover, and reducing excessive employee absenteeism. Each of the six participants acknowledged that interpersonal relations with student’s parents, their principals, and their colleagues played an important role in their career and overall job satisfaction.

**Teacher-parent relations.** When the interviewer asked the participants about parent-teacher relationships, all the teachers explained that parents are great volunteers, teacher assistants, and more importantly, when parents get involved with their children’s school, they also become invested, which can foster success for their child. Unfortunately, the participants suggested that despite being enthusiastic about parental involvement, very few parents engaged with them. Sara described her relationship with parents as:

A hit and miss. First of all, very few parents came to parent-teacher conferences and things like that. I have had some great relationships with parents. Maybe in my six years
at Oklahoma City, maybe 20 parents that I could say I have had good relations. They were sincerely involved. I had some really bad relationships with parents too. Some are just better than others.

Amy described her relationships with parents in a similar way and said:

It is tough to get parental involvement in that district. A lot of the reason, our parents, did not speak English, but not in every case. There just wasn’t a lot of parental involvement like you would see in other districts. You have events, like parent-teacher night, you have open house, all those type of events. We even had a fundraiser event with some activities outside just to bring parent in and the community together. However, parental involvement was very low.

Bob believed that parent-teacher relations need to be strong and said, “If you have the parents wanting to be involved, that makes your job so much easier.” Whitney explained that when she worked at OKCPS, parent-teacher relationships were difficult to develop because of low involvement. She said strong parental support could be significant not only to the child but the teacher and the school. Whitney recalled her experience in former school districts in Bryan, Florida, Flower Mound, Texas, and Louisville, Texas and said:

These districts got parents involved. That was a huge thing. Everywhere I went there was parents involved, even if it was math night, I mean, or just fun stuff to come and do. Having the parents volunteer is extremely helpful too. Like, they are in the library doing things...They gave teachers time...They put time into their faculty.

**Teacher-teacher relations.** Supportive relationships between fellow teachers is a vital element for teacher job satisfaction as it can foster affiliation, reduce stress, and can develop into a mentor-mentee relationship. When the interviewer asked the participants to describe the
relationships with their colleagues or fellow teachers, four out of the six participants described relations with their colleagues as positive. For example, Whitney said, “I worked with some great people. I had great relationships with co-workers.” However, Regina and Sara indicated that they experienced negative issues. Regina explained the feelings and build-up of tension between her colleagues often affected her perception of the job. While Sara indicated that in her school there was a broad layer of teacher favoritism and cliques among the staff, which was a source of dissatisfaction, frustration and anxiety for her and some of her colleagues.

**Teacher-principal relations.** Supportive relationships between a teacher and a principal can be equally or in some cases more important to teacher job satisfaction. A robust teacher-principal relationship can foster positive work environments that are indicative of teachers feeling less work-related stress and frustration as well as professional recognition and respect. Sara said, “I loved my old principal…He was a wonderful person. He was very kind. When we passed each other in the hallway, he would be friendly and ask about life.” Regina also said that she had a good relationship with her former principal and said:

I had an absolutely amazing principal for six years. His first year was my first year, and he took me and the other Teach for America teacher out to lunch and was like, ‘It is going to be an adjustment. We are going to do it.’ He always had our backs, absolutely always. I felt supported by my principal.

However, Bob, on the other hand, described his relationship with his principal less favorably. He stated:

Principals [frequently] go to meetings, the principals are out of the building for the entire day, which I think is ridiculous. I never understood that. If you needed them, they were
gone. You did not have anyone to go to as far as leadership. There was a lack of leadership.

Although Sara said she thought of her principal “as a wonderful person,” she explained that he had a significant problem with a lack of communication. She recalled:

He never responded to important emails that had to do with anything relates to actual work stuff. One time we had a staff meeting, and he asked everyone to leave a Post-it Note with one thing that they think needs changed at the school. He reported back to use, and he said without a doubt, it was communication...him not responding and other principals not responding. We all got hopeful that was going to change. Later it was all the same. Nothing changed, it was a lot of talk without action.

Amy suggested that she values a professional relationship with her principals. However, states that poor leadership and bad decision-making can quickly bruise a teacher-principal relationship. Amy said, for example:

When the students were not adhering to the dress code properly, therefore the principal told the students they lost ‘free dress Friday.’ However, the principal decided to punish teachers as well by taking away their Friday jeans day. We were lumped in with the student behavior. The principal’s actions brought us down to the level of students, and the students saw that…that caused the relationship between teacher and principal to be very us vs. them.

The interviewer recognized that participants who spoke favorably of their principal believed they were supported by their principal. Whereas, participants that had less than favorable remarks about their former principals believed there was a significant lack of teacher support coming from the principal’s office. As Valarie stated:
I spent two years trying to explain to principals that they don’t have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to make your teachers feel like you care about them. You are not bribing people. You are just acknowledging that you appreciate their sacrifice and that we are all in this together.

**Extrinsic Theme Two: Teachers are Grossly Underpaid: But Money is Not a Motivator**

In Oklahoma, the issue of low teacher pay has been a major headline in local media outlets. According to the CNBC (2017), at the time this study was conducted, Oklahoma ranked first in the United States as the state that paid teachers the lowest salaries. Lawmakers and teacher advocacy groups have argued that, if teachers were paid more, fewer teachers would leave the state and thus, the teacher shortage crisis would minimize (Hendericks, 2014; Martin, 2017; OSDE, 2017). When the researcher asked the participants if they believe they were compensated fairly, each of the six participants admitted that their salaries were indeed significantly low and they found it often financially challenging to make ends meet. Bob stated, “When I was in college, the starting teacher salary was about the same as it is today, $32,000 to $33,000 and I was in college in the mid-90’s. So, I do think a pay increase would help…Every penny counts.” Bob further stated that, while a raise would make OKCPS teachers happier, “Money is not everything.” He also pointed out that the OKCPS district also needed to address a host of other factors to increase teacher satisfaction. Sara, as a single mother, was particularly upset about teacher salaries in Oklahoma, however, and she said, “Things are getting more expensive and pay is not going up. It would be nice, even if the pay increase was just $5,000 or $10,000.” Regina, meanwhile, argued:
I can’t save money. My student loan repayments went up in the last year. I was trying to stay faithful to repaying that every month. But without any sort of raise…I didn’t really get much of a raise, maybe a few hundred dollars in salary over the last six years.

At the time of these interviews, the State of Oklahoma was losing hundreds of teachers to the State of Texas and other neighboring states that were paying teachers higher salaries. Sara responded, “I honestly thought about moving to Texas, I talked about it. If I got paid what they got in Texas…life would be so different.” Valarie said she had also thought about moving to Texas, but she was ambivalent: “Texas pays their teachers more, but there is some give and take, ya know? Just because you move out of state it doesn’t mean it is all going to be better.”

Whitney, when interviewed, had recently moved to OKCPS from a Texas school district. The researcher asked Whitney to describe how she felt when she received her first paycheck from OKCPS. Whitney replied:

I think it was about half of what I made in Texas. I left Texas with 23 years of experience, and I was earning approximately $57,000. And last year, I broke $40,000 at OKCPS. It was a significant difference. When I got to Oklahoma City, I could definitely tell they did not value teachers with experience.

Whitney also explained that she believed if school district’s like OKCPS paid their teachers more:

I think they would have better retention. Because you are losing teachers to Texas and these teachers are not even going to districts in Texas that are the highest paying districts. But, again, it is where you work that makes a difference. I am not sure more money would be enough to keep a teacher at a school as scary as North Lake (pseudonym) [in
OKCPS]. However, if you have great kids, great parental support, and then the money was good, oh yeah, your gonna stay.

Despite being severely underpaid, the researcher found it interesting that five out of six participants did not identify salary as a source of dissatisfaction while working for OKCPS. For most of the participants, teacher salary was only spoken about after the researcher queried if salary was a source of dissatisfaction. Valarie stated, “I didn’t go into teaching because I thought I was going to make a million dollars. I went into teaching because I wanted to change the world.” Amy provided a similar explanation, stating:

I don’t think most teachers go into the profession for the money. I took about a $7,000 a year pay cut to be a teacher because I felt that was my calling. That is not a de-motivator for me as far as salary and the lack of raises. I am not saying that to be an advocate for it. I agreed to the salary in a contract that I would be paid, and that is my job. I was there to do a job. My frustrations with OKCPS [were] never about salary. [OKCPS] has a big issue with student discipline, low morale, organizational climate, and no respect for teachers. Those are major issues. You can pay a teacher $60,000, and those issues will still burn down a teacher!

Regina agreed that low teacher pay was a source of dissatisfaction for her, but she explained, “It was not the main reason why I left OKCPS.” Sara, meanwhile, described how an increase in pay would affect her attitude:

It would be a lot easier to deal with some of the issues we have to deal with. It would just make working at Oklahoma City more tolerable. If nothing else changed but my pay, I would deal with it…But I still wouldn’t feel like a good teacher. I would not be okay with the inequalities and lack of respect for the staff.
Valarie, when queried about pay, was direct about how teachers are undervalued in general:

If this country celebrated educators left, and right…they could pay people minimum wage to be teachers. But in this country, we do not value educators. We value actors, celebrities, and athletes…It just blows my mind [because] we pay millions of dollars to a man to coach a football team here in this state, or we pay ridiculous amounts of money for someone to play a sport, but teachers, the people that impact our children’s lives for 12 or 13 years…society thinks they are just babysitters.

**Extrinsic Theme Three: Teachers are Dissatisfied with District Policies and the Administration**

Each of the six participants described dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Oklahoma City Public School district leaders as well as district policies. From the participant interviews, the interviewer found that teachers describe their experience as a teacher within the district as being alone, disrespected, and unrecognized. Specifically, teachers believed they are in neglect of much-needed support by school administrators, district administrators, state administrators, and state elected officials. When the interviewer asked the participants if they were satisfied with district-level policies and its’ administration, two topics were clearly important for the participants. Each of the six participants frequently spoke about student discipline policies and state-mandated assessments.

**Student discipline policy.** The research participants described OKCPS as having significant student behavior problems. During interviews with Amy and Whitney, the researcher noticed that the two participants spoke about being disappointed with how OKCPS school and district administrators have ineffectively managed student behavioral issues in the schools. The researcher could noticeably see how teachers were frustrated and dissatisfied with student
behavior issues that took place within their school and classrooms; therefore, he probed further and asked the participants to describe student behavior and how administrators manage such poor student behavior.

Amy said, “We have some really rough students that went to my school… I was cussed out, I had to stop fights. It felt like the administrators, the staff, or the district was not partnering or protecting the teachers enough.” Bob expressed that student behavioral issues are problematic and a major cause of teachers leaving the district, he said:

In OKCPS…they have issues. There is such high turnover, so you in return you get kids that have a lot of discipline issues…Oklahoma City is constantly getting new teachers from Teach for America, most have business degrees, and then they go through a teacher boot camp, where they teach about classroom management skills. The brand-new teachers get stuck trying to manage these kids. Then, once they get one or two years, they leave to go to another district.

Valarie said student behavior issues were a major issue in her school and her classroom. She said students would frequently get into fights and it was difficult to break it up. Valarie continued:

I tried to de-escalate the fights, tried to say, ‘Okay, we’re all going to be friends.’ But no, they just continued to exchange blows. I would say, ‘you’re going to the office.’ Then you have kids that talk back all the time, and I get frustrated, and I say, ‘Go to the principal!’ But the principals…they just kind of talk to them and they send them back. That may be all the principal does. But there are ways the principal can package that [talk] so that the teacher feels supported by their administrator and the kids feel…I don’t know if chastised is the right word…but they leave with an understanding that this is not appropriate behavior and will not be tolerated. Instead, principals are like, you didn’t hurt
yourself, you didn’t threaten to blow up the school, and you are not dealing drugs. Go back to class.

Regina echoed Valarie’s opinion about student discipline issues, when she said:

The behavior policy should be that students are to be accountable for what they did, we [should] suspend, we [should] expel. Rather, we have teachers crying and upset because a first grader harmed another student and just gets a talking-to and gets sent back to the classroom. We are thinking, the district just doesn’t want their numbers to…our principal, they don’t want the numbers to…they want the numbers to a look a certain way as far as whom we are reprimanding and when, and that is more important than the safety of the kids next to them.

Bob also mentioned the term ‘numbers’ when describing how principals manage discipline in his school. He said his principal did little to manage student behavior. Bob further stated:

Students would go down there, and he would just talk and tell the kid it will be okay. I think, at the time, the principal wanted the number of referrals sent to the district office to be below a certain number. So the principal would just kind of counsel the student and then send them back to the classroom after they’d been gone for, like, 20 minutes.

When the interviewer asked Whitney if student behavior was ever an issue for her and, if so, please describe situations where student behavior was unsatisfactory, she replied,

Oh, my God. Yes! Student behavior is an issue. That goes without saying…I had chair throwers. In the high schools definitely. I mean, it was like nothing is being done. You have kids smoking pot – we used to catch kids smoking pot in the bathroom. We find kids being inappropriate in the bathrooms. It was pretty bad. Students were attacking the teachers and each other. I know one instructional leader that was smacked by a little kid!
I mean, it is just really bad. I mean, to me, more than any school district I have worked in. That still goes on. I know one of the schools tried to bring in an assistant to work on student discipline issues, but it didn’t change. It didn’t change anything.

For Sara and Amy, the inconsistency and the lack of enforcement by the principals and the district when dealing with poor student behavior was both frustrating and unsatisfying as a teacher. Sara indicated:

When we have legitimate [behavioral] issues in the classrooms with certain students, teachers are kind of being undermined. I think it was for the school to protect themselves. But we had serious issues that were just being … [administrators] turning their back to them., so that our numbers looked better. But when it comes to classroom safety, I just felt like you have to do what is best for everyone in the classroom, no matter what. That was kind of frustrating. Being undermined as a professional. For example, if a student told the principal a different version of a story or just flat-out lied because the principal could not prove who was telling the truth, it was just warded that the student was a truth-teller. That was really frustrating for me. I am a person who is supposed to be a professional. I have all this education. I have been in school forever and for the principal to trust a 16-year old…whether they actually believed them or not, I don’t know. But just to be undermined constantly.

Amy said:

I felt a lot of dissatisfaction when I experienced disciplinary issues with students. I did my due diligence. I trusted enough to reach out. I did all the steps necessary. On multiple occasions, I took a lot of time dealing with these kind of students with the same issues. It really felt like there was push-back with how much disciplinary action the office was
willing to do. The (administrators) were inconsistent a lot of times with discipline and it
created a lot of problems in the classrooms… because they were not consistent with their
discipline. Students picked up on that. Their (students) consequences didn’t mean as
much to them. For example, students would say, ‘Whatever, I can sit in In-School
Suspension (ISS). I can do what I want. I can say what I want. I am just going to get a
day of ISS.’ It was really frustrating…Some of these students were very disrespectful…
When [administrators] are inconsistent, when they are weak, they say one thing, but do
another, it is soft, and doesn’t set a good tone for the school and students take advantage
of that. And there are some students that go to school to unfortunately, sell drugs. There
is very soft discipline on issues like that. It makes it tough to work in an environment like
that. Necessary actions were not taken as well as they should have been
taken…Administrators would celebrate the decrease in suspensions, when the problems
were not decreased. Administrators just stopped suspending students as much to get the
numbers down.

When the interviewer asked Amy how the administration’s actions on student discipline made
her feel as a teacher, Amy indicated,

Dissatisfied. I think there is a lot of expectation on the teacher to do everything, including
managing a discipline issue with the student. You are not allowed to say, ‘Please exit my
class’ or ‘Go see the principal.’ You are not allowed to do that because administrators
don’t trust that the student is actually going to the principal’s office. I get that. But I was
even chastised for asking [disruptive] students to step outside my classroom for moment
while I finished talking, and then I was going to go outside and talk to them. Instead, I
was chastised because I left them alone. But I did what I had to do. I had to remove them
from the class so that I could teach. Allow me as a teacher to do what I need to do. Trust me in the fact that I am not just kicking a kid out because I didn’t try all of the measures.

**State-mandated student assessments.** All six of the teachers described state-mandated testing as a particular source of dissatisfaction. According to the Oklahoma State Department of Education (2017), all students in grades 3 through 8 and in grade 10 are required to take state-mandated assessment tests on core curriculum topics such as language arts (grades 3-8, and 10), math (grades 3-8, and 10), science (grades 5-8, and 10), and social studies (grade 10). Teachers must prepare students for fourteen assessment tests issued during grades 3 through 8 and four assessment tests in grade 10 (OSDE, 2017). From each of the six interviews, this researcher found all of the teachers support some form of assessment testing to evaluate the success of each student. However, participant responses suggest the frequency of the assessment tests, the volume of information that student’s must learn is, all coupled with a limited time schedule is overwhelming for both the teacher as well as the student. Bob taught fourth grade, which focused on English language arts and math. Bob said that his administrators told him, “Quit teaching science and social studies. Just math and reading (language arts) only.” Bob described the instructions that he received from his school administrators as:

> A huge disservice to the students…[School administrators] just want you to teach the test…They are too interested in teaching the test and not about the quality of the whole education…It was all based on testing and then there is just way to much testing all the time. For example, you would give a benchmark test, and then based on the skills of the overall class they didn’t master, you would have to teach that and then test them just over that skill again. Then if they didn’t pass it, you must reteach it, and then test them again…To me, I just thought it was way too much. It was over-testing.
Sara described the state tests as a tremendous source of stress for teachers because, “If [students] did not pass it, they did not graduate. Testing was a huge deal.” Whitney said, “the testing is ridiculous.” Amy voiced similar sentiments about the state-mandated assessments, she said:

Administrators are focused on testing. There is such an emphasis on testing and scores. I was teaching a highly tested subject where they had an end of the year test. It was ridiculous. I had to rush through everything because they have a schedule, and our kids are not picking it up, and there is a lot of reading. But it does not matter, we have to do it anyway, because I don’t have the time to go back and reteach…we just don’t have the time. I hated that part because I don’t like to teach that way and it is a crappy way to learn as well. It takes the fun right out of it. It takes the fun out of learning. It takes the fun out of teaching. In large, this contributed to my dissatisfaction.

Extrinsic Theme Four: OKCPS Fosters a Non-Supportive Working Environment for Teachers

The administrators, teachers, supporting staff, and the policies that bind them all form not only a school district but an organization. If one or several aspects of an organization are not supportive or foster a positive work environment, job satisfaction can be compromised. When the researcher asked the participants to describe what it was like working for OKCPS, some of the participants used terminology such as negative, depressing, and sad to describe working in school houses across the OKCPS district.

Teachers across each demographic described low morale among OKCPS teachers. As the researcher probed further into the participant’s perceptions and experiences of working for the OKCPS district, the participants would commonly discuss workplace climate and morale issues when describing their former employer, OKCPS. Bob described the situation among his
colleagues as tense. He said, “In my school, teachers just seemed to be upset with each other all
the time. Then you would have the principal that would just kind of ignore it and kind of ignore
them.”

Whitney said:

I had some great relationships…but, there was a lot of dissatisfaction among teachers. It
was a negative place. I mean it was negative. Just the air around it. Among the teachers
and administrators, there is an underlying current of negativity. Morale is probably the
biggest thing.

Sara echoed Whitney sentiments and said. “Nobody really seems happy…low morale.

Each year it gets a little harder to stay motivated…It is just this feeling of no matter what I do I
am never going to win this battle.” Valarie described working for OKCPS as being in an
“abusive relationship” and says, “You get convinced that you cannot do any better than what you
are doing…You get indoctrinated into this negative mindset. I don’t know who or what is driving
that mentality, but I think it thrives inside the [OKCPS] district.

Valarie agrees with the notion that there is a low morale problem amongst Oklahoma
City teachers, however, she went a step further by indicating that the school climate is toxic.

Valarie believed that if:

Teachers feel supported by their administrators…if there is positive acknowledgement,
and it is ongoing, there will be a positive effect for principals, teachers, and for students.
If [administrators] would say something like, ‘Hey, you know, I saw that you have been
coming in every day 15 minutes early. Thank you for that’ it would be impactful. It is as
easy as that. But our district (OKCPS) for some reason thinks [recognition] has to be
grandiose. So they don’t do anything. Teachers feel their sacrifices are unnoticed and
they don’t feel like they are a family that is all pulling on the same rope. It is a very us versus them thing. It is teachers versus principals, principals versus the teachers, and principals versus the administration. The people that suffer the most are the kids.

Extrinsic Theme Five: Teachers Suggest that the State of Oklahoma has Failed Them

When each interview was drawing to a close, the researcher asked the participants if there were any additional factors that they wanted to discuss that influenced their job satisfaction as a public school teacher. The most common issue emerged from mid-career and later-career stage teachers who voiced dissatisfaction with the state government and described a shared belief that Oklahoma’s state elected officials care little about education. Whitney, for example, explained that when she moved to Oklahoma City and began teaching in the OKCPS district, “I didn’t feel as though the state (Oklahoma) held kids and education as a very important part of their values. They don’t value education.” Regina explained that when she goes to a store or a restaurant, she frequently uses teacher discount cards. According to Regina, the vendors did voice their support of her as teacher, telling her, “I wish you guys got paid what you are worth.” Regina said that she tells them to “try voting or get active” to help send a message expressing citizen concern for the state of education in the state. Valarie indicated that she was also frustrated about how the state of Oklahoma has neglected to raise teacher pay and provide better funding and resources to school districts like Oklahoma City:

In the State of Oklahoma, you see it all the time on the new that the state’s legislature is cutting funding to education. Then you have to explain to people why you still want to be a teacher. It is sad that you have to justify being in this profession.

Addressing the Research Questions
The overarching research question for this study is *What are the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that serve as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to remain or resign in a large public school district in Oklahoma City?* To sufficiently answer the primary question, the research developed sub-questions 1 through 5, which are addressed as follows:

**Research Sub-Question 1**

This section identifies the extrinsic (hygiene) factors that teachers, who had recently resigned from OKCPS, considered most important. The results of the intake questionnaire, as well as the in-depth interviews with six former OKCPS teachers, unearthed multiple hygiene or extrinsic factors that are considered influential toward teacher’s job satisfaction. During the interview, the researcher asked the participants to rank Herzberg’s eight hygiene factors as they contributed to their level of job satisfaction (See Figure 6), at 1.00 be the highest score, the participants revealed *district policy and administration* (Ranked 1.167) and *teacher salary and benefits* (ranked 1.833) as the two most important hygiene or extrinsic factors among the research participants. To increase trustworthiness regarding what hygiene factors are important to OKCPS teachers, the researcher examined the full excerpts extracted under categories labeled as organizational policy and administration and teacher salary and benefits from the coded interview transcripts. Among the 207 extracted excerpts that focused on the seven hygiene categories and discussed throughout the participant interviews, organizational policy and administration accounted for 106 extracted excerpts and teacher salary and benefits accounted for 56 extracted excerpts (See Appendix L). Given that organizational policy and administration is a broad area of discussion, the researcher examined the most discussed subtopic within this category, which was *teacher support issues*. Thus, when the results of the intake questionnaire, total excerpt counts, and field notes were triangulated, the qualitative data coincided substantially
that organizational policy and administration issues as well as teacher salary are major hygiene factors for teachers.

**Figure 6: Participants rank of hygiene factors**

OKCPS District teachers express not receiving adequate support. As discussed in Research Question 1, the research participants commonly used descriptors such as negativity, negative mindset, and low teacher morale to describe OKCPS teacher’s perception of job satisfaction. One of the dominant hygiene factors driving such descriptors was the participants’ consistently expressed belief that OKCPS was not supportive of its teachers.

When questioned about the administration’s support of its teaching staff, BOB indicated that there was “a lack of leadership at the administration building…You didn’t have anyone to ask questions.” Whitney replied that she had difficulty recalling any feeling of support from the administration while she was employed by OKCPS. Whitney said district administrators would ask teachers for their input, but “they talked a good talk and it was done…Nothing gets done. Nothing ever came of it.” Regina explained that she “felt like she was on an island a little bit…worried about my job performance, how I would be evaluated. Because it felt like I didn’t know what was required of me from one month to the next.” Regina also stated that
administrators neglected to connect well with their teachers indicating a one-way form of communication process, directed from the top of the hierarchy. Regina further commented, that although the administrators would ask teachers to complete surveys, such as surveys about professional development, “nothing really changed in the time that I was a teacher at OKCPS…I just had to find support myself.” Amy said the OKCPS district was not “partnering or protecting the teachers enough…there is a lack of appreciation.”

In the same vein, the research participants shared that they feel that they were not supported by their administration when it came to student behavior issues. Each of the six participants acknowledged administrators had made their job difficult as a result of the policy regarding student behavior and student discipline. The research participants suggested that the administration’s policy on how to manage such behavior had become dissatisfying. The participant interviews revealed that students were often verbally abusive to their teachers. More startling to the interviewer was when Valarie unveiled that students, as young as first graders, often engaged in physical altercations with other students and with teachers. The poor student behavior described by the participants moved beyond foul language and fighting, as some participants suggested that high school students would often meet in halls and bathrooms to participate in the selling of drug, gang activity, and sex.

Sara and Bob explained that teachers commonly tried to exhaust their classroom management skills before asking disruptive students to step outside the room or before sending students to the principal’s office. The participants told the interviewer that many teachers would send the students to the office as a way to remove the problem student from the classroom, so they could teach the lesson to kids willing to learn. Valarie stated that in OKCPS schools, “student behavior was becoming an issue because [teachers] couldn’t teach because they were
too busy spending the entire class time putting out little fires.” One time, Amy said that she moved two students to the hallway after they were disruptive, only later to be chastised herself by the principal for not keeping the students in the classroom. Whitney supported the notion that disorderly students should go see the principal for correction or discipline. However, the participants explained that, even though the principal’s office, by all accounts, should serve as a deterrent to disruptive or deviant students and a place where corrective measures could be employed the OKCPS principal’s office was “kind of a revolving door,” and that minimal if any, discipline measures were given to difficult students.

Bob indicated that, when he taught at an OKCPS elementary school, he sent disobedient students to the principal’s office. But he said he later found out, “they just sat with the secretary for 20 to 30 minutes, and that was it.” Regina recalled that, when one first-grader physically harmed another child, the misbehaving student was sent to the principal’s office and “just gets a talking to and gets sent back to the classroom.”

Amy told the interviewer that “the decision making on disciplinary actions on specific referrals is not necessarily the principal’s fault.” Sara indicated that principals stop short of disciplining students because of the backlash the OKCPS district had received over a 2016 civil rights suit, which claimed it had disproportionally disciplined minority students. According to Sara, the new district policy aimed to reduce student suspensions and expulsions. Nevertheless, the new district policy curbing certain student discipline had the participants feeling stressed, frustrated, and dissatisfied with their careers at OKCPS. Amy said, “We have some really rough students at our school…When you have a rough school and your principal takes a soft approach. It is not going to go over very well”. Sara said she believed the district should consider the safety of those in the classroom. Regina elaborated, stating:
Now, it is like, students will go to the principal, and they are told to color a page about how [what they did] is not okay. Then go back and say ‘sorry,’ then someone will talk to the parent. But the environment at home is what taught these kids that their behavior is okay and there isn’t a harsh consequence for that. It is telling kids that suffer that there are things you are just going to have to put up with this because people don’t get in trouble for those things.

Since the adoption of the new discipline policy at OKCPS, Whitney said that she believed that:

Principals are kind of getting talked to or reprimanded for [suspension] referrals. But it does not change. The behaviors are still happening. It comes down to teachers being dissatisfied. It is not fun teaching in a classroom where you don’t feel safe.

Amy, meanwhile, recalled a faculty meeting, when district administrators were discussing recent student suspension data. Amy said that “the administrators were celebrating that the number of suspensions had gone down. And all of us teachers that were in that meeting…looked at each other and said that should not be true. Because the behaviors are not getting better.” Amy continued, stating that the reduction in student suspensions “is about OKCPS not suspending as many students and making those numbers go down…That is creating a problem in OKCPS schools. It is affecting the climate in the school.”

**Teacher salary plays a significant role in the job satisfaction of educators.** In addition to administration and policy issues, participants indicated that salary plays a contributing role in the negative teacher climate and low morale impacting school in the OKCPS district. Based on the qualitative data and the intake questionnaire results, the findings suggest teachers considered their salary an important hygiene factor. Oklahoma’s State Superintendent of Education (2015), Joy Hofmeister stated, “Oklahoma teachers are woefully underpaid… a combination of low
teacher salary and declining job satisfaction is driving teachers out of the profession or to other states” (para 5). However, despite state officials being cognizant of low teacher salaries and the repercussions, teachers remained the lowest paid teachers in the United States (Hess, 2017).

Whitney stated that she was aware of colleagues that had to take on second jobs to make ends meet. Regina described her thoughts about her teacher salary as not only a source of dissatisfaction, but as source of anger. Sara identified with the feelings of low morale among her fellow teachers, and she said that “pay is probably a big part of it.” Sara stated that to help increase her salary, she went to graduate school and earned a master’s degree, but found out higher education and knowledge was not worth much in the eyes of the district. Sara said, “I got a thousand dollar raise for that, which is nothing when you spread that over 24 paychecks. It is embarrassing.”

All six participants said they experienced job dissatisfaction over their salary. Only one participant indicated that salary was the primary reason for their resignation. While, five of six participants indicated that salary in conjunction with other job-related factors, informed their decision to leave the district.

**Research Sub-Question 2**

This section identifies the intrinsic (motivation) factors that teachers, who recently resigned from OKCPS, considered most important. The results of the intake questionnaire, as well as the in-depth interviews with six former OKCPS teachers, unearthed multiple motivations or intrinsic factors that considered influential in how teachers perceived their job satisfaction. During the interview, the researcher asked the participants to rank Herzberg’s seven motivation factors as they contributed to their level of job satisfaction (See Figure 7), at 1.00 be the highest score, the participants revealed the three primary factors that emerged were achievement (ranked
1.667), recognition (ranked 1.667), and the work itself (ranked 2.667). To increase trustworthiness regarding which intrinsic factors were important to OKCPS teachers, the researcher examined the full excerpts extracted under categories labeled as organizational policy and administration and teacher salary and benefits. Among the 110 extracted excerpts focused on the seven motivation categories discussed throughout the participant interviews, achievement accounted for 36 extracted excerpts, recognition and respect accounted for 31 extracted excerpts, and the work itself accounted for 17 extracted excerpts (See Appendix L). Thus, when the results of the intake questionnaire, total excerpt counts and field notes, were triangulated, the qualitative data almost equally ranked achievement, recognition, and respect, as well as the work itself, as major sources of motivation for teachers.

Figure 7: Participants rank of motivation factors

OKCPS teachers find achievement as a significant source of motivation. The interviewer found that each research participant found job satisfaction or motivation when the students they were teaching achieved some form of academic growth or academic success. Whitney explained that her goal as a teacher was to make student minds grow, “that is why I do it.” When the interviewer asked why a sense of student achievement leads to job satisfaction, Bob said it was “gratifying,” while Amy indicated that when students achieved certain goals, she “makes an impact.” Regina explained that she was motivated when she really saw that she is
making an impact on her students. Similarly, Sara said she found it motivating when students achieved academic success as well, and she said, “it is the idea of making a difference…I connect with [students] on a deep level and they motivate me.”

**OKCPS teachers are void of professional recognition and respect.** All six of the participants indicated that they believed that they were not recognized or respected as professionals, and therefore this created an increase in job dissatisfaction. During the interview, participants described situations when administrators openly disrespected them. For example, Sara indicated that her principal yelled at her when a parent was present. Amy’s said she thought her principal felt compelled to punish teachers alongside the students for student dress code violations. Each of the six participants revealed that students often used foul language in the classroom and had even engaged in physical violence against teachers. Sara explained that administrators and students alike “don’t listen to us or respect us as professionals.” Valarie shook her head and said that “there is a pretty low view of educators.” Amy agreed, stating that “there is a lack of appreciation for teacher across the board.”

**OKCPS teachers identify the work itself as an important motivator.** Each of the six participants indicated that they found joy and satisfaction in the work that they did as teachers. All six participants suggested they that their journey toward becoming an educator began with a passion for the field or a life calling. When the interviewer asked the participants to describe “the work itself,” Bob shared that his motivation “is all about the kids…gratification….I love teaching it is always interesting.” Valarie, meanwhile, just shrugged her shoulders, smiled and said, “I love being a teacher.” Whitney indicated that she was motivated as a teacher when she witnessed her students “grow towards that goal.” Regina said, “Honestly, I have always had that passion [to teach] ...I want to keep working in that vein forever, hopefully.” During the
interview, Amy said she found teaching inspiring and that the work itself was about “wanting to make a difference.”

**Research Sub-Question Three**

This section identifies why teachers said they were motivated to leave the Oklahoma City Public School district. Herzberg and his colleagues (1959, 1993) argued that one’s job commitment is affirmatively influenced by job satisfaction. The in-depth interviews with six former OKCPS teachers revealed that these individuals resigned from the district because of one or multiple factors related to their job satisfaction.

**What motivated participants to resign from OKCPS?** When the interviewer inquired as to why Sara resigned from the OKCPS, she said, “So many things. We had a huge issue with overpopulation…we hear about this all the time on the news. We don’t have enough classrooms. Next, is student behavior issues. We have some legitimate [student behavior] issue in the classroom.” Sara ended by saying that, at OKCPS, “Nobody seems happy, low morale was an issue.”

A considerable reason behind Bob’s resignation was his frustration with the lack of resources and micromanaging within the OKCPS district. Bob said, “The lack of resources was tough being a Title 1 school district…They are always a step behind when it came to putting technology into a classroom.” Bob also complained about the top heaviness of the OKCPS hierarchy, indicating:

They have the superintendent, director of curriculum, director of elementary, director of high schools, and then…regional directors in charge of all those schools…There are much better ways to spend the money than paying all that money at the very top of the totem pole…Then there is the constant flow of [OKCPS administration] sending
someone to tell you how to do your job when I did not feel they really knew what they were talking about.

For Amy, the chief reasons for resigning from the OKCPS district centralized around a lack of teacher support and student behavioral issues. Amy said she decided to resign “when it felt like the administrators, the staff, and the district was not partnering or protecting the teachers enough…The support from the administrative staff is weak.” Amy then spoke about her frustration with student behavior and the district’s anemic response toward managing the situation. “I felt a lot of dissatisfaction with disciplinary issues…[Administrators] were inconsistent a lot of the times with discipline, which created a lot of problems in the classrooms…we have some really rough students that go to this school.”

When the interviewer asked Valarie what motivated her to resign from OKCPS, she replied:

The system is why I left…I loved being a teacher…I didn’t want to turn into one of those apathetic teachers…The problem is with the administration. There is a lot of problems at the upper administration level. The system is so corrupt, and just all the work trickles down to all the people at the bottom. But these people at the bottom have to do most of the work with the least amount of resources The people at the top are paid the most and I feel have the least responsibility. If you want to make a change [at OKCPS], you get kind of pushed to the side or there all this push back on you to just hush…I was frustrated.

Next, the interviewer asked Whitney, a 28-year veteran of the teaching profession, why she resigned from OKCPS, and she said, “For one, the pay. But, I also felt like at OKCPS district the kids and education were not part of their values, they didn’t value education.
Regina said her decision to resign from OKCPS was more about opportunity, trust, and being recognized for her professionalism. Regina explained that when she taught at OKCPS, she never felt that the district gave her a “feeling of trust” in her judgment. Regina’s said her current school district was providing her with a feeling of “I am trusted.” Regina clarified her response by saying that her new employer was giving her a great deal of freedom:

They allow you to decide how you are going to make this work for your students because you have met the families in person… and learned about what their child is like as a learner. Then I built, with the family, a plan for the school that is unique to them… It is about being trusted to provide high-quality learning.

Regina also said she found it motivating that her new employer…

…wanted to talk about my philosophy of education and what I care about when working with students…I absolutely believe in the necessity of a thriving public school system. But it is one of those things that there are families that exist right now that have children in the district right now that should not have to wait, the shouldn’t have to…well…wait years from now for it to be better. Their kids are in school right now and want that excellence offered to them and that choice. As much as it stinks, it is like I know now I am doing something. I am still a teacher. I am still impacting kids. But the way the [OKCPS] district was working, it just wasn’t sustainable for the kind of professional I am.

What motivated others (colleagues) to resign from OKCPS. To gain a broader understanding of the factors motivating teachers to resign from the OKCPS district, the interviewer asked the participants what motivated their colleagues to resign from the district. Bob explained that, when he spoke with his fellow teachers, “I would say a lot of them
[resigned] because classroom management issues. Oklahoma City has a lot of [discipline issues”
Bob also indicated that teacher salary was another motivator behind their resignation. Whitney explained that many of her colleagues resigned from the district because they believed administrators “didn’t care for the kids, they didn’t care about teachers.” Amy said that many of her colleagues felt they were motivated to resign because the “administrative staff was weak on discipline.” She also explained that a few of her colleagues would complain about “never getting a raise” and “a lack of appreciation.” Sara indicated that “people did not like the principal…It really stemmed from the lack of communication.” Sara also stated that her colleagues were stressed by the existence of cliques and principal favoritism: “A lot of people were targets of those cliques.” Valarie indicated that her colleagues were overburdened and dissatisfied with the school because it was overcrowded, and excessive student behavior issues persisted. Valarie continued, stating that “the things that they told me was that the school was incredibly overcrowded and the behavior issues are horrible. The police are there all the time. There are gang fights almost every day. It is really getting out of control.” Regina said that, when she was hanging out in the hallways with her fellow teachers, they would say:

On any given day, there is a lot of complaints…Some of it was just venting frustration. But I was not alone in feeling like, ‘if we get one more thing that we are just told to do for the sake of doing it, I am going to lose my mind.’ Everyone. I have always heard that as I have been in that building.

Regina also said that her colleagues resigned because of the student behavior issues and the district’s policy (or lack thereof) on student discipline.

**What motivated others (colleagues) to stay at OKCPS.** During a time that many teachers were resigning from the OKCPS district, the interviewer found it important to inquire
why some professionals were opting to stay with the district. Common motivations to stay with the district included comfort, the students, tenacity, and some being so close to retirement age. Bob said the teachers he was aware of stayed with OKCPS simply because many had been with the district for several years and, “it is about comfort level…and a fear of change.” Similarly, Whitney said she believed that teachers chose to stay with OKCPS because “Many of those teachers have been there forever… I think it was just become a part of who they are.” Valarie suggested that teachers choose to stay with the OKCPS because of the students, that “the kids make it hard to leave…there is such great need. You get so attached to your students.” From Amy’s perspective, some of her fellow teachers were tenacious. Amy said her colleagues stayed with OKCPS because, “Grit has a lot to do with it.” Regina indicated that teachers decided to stay with the district for similar reasons:

I had a couple of really sweet colleagues that have been there for 20 years. They were my shoulders to cry one. For a lot of them…they fear they can’t afford to [leave]…they have kids in college. Others say ‘I have always done this. This is what I know to do. What else would I do?’ But most of them…they got just a couple of years left to retirement…they are waiting to retire.

**Research Sub-Question Four**

This section discusses the relationship between job satisfaction and a teacher’s decision to resign from OKCPS district. In addition, this section describes how job satisfaction plays an influential role in a teacher’s decision to resign. During the in-depth interviews with six-former OKCPS teachers, some of the participants spoke specifically about job satisfaction and described how factors associated with job satisfaction played an influential role in their decision to resign and leave the district.
The interview with Valarie revealed that she was particularly frustrated with OKCPS’s organizational policy and its administration. Valarie described the Oklahoma City Public School district as “corrupt” and troubled with bureaucracy and leadership concerns “that trickles down to the people at the bottom.” Valarie recognized that each school had its individual problems; however, she said she perceived that such issues, due to poor administration, bad decision making, lack of student discipline, and the low morale amongst teachers, constituted part of a broader, more systemic problem within the district. Valarie stated that the motivating reason for her resignation was due to the “system.”

Whitney, at the time the researcher interviewed her, was a seasoned teacher that had worked in districts throughout Texas and Florida throughout her 28-year career. Whitney followed her husband to Oklahoma because of his career. Whitney indicated that, when she began working for OKCPS, she recognized a current of negativity and low morale. She said also believed that OKCPS was far behind any school district in which she had ever worked. Whitney stated that she was appointed as a department head sometime after her first year with OKCPS. When Whitney recalled asking teachers within her department if they needed anything, she indicated that the requests were alarmingly basic: “We need paper and pencils…supplies.” Whitney said she remembered thinking to herself, “Really? And then there are no textbooks to give out…Not that textbooks are a big thing these days, but supplies?” Whitney indicated that was a particular moment when she became dissatisfied with OKCPS: She said OKCPS “is spending millions to renovate a building for the admin…when there are so many more problems. OKCPS has their priorities way off.” Whitney explained that the decision-making of administrators compounded by a low teacher salary fueled her decision to leave the district.
Regina was particularly dissatisfied with OKCPS because of her dissatisfaction with her working conditions as a teacher, particularly because of the excessive poor student behavior and an anemic response by her administrator or principal staff regarding this issue. Like all six of the participants, Regina said she was frustrated that she was not respected and recognized as a professional. She also stated that administrators needed to start making serious changes to retain and recruit qualified teachers. Regina described the situation of OKCPS by using an analogy:

[It] feels like a massive bureaucratic ship with a tiny rudder…It takes so long to turn the ship…it really felt bogged down, and while the desire might be there to change things for teachers. I really feel like it will take years to get there.

Regina’s dissatisfaction with OKCPS weighted her decision to resign from the district.

Amy said was driven to leave the district for multiple reasons. During her time with OKCPS, she became disenchanted with the bureaucracy and organizational policies that shaped the OKCPS district. A leading cause of dissatisfactions for Amy was related to autonomy. Amy said, “When I have freedom…it is kinds of hands-off with administrative stuff, I love it.” However, Amy said she believed the OKCPS district did not have the students’ best interest in the right place, because they were more concerned with end-of-the-year student assessments than with the quality of education students received throughout the year. “I hated that part. I don’t like teaching that way and it is not a good way to learn.” For many employees, having a sense of professional autonomy can lead to feelings of fulfillment and satisfaction with their work. However, Bob, for example, also said he felt frustrated by the absences of autonomy, saying that “there wasn’t much freedom. There wasn’t much of a chance for individualized education.” Amy also indicated that much of her dissatisfaction with her job as a teacher centered on addressing excessive poor student behavior and the way the principal was dealing with the issue. For Amy
the lack of consistent and active discipline was just another example of how administrators, from her observations, showed no respect for teachers.

**The Central Research Question**

The overarching research question for this study is *What are the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that serve as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to remain or resign in a large public school district in Oklahoma City?*

Based on the findings and the answers of Sub-questions 1 through 4, the answer to the central research question is as follows:

The intrinsic (motivation) factors that serve as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to remain or resign in a large public school district in Oklahoma City is:

(A) The motivation they receive in forms of recognition and respect from district and school administrators.

(B) The responsibility or workload they are given, and if the responsibility is motivating or stress inducing.

(C) The motivation they receive from the academic success of their students.

(D) The motivation they feel from working as a teacher or the work itself.

The extrinsic (hygiene) factors that serve as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to remain or resign in a large public school district in Oklahoma City is:

(A) The strength and effectiveness of the interpersonal communications that exists with parents, colleagues, and administrator.

(B) Salary and wages.

(C) Policy making and leadership.

(D) The culture of the organization and if it is supportive of teachers.
(E) The leadership of elected officials

Discrepant Cases and Non-Conforming Data

After the data were analyzed and findings presented, the researcher examined the data and findings for discrepant cases. Meriam (2002) advised qualitative case study researchers to “purposefully seek cases that might disconfirm or challenge your expectations or emerging findings” (p. 27). As there were no expectations, the researcher looked for themes that did not align. The researcher found no disconfirming data or challenges in the findings. However, had he observed them, full disclosure would have ensued.

Summary

The purpose of this descriptive, single case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, described their experience of job satisfaction. This chapter presented the profiles of six former Oklahoma City Public School teachers who participated in this descriptive case study. This chapter presented the results of in-depth interviews consisting of semi-structured questioning. All interviews were transcribed and coded. The coding process permitted multiple themes to emerge. In the analysis of the codes and themes, the researcher identified patterns and shared experiences among the teachers. The central research question produced seven themes: (a) teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect; (b) teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility; (c) teachers’ great achievement is finding success in their students; (d) OKCPS foster a non-supportive working environment for teachers; and (e) teachers believe the State of Oklahoma has failed them. The results of Sub-Question 1 revealed two important extrinsic factors for teachers working within the Oklahoma City Public School District: (a) OKCPS district policy on student discipline is a considerable source of teacher dissatisfaction and (b) low teacher pay plays a significant role in teacher dissatisfaction with their
jobs. Sub-Question 2 revealed three important intrinsic factors for teachers working within the Oklahoma City Public School District: (a) teachers find achievement as significant source of motivation; (b) teachers are void of professional recognition and respect; and (c) teachers identify the work itself as an important motivator. The results emerging from Sub-Question 3 revealed that the motivating factors behind teachers resigning from OKCPS district included poor workplace conditions created by excessive student behavior issues, which according to the participants, were exacerbated by: (a) OKCPS district policy on student discipline; (b) OKCPS leadership’s decision making that created deficiency of resources for students and teachers; (c) the absence of recognition, respect, and support by the administrators; (d) no autonomy or freedom; and (e) low teacher pay. The results that emerged from Sub-Question 4 conveyed that the participant’s job satisfaction, or the lack thereof, did, in fact, relate to their decision to resign from the Oklahoma City Public School district.

While these emerging themes and patterns will be discussed further in Chapter 5, the results and findings of Chapter 4 demonstrate that the participants experienced minimal sources of intrinsic motivation factors while working for the OKCPS district. Furthermore, participants experienced minimal sources of extrinsic factors while with the district. Herzberg et al. (1959, 1963) posited that, when motivation factors are in place or present, employers can anticipate high job satisfaction and high job commitment. However, when motivation factors are not in place or absent, employers can anticipate low job satisfaction and low job commitment. In the same vein, when hygiene or extrinsic factors are in place or present, employers can prevent dissatisfaction. However, if hygiene factors are not in place or absent, employers can anticipate general job dissatisfaction. In the case of each participant, several extrinsic and extrinsic factors were
absent, which fostered high levels of job dissatisfaction and motivated their decisions to resign from the district.
Chapter Five: Conclusion and Implications

Revisiting the Problem of Practice

As noted in Chapter 1, Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS) is a district trying to recruit and retain quality educators. However, OKCPS is hemorrhaging teachers at an alarming rate. This trend has many classrooms without teachers, which has forced OKCPS to hire less than qualified individuals via emergency certification. The problem of practice prompting this study is the decrease of job satisfaction among public school teachers who have recently resigned from a large urban school district in Oklahoma City. In particular, the intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. The absence of understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors impacting teachers within the Oklahoma public schools makes it difficult for school district administrators and other policymakers to develop effective teacher recruitment and teacher retention strategies. During a time when Oklahoma’s school districts are facing a teacher shortage crisis, this situation is particularly problematic.

Revisiting the Purpose of the Study and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to describe the natural phenomena of the case (teacher attrition, retention, and recruitment issues) and to provide a clear picture of what teachers are experiencing (job satisfaction/job dissatisfaction). Specifically, the purpose of this descriptive, single case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, described their experience of job satisfaction.

To achieve the purpose of this descriptive case study, six former OKCPS teachers completed a questionnaire and participated in semi-structured interviews. The interviews were intended to provide the participants the opportunity to address questions regarding job satisfaction while working for OKCPS. Specifically, the interviews focused on motivation and
hygiene factors. Data were organized and then analyzed applying a systematic inductive process of data analysis. The qualitative responses resulted in common themes and patterns that addressed the research questions. As a reminder, the researcher questions guiding this case study were:

   **Central question.** How do teachers, who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction?

   **Sub-question 1.** What extrinsic (hygiene) factors do teachers identify as important?

   **Sub-question 2.** What intrinsic (motivation) factors do teachers identify as important?

   **Sub-question 3.** Why are teachers motivated to leave as a teacher in the school district?

   **Sub-question 4.** Does the job satisfaction of teachers related to their decision to resign from the school district? If so, how does a teacher’s job satisfaction influence a teacher to resign from the district?

**Review of the Theoretical Framework**

The case study employed Herzberg’s (1959, 1993) two-factor theory of motivation framework to help inquire into the problem of practice. Herzberg argues that human needs, within the context of work, are divided into two independent categories – motivation (intrinsic needs) and hygienes (extrinsic needs). Herzberg found no real correlation between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction as motivators and hygienes are two different stimuli. Therefore, Herzberg concluded that the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction. It is important to understand that the absence of hygiene factors may demotivate employees, but by themselves, the presence of hygiene factors cannot foster lasting motivation. Employers should be aware that in order to create an optimum working
environment for their employees, hygiene factors or demotivators must be identified and removed. Next, motivators must be improved, augmented, or kept in place so to create work condition prime for job satisfaction. Employers should not assume that the removal of hygiene factor(s), such as giving a salary increase, will increase job satisfaction. By forming a work environment where employees are highly motivated and have little or no complaints results in a workplace where employees experience high motivation and high hygiene.

Two-factor theory was used to help guide the researcher develop interview questions that consider work experiences, specifically variables that foster job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Two-factor theory was used to guide the coding process, including qualitative data analysis. The theoretical framework helped to explain why a participant experienced job satisfaction or job dissatisfaction and if strong job commitment exists.

As this dissertation comes to a close, this chapter will synthesize the research findings outlined in chapter four. Also, this chapter will discuss how the research findings relate to major ideas from the literature and the theoretical framework guiding this study. Doing so permits a greater understanding of the causes that contribute to the participants’ job satisfaction and teacher retention in the Oklahoma City Public Schools district. Further, this chapter will underscore the implications for practice and make suggestions for future research, and discuss the limitations of the study. Finally, this chapter will conclude with a personal reflection.

Summary of Findings Related to Teacher Job Satisfaction

This study investigated the job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction of former teachers that worked for Oklahoma City Public Schools. The researcher conducted a qualitative case study to research the overarching question: How do teachers, who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools, describe intrinsic and extrinsic variables that influence job satisfaction and job
dissatisfaction? In order to address the central research question, each of the six teachers completed a questionnaire and participated in a semi-structured interview. Questionnaire responses and qualitative data were utilized during the analyzing and coding of data. Through the qualitative process, the researcher was able to answer the research questions from the emerging themes. Constructed from the data collected in the participant interviews nine key themes emerged (Figure 8).

Figure 8 Key Findings

**Interpretation of Thematic Findings**

As discussed above, the data from this study were analyzed using a systematic process that produced two categories and nine emerging themes. The first category, hygiene factors, had four emerging themes: (a) teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect, (b) teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility, (c) teachers’ greatest achievement is finding success in their students, and (d) teachers find motivation in the work itself. The second category, motivation factors, had five emerging themes: (a) teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication, (b) teachers are grossly underpaid; but money is not a motivator, (c) teachers are dissatisfied over district policies, (d) Oklahoma City Public Schools foster a non-
supportive working environment for teachers, and (e) teachers believe the State of Oklahoma has failed them. The following section will interpret these findings based on the study’s categories.

**Motivation Factors.**

*Teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect.* The six participants shared common beliefs that while at work, administrators as well as students routinely disrespect them and fail to recognize them as professionals. Each of the six teachers participating in this study had earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree. One participant was in the process of earning her doctorate. Despite their academic achievements and skills from career experience, the participants found it frustrating that school principals and district leaders held such a low opinion of their teachers. The participants were asked to describe how school officials demonstrated disrespect and a lack of professional recognition. One participant shared an experience where her school principal openly belittled her in front of her peers. A second participant explained that his school principal made him feel like a glorified babysitter. Meanwhile, a third participant shared a stressful experience that involved a parent, the principal, and herself. The teacher explained that she refused to break testing protocol despite calls to do so by the parent and the principal. She recalled that as the principal contradicted her professional opinion, “the principal, in front of the parent, in front of the other people in the room, starts to yell at me, screaming at me.” This participant said this caused her to feel embarrassed, disrespected, and emotionally shaken.

The participants acknowledged that not all principals in the district lack professionalism or good leadership. However, the participants held a common belief that as a teacher, school and district leaders often discount or ignore their ideas, opinions, and concerns. Some participants suggested that despite their experience and knowledge, that had no voice in the district.
Teachers are overwhelmed with additional responsibility. When the researcher asked the participants to describe their responsibilities as a teacher working for OKCPS, each shared a common attitude of burnout and stress. It was during this line of interview questions that the researcher observed visible aggravation in the face of the participants. For each of the participants, frustration grew from not having enough individualized time for instruction for the students. During the interview, participants expressed they felt stress and dissatisfaction because of the bureaucracy within OKCPS. For example, Regina stated there were copious amounts of unnecessary or redundant paperwork that teachers must deal with when working for OKCPS. She further indicated the teachers sometimes lost up to two planning periods a week due to mandatory meetings that could have otherwise been communicated through an email or memo. Valerie echoed Regina’s sentiments but added that some teachers are forced to work from home, so to create more instruction time during the school day.

For some participants, their source of frustration and feeling overwhelmed were related to the needs of their students. Bob said teacher burnout and stress is a real issue with teachers because teachers in this district are not just figures standing next to a chalkboard, he said rather, “I was a father figure. A counselor. I was a parent sometimes teaching them right from wrong.” One participant said that a common reason for teacher burnout is due to student apathy. She indicated, “they [students] do not want to do anything…I don’t know how to fix this. I don’t know how to change this…We cannot get anything out of them.”

Teachers’ greatest achievement is finding success in their students. When the researcher asked the participants what motivated them as a teacher, each shared that it was a drive to achieve academic success in his or her students. For one participant, she admitted that her dream of changing the world one student at a time might be a little romanticized.
Nevertheless, she was driven by the challenge of guiding her students toward academic
achievement. For another participant, she was motivated because he knew some of her students
suffered difficult disadvantages, and she said “when her students grasp the lesson and understand
her teaching…I know I helped them find their way.”

*Teachers find motivation in the work itself.* It was clear throughout the interviews that
the participants enjoyed teaching. Each of the six participants indicated that their inherent joy of
being an educator gave them a great source of motivation and satisfaction. For most of the
participants, teaching was a life-long dream. One participant explained that she felt it was a
calling for her to be a teacher, she “It is a call to put good into the world.” Amy stated she took a
$7,000 a year pay cut to be a teacher because she felt a calling to be a teacher. Another
participant indicated that teaching is a passion and that she is motivated by witnessing her
students find success. Perhaps the most significant moment for the researcher, was during the
interview when one participant spoke with deep emotion and said, as a teacher, “I want to make
them believe that they can do more than they think they can, and are more capable of it.”

*Hygiene Factors.*

*Teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication.* Each of
the six participants stated during the interview that interpersonal communication with student’s
parents, their principals, and their colleagues played an instrumental role in their career success
as well as their overall job satisfaction. However, participants explained that in some cases,
interpersonal communications could be challenging.

During the interview, the researcher learned that teachers value the relationships with the
student’s parent(s). The participants indicated that parents were an active partner in guiding their
child toward success. One participant said that parents serve as a support system for their child.
Another participant discovered that when parents are involved with their children’s schooling, the parents become invested in their child’s education. For other participants, parents were described as being excellent volunteers, teacher assistants, and overall relief for teachers. Unfortunately, the six participants stated that despite being enthusiastic about developing a teacher-parent relationship, very few parents in the district engage with them. One participant stated, “there just wasn’t a lot of parental involvement like you would see in other districts.”

A teacher can also find support by developing interpersonal relationships with their colleagues at work. For four out of the six participants, interpersonal relationships with their colleagues at work were a positive and satisfying experience. One participant explained that she had a great relationship with her co-workers. However, two of the participants described interpersonal relations at work as negative. For example, one described feelings of tension, while another participant said she was often dissatisfied with her relationships at work because of teacher favoritism and social cliques among the staff.

Perhaps the greatest relationship a teacher can build upon is with his or her principal. Two of the participants describe a positive relationship with their school principal. Regina recalled how she always felt supported by her principal. However, most of the participants describe their relationship with their principals as negative due to poor communication habits and lack of leadership skills. For example, Sara explained that although her relationship was positive with her principal, she indicated that he had a significant problem with a lack of communication. For some of the participants, their relationship with the principal suffered due to poor leadership. Bob indicated that his principal was never in the building. He said, “the principals are out of the building the entire day…there was a lack of leadership.” Amy recalled when her principal grew upset that students were not following the dress code properly. Instead
of addressing the issue with the students, the principal punished students as well as the teachers by taking away “free dress Friday” for the students and “Jeans Day” for the teachers. For Amy, the combination of poor leadership and bad decision-making forced her teacher-principal relationship to deteriorate.

**Teachers are grossly underpaid; but money is not a motivator.** Oklahoma’s teacher pay has been the subject of must discussion, as the state ranks last in the country regarding average teacher pay (CNBC, 2017). Each of the participants expressed dissatisfaction with their teacher salary, in fact, most find it financially trying to make ends meet. Bob stated that when he was in college in the mid-1990’s, the starting salary for a teacher was about $32,000 to $33,000 per year. In 2017, the salary has not changed much. Sara explained that it costs more each year to live. However, teacher salaries are not rising. Regina found her salary is disappointingly low, which makes it difficult for her to pay back her students loans. Whitney experienced a $17,000 per year deduction in pay after she moved from Texas to Oklahoma City. Whitney said, “she could tell that OKCPS did not value teachers with experience.”

Despite the participant’s dissatisfaction with their teacher salary, five of the six participants did not identify salary as a leading source of dissatisfaction. Salary could be low on their list of job dissatisfaction because of their inherent motivation for teaching. Valerie explains, “I didn’t go into teaching because I thought I was going to make a million dollars, I went into teaching because I wanted to change the world.” Similarly, Amy stated that salary is not a motivator, “I don’t think most teachers go into the profession for the money...My frustration with OKCPS [was] never about salary. OKCPS has a huge problem with student discipline, low morale, organizational climate, and no respect for teachers. Those are major
issues.” Regina agreed that low teacher pay is a source of dissatisfaction, but, “it was not the main reason I left OKCPS.”

**Teachers are dissatisfied over district policies.** During the participant interviews, the researcher learned that the participants experienced job dissatisfaction with OKCPS regarding its district policies. Specifically, the district’s policy regarding student discipline and the district’s policy on mandated student assessments.

A common thread across each of the participant interviews is the participant’s dissatisfaction regarding the district’s policy on student discipline. Some of the participants became visibly frustrated when discussing the topic of student behavior. Whitney said, “student behavior in OKCPS is an issue…it is like nothing is being done [to control it].” The participants conveyed that OKCPS classrooms commonly experience unruly student behavior, student outbursts, student-teacher confrontations, and other forms of inappropriate student behavior. The teachers suggested that after they attempted to practice classroom management and it failed, they would send the disobedient students to the principal’s office. However, the participants each expressed frustration with how their principals handled such student behavior. Valarie said, “the principals…they just kind of talk to them, and they send them back… principals are like, you didn’t hurt yourself, you didn’t threaten to blow up the school, and you are not dealing drugs. Go back to class.” She continued by saying that it is frustrating that principals are not supporting the teachers and delivering a message to these students that poor and inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. Regina had a similar opinion of the district’s handling of student’s exhibiting disobedient behavior. She said, “students should be held accountable for what they did, we should suspend, and we should expel. Rather we have teachers crying and upset.” Amy believed principals were weak on holding students accountable. She said, [principals] say one thing, but
do another, it is soft, and it doesn’t set a good tone. It makes it difficult to work in an
environment like that.” Bob agreed that principals and administrators are doing little to control
the student discipline issue and said, “principals want the number of [suspension] referrals sent
to the district office to be below a certain number. So the principal would just counsel the student
and send them back.” Amy further explained that the OKCPS district has “some really rough
students.”

The second area of frustration among the participants was their dissatisfaction regarding
state-mandated testing. Particularly, OKCPS teachers have grown frustrated by the amount of
time it takes to prepare for state-mandated assessments and the mass of valuable time that state-
mandated assessments consume from their lesson plans. Moreover, teachers suggest that
administrators place such an emphasis on assessment testing and not quality teaching. All six
participants expressed dissatisfaction regarding state-mandated assessment exams.

From the participant interviews, the researcher learned that the frequency of the
assessment tests, the volume of information that students must learn, all coupled with a limited
schedule, is overwhelming for both the teacher and student. Bob said that state-mandated
assessments are, “a huge disservice to the students…[administrators] are too interested in
[teachers] teaching the test and not about the quality of the whole education.” Amy agreed, and
said, “administrators are focused on testing.”

**OKCPS foster a non-supportive working environment for teachers.** Throughout the
interview process, participants would describe OKCPS as a workplace that is negative,
depressing, toxic, and sad. The participants indicated that low morale was a common feeling
among OKCPS teachers. When Whitney described her school, she said, “there was a lot of
dissatisfaction among teachers. It was a negative place. I mean it was negative. Just the air
around it…there was an underlying current of negativity.” Sara said in her school, “nobody seems happy…low morale. It is just this feeling that no matter what I do I am never going to win this battle. One participant defined her time with OKCPS as an “abusive relationship.” After the participant interviews, the researcher surmised that the absence of key motivation and hygiene factors likely contribute to the low morale experienced by teachers in OKCPS.

_Teachers believe the State of Oklahoma has failed them._ When the researcher asked each participant if they had anything they would like add to help inform this study, teachers frequently voiced dissatisfaction with the state government and its elected officials. Many of the participants suggested that the state’s elected officials care little about education and its educators. Valarie said, “in the State of Oklahoma, you see it all the time on the news that the state legislature is cutting funding to education.” She continued by saying that she grows frustrated when she has to explain why she still wants to be a teacher. She closed by saying, It is sad that you have to justify being in this profession.”

**Summary**

The participants represented in this study described in detail the factors that foster satisfaction and dissatisfaction when they were employed at OKCPS. From a motivation perspective, the teachers indicate the key factors that motivate them at OKCPS was the drive to achieve success in their students and the work itself of being a teacher. However, the participants explained that when working for OKCPS, they were dissatisfied with responsibility and school administrators neglected to provide much-needed recognition and respect that fostered much needed motivation. From a hygiene perspective, the research participants describe OKCPS as a workplace absent of key variables that prevent job dissatisfaction, such as interpersonal relationships and organizational communication, salary, and issues related
organizational policy and administration. As a result, this researcher concluded that OKCPS teachers were not adequately satisfied, which ultimately impacted their decision to resign from the district.

**Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework**

This study was based on Herzberg et al.’s two-factor theory of motivation (1959, 1966), which for nearly six decades, remains a relevant theoretical model that focuses on determining the job-related variables in work environments that foster satisfaction (motivation) or dissatisfaction (hygiene). As a reminder, hygiene factors are referred to as such because these are factors that can be avoided or prevented. When hygiene factors are high, job satisfaction is high. However, when hygiene factors are low or not present, employees are dissatisfied. Figure 9 reveals each of the nine emerging themes represented under each category. Furthermore, Figure 9 depicts the theoretical connection to the two-factor theory framework.

**Figure 9**

*Key Themes and Theoretical Connections*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation (Intrinsic) Factors</th>
<th>Theoretical Connection to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect</td>
<td>Recognition and Respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers greatest achievement is finding success in their students</td>
<td>Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers find motivation in the work itself</td>
<td>The Work Itself</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hygiene (Extrinsic) Factors</th>
<th>Theoretical Connection to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication</td>
<td>Interpersonal Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are grossly underpaid: But money is not a motivator</td>
<td>Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are dissatisfied over district policies</td>
<td>Organizational Policy &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City Public Schools foster a non-supportive working environment for teachers</td>
<td>Organizational Policy &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers suggest the State of Oklahoma has failed them</td>
<td>Organizational Policy &amp; Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Motivation factors.

Teachers are deprived of professional recognition and respect. As discussed above, the participants of this study have expressed that they are dissatisfied with OKCPS school principals and district leaders because they believe they do not respect and receive little recognition for their work as teachers and as professionals. Herzberg (1959, 1966, 1993) asserts that there are several ways that recognition can be given at work. Giving an employee recognition can derive from anyone, can be positive or negative, and can be delivered in the form a notice, acknowledgment, praise, and compensation, such as a bonus or a raise (Herzberg, 1959). Consequently, Herzberg (1959, 1966, 1993) maintains that employees may feel a sense of job satisfaction from such acknowledgment. However, the participants in this study describe their experience at OKCPS as being void of such recognition. Therefore, in the case of the participants, Herzberg’s two-factor theory would posit that school leadership made little to no effort to notice or praise their teaching staff. As a result of OKCPS leadership neglecting to put into place efforts to notice, praise, and recognize the work of their teachers, job satisfaction has not been maintained.

Teachers are overwhelmed with responsibility. According to Herzberg (1959, 1966, 1993), when workers experience a lack of responsibility or a diminished role in the organization, dissatisfaction may settle into the mind of the worker. Also, when employers assign additional responsibility to workers, the employee gain a sense of satisfaction because he or she perceives the employer as having trust in their capabilities (Herzberg, 1959, 1966, 1993). In the traditional sense of two-factor theory, responsibility is a motivational factor. However, the participants describe being dissatisfied because they are overwhelmed by their work responsibilities, and as a result, they indicate that do not have sufficient time to perform their job. The participants
suggest too many schools and district meetings, district bureaucracy, and the high needs of their students all contribute to an excessive amount of responsibility. Although responsibility is considered a motivator within the two-factor framework, the participants find that the responsibility handed to them to be a source of dissatisfaction. Herzberg (1965) maintains that job satisfaction is determined by the feelings that manifest within the individual. Further, Herzberg (1959, 1966, 1993) finds that the opposite of job satisfaction is no job satisfaction. Considering the beliefs and feelings expressed by the participants in this study and theoretical framework, the nature of the work for OKCPS teachers can be overwhelming, thus permitting feelings of stress and burnout, which equates to job dissatisfaction.

**Teachers’ greatest achievement is finding success in their students.** Throughout the study, the participants described their greatest motivation was helping their students achieve. As a result, the participants believe when their students find success, they also experience achievement. Herzberg (1993) suggests that such feelings of achievement stem from “the successful completion of a job” (p. 59). He further notes that achievement is the opposite of failure (Herzberg, 1959). Therefore, based on two-factor theory, teachers can experience job satisfaction as a result of developing feelings of achievement when their students reach academic success.

**Teachers find motivation in the work itself.** Herzberg (1959) asserts that civil servants, including those who are members of the police force, fire brigades, military, and teachers typically have an intrinsic interest in the tasks that they are assigned to perform. According to two-factor theory, the work itself is about doing a job or tasks of the job for the sake of doing something good (Herzberg, 1959). The researcher found Herzberg’s notion of the work itself to be true when it came to the research participants, as each teacher explained that their path to
becoming a teacher was the need to do good or they received a spiritual calling to become a teacher. Herzberg (1959) warns that although workers, such as teachers, may be driven by an intrinsic interest, employers should be careful to avoid allowing such workers to experience boredom, stress, or burnout because they risk maintaining job satisfaction. Each of the research participants is motivated by the work itself. OKCPS can likely assume that many other teachers within their district have an equal intrinsic interest in teaching. However, if motivation factors and hygiene factors are not in place or adequate, OKCPS can anticipate the risk of losing these teachers as well.

**Hygiene Factors.**

*Teachers value interpersonal relationships and organizational communication.*

Herzberg (1959, 1993) found that interpersonal relationships and organizational communication play significant roles in the job satisfaction of workers because good relations, teamwork, and group cohesiveness are essential components for a conducive working environment. Strong relationships further foster a sense of belongingness, spark innovation, and increase efficiency and performance (Herzberg, 1959, 1993). However, Herzberg (1959) further found that negative effects can arise when interpersonal relations are fractured, non-productive, or non-existent. Key interpersonal relationships for teachers are their superiors, colleagues (peers), and parents. Although strong relationships are healthy for schools and school districts, the participant’s interviews indicate that (a) teacher’s interpersonal relationships with OKCPS principals are fractured and/or non-productive, (b) teacher’s interpersonal relationships with their colleagues is predominately healthy with the exception of some localized cases, and (c) teacher’s interpersonal relationships with their student’s parents are relatively non-existent and thus, non-productive.
Based on the findings of this study and the tenets of the framework, interpersonal relations can be identified as a source of dissatisfaction for OKCPS teachers.

**Teachers are grossly underpaid; but money is not a motivator.** As discussed in Chapter 1 and above, Oklahoma’s teacher salary was the lowest in the nation. Herzberg (1993) indicates that salary “involves wage or a salary increase, or an unfilled expectation of a salary increased” (p. 46). Due to Oklahoma’s low teacher pay, many of the participants describe their personal financial situation as unstable, living day to day, and being unable to save money. As a result, OKCPS teachers are dissatisfied with their salary. Nonetheless, during the participant interviews, the researcher learned that while OKCPS teachers are dissatisfied with their annual salaries, compensation alone is not why they resigned from the district. Rather, the participants pointed to many of the hygiene and motivation factors not in place at OKCPS as justification for their departure from the district.

Two-factor theory categorizes salary and compensation as a hygiene factor. Herzberg (1993) asserts that while an increase in pay or a bonus may summon motivation in workers, he found that compensation provides only temporary job satisfaction. Herzberg (1993) suggests that once an employee receives a pay increase, employees will quickly adapt to a new reality until they realize the pay increase was not enough or they perceive the pay increase as being not equitable or fair. Considering OKCPS teachers have not received a sizeable pay increase in over 20 years, the feelings of dissatisfaction among OKCPS is warranted. However, OKCPS administrators as well the state’s elected officials should be cognizant that a pay increases alone will not solve the teacher retention issues impacting the district.

**Teachers are dissatisfied over district policies.** According to Herzberg (1993), company policy and administration pertains to organizational policies that have an impact on work
relations within the organization. In particular, those policies that are adequate or inadequate or harmful or beneficial to workers (Herzberg, 1993). The participants describe two key OKCPS policy issues that foster job dissatisfaction: (a) student discipline and (b) state-mandated assessments. During the interviews, participants were visibly stressed when discussing the student behavior issues that OKCPS teachers encounter on a regular basis. Participants suggest OKCPS student discipline policies are ineffective and creating excessive stress on teachers. Furthermore, the participants described OKCPS policy mandating assessment exams are excessive, ineffective, and time-consuming. Policy implications such as OKCPS’ policy on student discipline or student assessments have played a contributing role in the job dissatisfaction of teachers.

**OKCPS fosters a non-supportive working environment for teachers.** According to two-factor theory, organizational issues such as workplace climate and organizational culture were hygiene factors, specifically an administrative factor (Herzberg, 1993). Throughout the interview process, the researcher learned that the participants held a common belief that OKCPS fostered a non-supportive working environment for its teachers. This notion was prompted by the participant’s description of their workplace experience and perspectives. Participants explained that OKCPS had cultivated low morale among teachers as well as a toxic environment due to several motivation and hygiene factors not in place. Such workplace conditions are a result of poor administrative leadership at the school or the district level (Herzberg, 1993). Herzberg (1993) asserts that such administrative inadequacies can be harmful to the organization.

**Teachers believe the State of Oklahoma has failed them.** The participants have expressed their disbelief and frustration with Oklahoma’s elected officials. From the state legislature routinely cutting funding from education coffers or the legislatures inability to give
pay increases to teachers, these failed policies, orchestrated by the state’s elected officials, have teachers convinced that the State of Oklahoma had failed them. Participants hold the state accountable because legislative policies have resulted in severe education cutbacks, teacher layoffs, school closures, as well as several failed attempts to increase teacher salaries. As the State of Oklahoma is instrumental in many of OKCPS’ policymaking, this theme falls under two-factor theory’s administrative factor (Herzberg, 1993). As stated above, policy-making can develop into adequate and inadequate implications (Herzberg, 1993). Additionally, policy-making can also result in beneficial and harmful implications (Herzberg, 1993). Thus, the inadequate and harmful policy-making by Oklahoma’s elected officials had fostered dissatisfaction in the minds of OKCPS teachers.

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Literature

The findings from this study closely align with the literature presented in Chapter 2. This section presents these connections.

**What job-related factors foster motivation in teachers?** Sargent and Hannum (2005) maintain that the job satisfaction of teachers is closely related to teacher motivation and their commitment to the teaching profession. The body of literature detailing what fosters motivation in teachers clearly indicated that a teacher’s motivation influences or contributes to their intrinsic growth. Herzberg (1959) found that only a small number of factors foster such positive or good feelings about a job. The literature suggested that intrinsic motivation at work is produced by feelings of achievement, status, recognition, responsibility, opportunity for advancement or growth, and the work itself (Herzberg, 1959; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003).
Most careers have an opportunity for an advancement and growth, however, “teaching offers little opportunity for advancement as it is currently structured” (Lunenburg & Ornsten, 2008, p. 99). Similarly, there is little opportunity for teachers to feel motivated by status, such as a highly ranked position or having a superior sense of importance (Herzberg, 1959; Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003). Participants in this study found achievement, recognition, responsibility, and the work itself contribute to their motivation, and in some cases, de-motivation.

**What job-related factors prevent dissatisfaction in teachers?** Hygiene factors do not exist for employees to feel satisfied, rather, such factors exist to contribute to an employee’s extrinsic growth. (Herzberg, 1959). When hygiene factors are high, job satisfaction is high. However, when hygiene factors are low, employees are dissatisfied (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Therefore, hygiene factors play an important role in the job satisfaction equation, as they exist to prevent the erosion of satisfaction (Trehan & Paul, 2014). The literature suggested that hygiene factors include: salary, organizational policy, quality of supervision, job security, workplace conditions, work-life balance, and interpersonal relations (Herzberg, 1959; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Porter, Bigley, & Steers, 2003). When the researcher asked the participants to describe what dissatisfied them while they were employed at OKCPS, each of the participants shared a common experience. For example, the participants indicated that OKCPS failed to provide a workplace that encouraged positive feelings about (a) interpersonal relationships with administrators, peers, and parents, (b) teacher salary, (c) a support working environment, (d) organizational policy issues regarding student discipline and student assessments, and (e) policy issues decided by state government. Trehan and Paul (2014) warn school district leaders, that when teachers experience hygiene factors (dissatisfiers), they are likely to develop negative attitudes toward their workplace, which may influence the individual’s job satisfaction.
Unfortunately, Trehan and Paul’s (2014) forewarning appears to have taken a significant toll on OKCPS, as the district is facing a teacher shortage crisis.

**Will a salary increase suppress the teacher retention issues at OKCPS?** An increase in Oklahoma’s teacher salary was significantly overdue. Teachers in Oklahoma have not experienced an adequate raise in over 20 years. The literature suggests that many of Oklahoma’s teachers have left the state for higher paying districts in states such as Texas (Adger, 2017; Botari, 2017; Martin, 2017). Herzberg (1959) notes that when employees experience an increase in salary it will foster a positive effect, while an inequitable or a decrease in salary, will produce a negative effect. Thus, it would appear that Herzberg’s notion of salary and its ability to cause a negative effect correlates with teachers leaving Oklahoma for higher paying jobs elsewhere.

Such evidence motivated teacher advocacy groups, elected officials, as well as the superintendent of OKCPS, to swiftly ask for teacher pay increases to thousands of teacher to help offset the teacher shortage crisis impacting the state (Willert, 2017).

Herzberg finds that low salary can foster dissatisfaction and a pay increase can counter such negative effects. However, Furnham (2006), as well as Herzberg (1976), posit that the motivation that follows a salary increase is temporary because workers will adapt to new conditions. Furnham (2006) adds that pay increases do not solve everything. For example, this study’s participants indicate multiple hygiene factors contributing to their dissatisfaction with OKCPS - salary being one of those factors. However, when the researcher asked if salary played a role in their decision to resign from the district, the participants responded with statements such as, “It was not the main reason why I left OKCPS,” or:
I don’t think most teachers go into the profession for the money...My frustration with OKCPS [was] never about salary. OKCPS has a huge problem with student discipline, low morale, organizational climate, and no respect for teachers. Those are major issues.

If I received a pay increase, it would be a lot easier to deal with some of the issues we have to deal with. It would just make working at Oklahoma City more tolerable. If nothing else changed but my pay, I would deal with it… I would not be okay with the inequalities and lack of respect for the staff.

The literature suggested that salary can be a means for leaders to spark temporary satisfaction, however, pay increase will not foster motivation or serve as a blanket remedy to existing hygiene omissions. The participants in this study clearly indicate that their decision to resign from OKCPS was not based on salary alone. Instead, it was a culmination of the absence of key motivation and hygiene factors.

Summary

The interpretation of the findings was consistent with the theoretical framework as well as the literature review. Specifically, the findings of this case study supported Herzberg’s (1959, 1987) position that workers find motivation at their place of employment from two sets of work-related stimuli; growth factors intrinsic to the job (motivation factors) and factor extrinsic to the job (hygiene factors). Also, the findings of this study support Herzberg’s (1959; 1987) assertion that the stronger presence of intrinsic or motivation factors results in job satisfaction, meanwhile, the absence of extrinsic or hygiene factors are drivers of job dissatisfaction and demotivation.

While each of the four participants in this study found motivation through achievement and the intrinsic nature of being a teacher, the participants indicate that they receive little respect
and recognition. Furthermore, the teacher work responsibility at OKCPS is overwhelming to the point of stress and burnout. When organizational leaders fail to maintain key motivators in place for employees, the organization is at risk of declining job satisfaction among employees and low job commitment. The teachers also described multiple dissatisfiers or hygiene factors contributing to their dissatisfaction at work. When factors such as poor salary, organizational policy/administration issues, failed interpersonal relationships, and a non-supportive working environment exists within an organization, the organization risks preventing job dissatisfaction from affecting employees. This study found that the participants of this study have been negatively impacted by low motivation and low hygiene, which Herzberg (1959) finds is the worst situation for organizations. Gardner (2010) notes that as cases of teacher job dissatisfaction persist, school district should prepare for sustained teacher retention issues.

**Implications for Practice**

The main objective of this descriptive case study was to address the teacher shortage crisis effecting Oklahoma City Public Schools. Specifically, this study described the experiences and perceptions that former OKCPS teachers had regarding job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction and its impact on their decision to resign from the district. The review of the literature and reporting of interview data revealed that each of the participants experienced both job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Each of the participants described their sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. However, during the qualitative data analysis process, the researcher discovered that each of the participants expressed commonality about what fosters job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction.

This study was based on a qualitative research design. By choosing to conduct a descriptive qualitative case study, it required the researcher to actively focus, closely listen, and
carefully observe each participant as they answered the interview questions. From the researcher’s perspective, each participant spoke honestly, was very detailed, and often expressed emotion throughout the interview. By analyzing all of the interview data, a clear image emerged that OKCPS teachers are highly motivated by the intrinsic nature of being a school teacher. However, the interview data also presented a clear image that Oklahoma City Public Schools have significant deficiencies. The perceptions drawn from this study indicate that factors related to motivation and hygiene are not in place for OKCPS teachers, thus teachers in the district reflect low level of job satisfaction. Research indicates that teacher job satisfaction directly affects teacher job commitment. Thus, it is critical for school administrators to foster and maintain high levels of job satisfaction among its teachers, so school districts can benefit from high teacher retention.

According to a Learning Policy Institute (2017) study, annual teacher turnover rates in the United States typically range from 8 to 24 percent. However, several schools throughout the OKCPS district posted retention rates ranging from 15 to 60 percent (Willert, 2017). Poor teacher retention can have negative effects on teacher productivity, bonds between student and teacher, and student achievement (Hendricks, 2015). Hendricks (2015) posits that “when a teacher is retained, students are likely better-off because they would have been taught by a less-experienced replacement. Unfortunately, classrooms across OKCPS once occupied by qualified teachers that have resigned from the district are now occupied by hundreds of less experienced personnel or emergency certified teachers. Rather than subjecting the district’s 46,000 students (approximate) to teachers that are less than qualified to teach, the district would serve the students, parents, and the community well by striving to retain those well-qualified teachers.
currently with the district. In light of the findings of this study, the following implications are offered.

**Implication one.** The findings of this study revealed that OKCPS teachers believed that they are not recognized as a professional by school and district administrators. The research participants indicated that they had earned a bachelor’s degree or a master’s degree. One participant was entertaining the idea of earning a doctoral degree, and another participant was in the process of earning a doctoral degree. Despite their degrees and years of experience, the research participants indicated that their employer often disrespected them and neglected to recognize them as a professional. According to Ingersoll (2011), teachers find satisfaction in their career choice just like lawyers, doctors, and other skilled workers. The feeling of being recognized is a significant source of motivation for an employee. Therefore, the implications of this study is that the absence of recognition can lead to employees feeling low job satisfaction and low levels of job commitment (Herzberg, 1959). Low satisfaction is an unfortunate revelation considering the vital role that teachers play in our society. In a study conducted at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Bialoptocki (2006) found when administrators and principals provide daily informal recognition; strong positive relationships are formed. As recognition is a predictor of job satisfaction, OKCPS administrators and school principals should increase, modify, or develop efforts to recognize and praise teachers in their district.

**Implication two.** Based on the findings of the study, OKCPS had significant voids in both dimensions of the motivation-hygiene framework. This study concluded that teachers are deficient in motivation factors such as recognition and responsibility. Meanwhile, the study concluded that the participants believe their former employer neglected to have in place important hygiene factors such as salary, administrative policy, and interpersonal relations. There
are no signals that OKCPS is shifting its current paradigm, which is a culture unsupportive of its teachers. However, there are efforts by the state to raise teacher salaries.

As supported in this study, Herzberg et al., (1993) found that workers will perceive low compensation as a source of job dissatisfaction and demotivation. Also supported in this study is the notion that held by Herzberg (1959, 1993) and his colleagues, which discovered that salary is not a motivator, but rather, salary is a hygiene factor. According to the Herzberg studies (1959, 1993), salary is a hygiene factor because an increase in compensation yields only temporary or extrinsic satisfaction. Furnham (2006) explains, when it comes to job satisfaction, pay is not everything. For example, in 2017, Massachusetts had set a high bar for quality education as well an average teacher salary of $76,981 per year (Zimmer, 2016; NEA, 2017). However, despite a robust average salary that is higher than most states in the nation, Massachusetts also struggles with teacher shortage issues. According to Zimmer (2016), Massachusetts has struggled with teacher retention and recruitment problems for nearly a decade. Teach.com (2018), suggests the Massachusetts teacher shortage was contributed by several years of teacher layoffs, Baby Boomer retirement, growing student population, and fewer new recruits. Similar factors have impacted Oklahoma City Public Schools. The implications of this finding should serve as an alarm bell for OKCPS as it suggests that even if teachers receive additional compensation, the district should not anticipate its teachers to experience high levels of long-term job satisfaction or job commitment, unless the current paradigm shifts to a more positive environment for teachers. Nevertheless, this implication should deter the state or the district from increasing OKCPS teacher salaries.

**Implication three.** The findings of this research reflects that OKCPS district classrooms experienced frequent disruptive and disobedient student behavior. As a result, teachers were
stressed and emotionally distraught while at work and during their off-hours. Vaaland, Idsoe, and Roland (2011) posit that prolonged disobedient student behavior can have a negative effect on teachers, the learning conditions for all those present, and the district’s overall learning objective. As a result of a federal civil rights investigation, the district implemented a behavioral intervention and support program identified as Positive Behavior Interventions and Support or PBIS (OKCPS, 2016). The principles of PBIS aims to improve the social, emotional, and academic outcomes of students through a positive behavior instruction and intervention. In other words, PBIS discourages traditional school punishment and suspension methods. The Texas Juvenile Justice Department studying the Effectiveness of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, finds PBIS “effective in curtailing an upward trend in problematic behaviors” in Texas schools (TJJD, 2012, p. 22). Meanwhile, The National Center on Intensive Intervention at the American Institutes for Research concluded that PBIS, when implemented correctly, can significantly improve teachers’ efficacy to control student disobedience and behavioral problems within the classroom (Bradshaw, 2014). Nevertheless, while PBIS methods may prove, in the long-run, to be effective, OKCPS teachers experienced reoccurring student discipline problems despite PBIS initiatives. Prolonged exposure to work-related stressors, such as student discipline problems and disruptive student behavior can lead to teacher burnout and job dissatisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Teachers should be left to focus on learning objectives, and they should feel supported by the school’s principal and administration.

This study stops short of making any generalizations about PBIS and its methods. Rather, this study questions if school administrators and their staff thoroughly understand and know how to properly implement PBIS intervention and support methods. As an implication of this study, school district policymakers as well as school administrators must be proactive in providing
relief for teachers experiencing disobedient student behavior. Thus, the district should re-examine the efficacy of PBIS implementations by school administrators and their staff. By relieving the teacher of unruly, disobedient, and sometimes threatening student behavior, the teacher can reduce his or her stress and focus on the learning objective.

**Implications for practice summary.** This study provides decision makers an indication of the what motivates their teachers. More importantly, this study informs decision makers of multiple hygiene factors that were not in place that is consequently fostered job dissatisfaction and resulted in high teacher attrition and low teacher recruitment. The implications for this research should be utilized to re-examine administrative policies, district leadership, and improving relationships with teachers. The findings of this research can be used as an example for all public school districts. Furthermore, the findings of this research should be incorporated into existing and future studies that aim to improve the job satisfaction of teachers within the district.

**Areas for Future Research**

The researcher sought to bring to light, how teachers describe job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction when working for the Oklahoma City Public Schools district and how such variables have impacted teacher attrition and teacher recruiting efforts in the district. The findings presented in this study builds upon the existing body of literature concerned with the work attitudes and job satisfaction of workers. This descriptive case study fills a gap in the literature as it focuses on the job satisfaction of teachers who recently resigned from Oklahoma City Public Schools.

This study represented a small number of former OKCPS teachers. In the future, I would like to see the sample size increased so district leaders will gain a broader understanding of the
job satisfaction of former OKCPS teachers. Further, future researcher may consider employing a quantitative tool to measure the level of job satisfaction. In this study, the participants represented a diverse set of backgrounds and demographics. Future studies could focus on former teachers from specific chronological ages, generational ages, career stages, or educational backgrounds. Also, researcher could conduct a comparative study examining the job satisfaction of OKCPS teachers in relation to independent (or private) charter schools.

Other items to consider for future research could be looking at how organizational culture plays a role in the job satisfaction of teachers. For example, this study found that many teachers within the OKCPS district experienced low morale in their school. By gathering such data could be beneficial to educational leaders unaware that low morale is impacting the organizational culture in their schools.

Last, future studies should consider the job satisfaction of teachers that work in an environment that follows traditional discipline methods versus alternative discipline programs, such as PBIS or Positive Behavior Intervention and Support. A 2017 survey examining the perspective and opinions of OKCPS teachers found that only 31% of teacher surveyed agree that such alternative discipline programs are effective. Meanwhile, teachers continue to experience job dissatisfaction as a result of teacher disrespect, student disruptions, and personal threats by disobedient students.

Limitations of the Study

The site of this case study was an independent charter school located in Oklahoma City. The sample for this study included six former OKCPS teachers. While the research site and sample size was typical of a descriptive case study, this case study and these findings had limitations.
The researcher limited the research participants to former employees of the OKCPS district. The researcher believed it was important for this case study that research participants to have experienced a full spectrum of employment, including working for OKCPS, experiencing the factors that fostered job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction, and experiencing the decision process that led to their resignation from the district.

The primary limitation of the findings is their generalizability and transferability. OKCPS comprises of approximately 2,500 full-time educators teaching in classrooms across the district’s 87 schools. This study was informed by six research participants, each of which recently resigned from the OKCPS district. The research participants were selected to be in this study because they were teachers from different grade levels, had represented different schools within the OKCPS district, and they represent diverse genders, race, chronological ages, educational backgrounds, work experiences, career stages, and personal backgrounds. Although the researcher recruited a diverse sample of participants, the research findings may not be transferable between school districts and or generalized across the target population. In hindsight, the research design presented in this case study was limited to a descriptive analysis of the findings. By utilizing a quantitative component and increasing the sample size, the findings of this case study may represent far-reaching implications.

Last, this researcher is an “outsider,” which some may consider as a potential limitation of this study. The researcher is not an educator, teacher, or a school administrator. Instead, he is a scholar and citizen of a school district that recognized a significant problem of practice occurring within OKCPS. Limitations may exist because participants may find it hard to trust the researcher or that as a researcher outside of the profession, I would not be able to understand or maintain objectivity. As a researcher from outside the profession, I aimed to respect the
participants of this study and took great pains to earn their trust. As an outsider, I recognized the importance of allowing the participants’ own voice and descriptions to be the subject of this research. Therefore, all bias or preconceptions were bracketed including during the data collection and data analysis of this study. As an outsider, I aimed to feel just as competent as an industry insider, because it is important that this researcher’s insights and report help readers see and understand the full picture of the phenomena.

**Personal Reflection as a Scholar Practitioner**

This research project grew from my educational background and professional experience as well as a motivation to identify organizational bottlenecks and solving workplace challenges. The coursework and readings issued by Northeastern University’s Doctor of Education program afforded me a deeper understanding of public school systems in the United States as well as the diverse needs that educators require to confront the challenges they face every school day. Therefore, it was natural for me to develop an intellectual curiosity as to why a public school district in my community was experiencing a teacher shortage crisis.

Before this scholarly endeavor, I was part of group conversation consisting of family, friends, and colleagues, some of who were teachers actively working for Oklahoma City Public Schools. None who participated in this study. It was during this conversation that I initially became aware of the attitudes and perceptions that teachers developed regarding OKCPS. In this conversation, it was apparent that they loved their role as an educator. However, it was equally apparent these teachers were troubled by feelings of stress and low morale. The candid revelations shared by this small group of OKCPS teachers increased my interest in the organizational challenges that existed within the walls of OKCPS.
As this researcher reviewed the literature, he realized that OKCPS teachers were not living in a bubble. Instead, he learned that school districts across the country were experiencing similar labor shortages. Furthermore, he also learned that teachers frequently experience stress, low morale, and a feeling of being unappreciated. The researcher soon developed an awareness that the topic of dissatisfied teachers was important and a significant component of the teacher shortage epidemic. It was evident that work attitudes and job motivation were at the center of the OKCPS teacher shortage crisis. A paradigm not so unfamiliar in organizations outside of the public school sphere.

By underpinning this research on a theoretical framework developed by Frederick Herzberg and utilizing a qualitative methodology, this researcher was able to unearth meaningful testimony from six research participants. The participants revealed honest and heartfelt feelings and attitudes about their experiences as a teacher working for OKCPS. Each described in detail, what motivated them as a teacher as well as the deficiency in hygiene factors that in-large contributed to their dissatisfaction and their decision to resign from OKCPS. According to Herzberg’s two-factor theory, when all or most motivation factors are in place, an employee will experience high levels of job satisfaction and a strong commitment to their job. Two-factor theory also suggests that when employers have in place most or all hygiene factors, job dissatisfaction is prevented. OKCPS has neglected both sides of the two-factor theory and thus is experiencing the woes of a teacher shortage crisis. By the researchers own perception, the six qualified teachers interviewed for this research project would likely be employed today by OKCPS if school administrators and policymakers were truly cognizant of the concerns of their teachers and if the administration worked diligently to correct such issues.
Lastly, this researcher believes that this case study is especially timely as the OKCPS district is willing to look inward to help improve the district. In January 2017, the district reported that it was in negotiations with an organizational consulting firm that aims to address the district’s “dysfunctional culture” (Willert, 2018, para. 1). According to the director of the consulting firm, the aim is for transformational change by identifying the district’s inefficiencies, improve the district’s communication, and fostering teamwork (Willert, 2018). The consultant firm is estimated to cost the district $2.1 million.

As I reflect on this research process, I have learned some valuable lessons. First, I have learned to appreciate the growing body of academic research that strives to make positive changes in the world around us. Secondly, I have learned that value of removing all outside noise and bias and listening to what others have to say about issues important to them. Third, I have learned that while teachers are often thought of as pillars in the community, they are not always treated as such by their students, parents, and administrators. As such, I have a developed a sense of sadness and disbelief that teachers find themselves disrespected by the very students they hope will find success in the future and their peers fail to recognize them for their professionalism. Last, I have always respected the role of teachers. However, after compiling the research and talking with this study’s six research participants, this researcher has an even greater sense of respect and admiration for the teaching profession.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, research findings were integrated with theory and then extrapolated by the researcher for interpretation and thoughtful discourse. The chapter also examined implications for practice and considered future research opportunities. The purpose of this descriptive case study was to explore how teachers, formerly employed by a large school district, describe their
experience of job satisfaction. While this study was limited by the size of the criterion sample, the findings that emerged from this body of work, sheds light on the factors that foster job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction among the thousands of public school teachers working throughout the Oklahoma City Public Schools district. This study confirms that former OKCPS teachers experience low job satisfaction and low job commitment. Additionally, as a result of teacher’s low job satisfaction, the district is experiencing a teacher shortage. The results of this study should be utilized to support school districts’ efforts to create a workplace that meets the professional and personal needs of teachers.
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Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval

Northeastern

Notification of IRB Action

Date: July 11, 2017
IRB #: CPS17-06-05

Principal Investigator(s):
Kelly Conn
Chase Raymond

Department:
Doctor of Education
College of Professional Studies

Address:
20 Belvidere
Northeastern University

Title of Project:
A Case Study Exploring Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District

Participating Sites:

Charter School permission in file

Informed Consent:
One (1) unsigned consent for online interviews
One (1) signed consent for face-to-face interviews

As per CFR 45 46.117(c)(2) signed consent is being withheld as the research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to subjects and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required.

DHHS Review Category:
Expedited #6, #7

Monitoring Interval:
12 months

Approval Expiration Date: JULY 10, 2018

Investigator’s Responsibilities:
1. Informed consent form bearing the IRB approval stamp must be used when recruiting participants into the study.
2. The investigator must notify IRB immediately of unexpected adverse reactions, or new information that may alter our perception of the benefits-risk ratio.
3. Study procedures and files are subject to audit any time.
4. Any modifications of the protocol or the informed consent as the study progresses must be reviewed and approved by this committee prior to being instituted.
5. Continuing Review Approval for the proposal should be requested at least one month prior to the expiration date above.
6. This approval applies to the protection of human subjects only. It does not apply to any other university approvals that may be necessary.

C. Randall Colvin, Ph.D., Chair
Northeastern University Institutional Review Board

Nan C. Regina, Director
Human Subject Research Protection

Northeastern University FWA #4630
May 24, 2017

Re: Doctoral Research Project

Dear Chase Raymond

I am writing this letter to inform you as well as the Internal Review Board at Northeastern University that you, Chase Raymond, have my full support and permission to complete your doctoral research at ___ Charter Schools in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. For your research, ___ Charter will grant permission to access and contact teachers that meet your research criteria. As part of your research, you are also permitted to conduct interviews as well as a survey. Last, with the assistance of an ___ Charter staff member, you will be given permission to utilize ___ to message, identify, and contact teachers for your research.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Appendix C: Example of Recruitment Letter

Date

Dear Teacher,

My name is Chase Raymond, and I am a doctoral candidate at Northeastern University under the guidance of Dr. Kelly Conn. I am preparing to conduct research for my dissertation and would like to invite you to take part in my study. Specifically, I am looking to interview public school teachers who have recently resigned from the Oklahoma City Public School District.

The title of my study is *A Case Study Investigating Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District*. As the title suggests, the purpose of this study is to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors of teachers working in an Oklahoma City Public School District. In order to collect the necessary data, I am inviting you to participate in this study participating in a one-on-one interview. The purpose of the interview is to understand intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction, teacher job dissatisfaction, and teacher motivations to resign from the classroom. The information learned from this study may help school administrators and other policy makers increase their understanding of what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers working in an Oklahoma City Public School district, which may better prepare teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies.

The interview will take approximately 40 to 60 minutes. Prior to commencing the interview, you will be given a consent form that will explain the process of taking part in the research. The interview will consist of general, non-identifiable information along with questions pertaining to your experiences as a K-12 public school teacher in an Oklahoma City Public School District.

Your participation is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the research at any time. Additionally, for the purpose of the research, you will be identified as a Teacher followed by a number, such as Teacher 1. The only individual’s privy to the recordings (audio/video) of this interview will be myself, the doctoral candidate, and Dr. Kelly Conn, the doctoral advisor. After the audio of the interview has been transcribed it will be destroyed to ensure confidentiality.

If you are comfortable with the purpose of this study and are willing to participate, please let me know by XX-XX-2017 by emailing at the email address below. If you have any questions, please contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or via e-mail at xxx@husky.neu.edu.

Thank you,

Chase Raymond
Doctoral Candidate, Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies
Appendix D: Example of Follow-up Recruitment Email

Dear Teacher,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Chase Raymond, and I am a doctoral candidate at Northeastern University under the guidance of Dr. Kelly Conn. On XX-XX-2017, I mailed you a letter inviting your participation in my doctoral study. I wanted to follow up through email and again invite you to take part in my study. In my research, I am looking to interview public school teachers who have recently resigned from the Oklahoma City Public School District.

The title of my study is *A Case Study Investigating Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District*. As the title suggests, the purpose of this study is to describe the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors of teachers working in an Oklahoma City Public School District.

In the email, I discussed how your participation would help me in my doctoral study. In short, your participation may help school administrators and other policy makers increase their understanding of what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers working in an Oklahoma City Public School district, which may better prepare teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies. I am asking teachers to dedicate approximately 40 to 60 minutes for an interview about their experiences.

While a select number of participants will be chosen for this study, I ask that you please consider participating. If you are comfortable with the purpose of this study and are willing to participate, please let me know by XX-XX-2017 by emailing at the email address below. If you have any questions, please contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or via e-mail at xxx@husky.neu.edu.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chase Raymond
Doctoral Candidate, Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies
Appendix E: Example of Pre-Interview Confirmation Email

Date:

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study *A Case Study Investigating Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District.*

The purpose of this email is to gain some general background information prior to our interview. There are eleven questions in total focused on demographic data and your history as a teacher with Oklahoma City Public Schools. One of these questions are open-ended, asking you to complete a statement.

I have included with this email an intake questionnaire, so that I can gain a better perspective of your background. Please identify yourself at the top of the questionnaire as Teacher #____. The questionnaire should take no longer than approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Additionally, I would like to reiterate that your participation in this study will help me contribute to an important body of literature— learn more about what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers. Your participation in this study may better prepare school leaders and administrators on teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies.

Lastly, I would like to schedule a time and place for our interview. We can conduct the interview in-person or via Facetime/Skype. Since I am working with 6-8 participants, would you please provide me with at least two 40-60 minute periods where you are available to be interviewed?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,

Chase Raymond
Doctoral Candidate, Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies
Appendix F: Example of Signed Informed Consent Form for One-on-One Interview

Northeastern University, Department
Name of Investigator(s): Dr. Kelly Conn, Principal Investigator & Chase Raymond, Student Researcher
Title of Project: A Case Study Investigating Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District.

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the study, however, the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions that you have. When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research study?

We are asking you to be in this study because you are a licensed Oklahoma teacher that has recently resigned from the Oklahoma City Public School district.

Why is this research study being done?

The purpose of this study is to describe factors that influence the job satisfaction of teachers, particularly in a large public school district in Oklahoma City. This study plans to examine the job satisfaction of teachers in an Oklahoma City school district in order to determine factors that influence a teacher’s decision to resign from the classroom.

What will I be asked to do?

If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in a one-on-one interview for questioning about your experiences as a public school teacher in an Oklahoma City public school district, particularly the factors that influence job satisfaction.

Where will this take place and how much of my time will it take?

The one-on-one interview will be convened at a time and place that is convenient for the research participant. The participant may choose from an in-person interview or a virtual interview (e.g., Skype or Facetime). The interview is anticipated to take approximately 60 minutes.
Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

The only foreseeable risk associated with your involvement in this research is the possibility that your participation, and only your participation, could be discovered by other individuals. To minimize this risk, your name will never be recorded on any of the written or electronic materials involved in this study. Rather, your identity will be identified as a Teacher followed by a number, such as Teacher 1. Thus, your identity and participation in this study should not be revealed to anybody.

Will I benefit by being in this research?

There will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in the study. However, the information learned from this study may help school administrators and other policy makers increase their understanding of what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers working in an Oklahoma City public school district, which may better prepare teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies.

Who will see the information about me?

Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project. To minimize this risk, your name will never be recorded on any of the written or electronic materials involved in this study. Rather, your identity will be identified as a Teacher followed by a number, such as Teacher 1. Thus, your identity and participation in this study should not be revealed to anybody.

In rare instances, authorized people may request to see research information about you and other people in this study. This is done only to be sure that the research is done properly. We would only permit people who are authorized by organizations such as the Northeastern University Institutional Review Board to see this information.

If I do not want to take part in the study, what choices do I have?

Your participation in this research study is completely voluntary. If you participate, you can withdraw at any time.

What will happen if I suffer any harm from this research?

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of my participation in this research.
Can I stop my participation in this study?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time.

Who can I contact if I have questions or problems?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Chase Raymond at [redacted] or [redacted], who is mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Dr. Kelly Conn at [redacted].

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, Mail Stop: 560-177, 360 Huntington Avenue, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

Will I be paid for my participation?

You will not be compensated for your participation in this study.

Will it cost me anything to participate?

The research participant will not incur any cost as a result of this study.

Is there anything else I need to know?

You must be a licensed teacher in the State of Oklahoma.

[Redacted] Charter Schools nor Oklahoma City Public Schools is a sponsor of this study nor are they conducting this research.
I agree to take part in this research.

Signature of person agreeing to take part       Date

Printed name of person above

Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent       Date

Printed name of person above
Appendix G: Example of Unsigned Consent for Virtual Interviews

Northeastern University, Department of: College of Professional Studies
Name of Investigator(s): Principal Investigator, Dr. Kelly Conn, Student Researcher, Chase Raymond
Title of Project: A Case Study Investigating Teacher Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention Issues in a Large Urban Oklahoma School District.

Request to Participate in Research
We would like to invite you to take part in a research project. The purpose of this study is to describe factors that influence the job satisfaction of teachers, particularly in a large public school district in Oklahoma City. This study plans to examine the job satisfaction of teachers in an Oklahoma City school district in order to determine factors that influence a teacher’s decision to resign from the classroom.

You must be at least 18 years old to be in this research project.

The study will take place at a time that is convenient for the research participant and will take about 40 to 60 minutes.

If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to complete an intake questionnaire. You will also be asked to take part in a one-on-one interview via Skype or Facetime (whichever is convenient) with the student researcher. The interview will be about your experiences as a public school teacher in an Oklahoma City public school district, particularly the factors that influence job satisfaction.

The only foreseeable risk associated with your involvement in this research is the possibility that your participation, and only your participation, could be discovered by other individuals. To minimize this risk, your name will never be recorded on any of the written or electronic materials involved in this study. Rather, your identity will be identified as a Teacher followed by a number, such as Teacher 1. Thus, your identity and participation in this study should not be revealed to anybody.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in the study. However, your answers may help us to learn more about what drives satisfaction and dissatisfaction in teachers working in an Oklahoma City public school district, which may better prepare teacher recruitment and teacher retaining strategies.

Your part in this study will be handled in a confidential manner. Only the researchers will know that you participated in this study. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify you or any individual as being of this project.

The decision to participate in this research project is up to you. You do not have to participate and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may withdraw at any time.
You will not be paid for your participation in this study.

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Chase Raymond at xxx@husky.neu.edu or XXX-XXX-XXXX the person mainly responsible for the research. You can also contact Dr. Kelly Conn at xxx@northeastern.edu, the Principal Investigator.

If you have any questions about your rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, Mail Stop: 560-177, 260 Huntington Avenue, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617.373.4588, Email: n.regina@northeastern.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

You may keep this form for yourself.
Thank you.
Chase Raymond
Appendix H: Example of Intake Questionnaire for One-on-One Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Please enter the identifying code located at the bottom of your</td>
<td>16-22, 22-40, 41-51,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confirmation email.</td>
<td>52-62, 63-71, 71-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 16-22</td>
<td>[ ] 22-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 41-51</td>
<td>[ ] 52-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 63-71</td>
<td>[ ] 71-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gender*</td>
<td>[ ] Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Female</td>
<td>[ ] No Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Marriage Status*</td>
<td>[ ] Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Divorced</td>
<td>[ ] Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Widowed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Have Children?*</td>
<td>[ ] Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Highest College Degree Earned*</td>
<td>[ ] Associates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Bachelors</td>
<td>[ ] Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Doctorates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Which path did you choose to become a teacher?*</td>
<td>[ ] Traditional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Alternative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. How would you describe the stage of your career?*</td>
<td>[ ] Early career stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] Mid-career stage</td>
<td>[ ] Late-career stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How many years (total) have you been teaching?*</td>
<td>[ ] Less than 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 1 to 5 years</td>
<td>[ ] 6 to 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 11 to 20 years</td>
<td>[ ] 20 years or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. As a teacher, how many years were you employed with Oklahoma City</td>
<td>[ ] Less than 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Schools?</td>
<td>[ ] 1 to 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 3 to 5 years</td>
<td>[ ] 5 to 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ ] 10 to 20 years</td>
<td>[ ] More than 20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. As a teacher with Oklahoma City Public Schools, did you hold a</td>
<td>[ ] Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>formal leadership role in your school, such as department chair,</td>
<td>[ ] No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructional resource, teacher mentor, leadership team member, or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other leadership role?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I: Example of Interview Protocol and Interview Questions

Interviewee (Pseudonym): ______________________________________

Gender: _____________________________________________________

Interviewer: _________________________________________________

Part I: Introduction

Thank you for being able to speak with me today. You have been selected to participate in this research study because you have been identified as someone who has a great deal to share about their experience as a public school teacher working for Oklahoma City Public Schools. The research project focuses on the job satisfaction of teachers in order to determine factors that influence a teacher’s intent to stay or resign from the classroom.

The hope is that this research can be used to help inform policymakers and administrators about the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction factors that serve as antecedents in the intention of teachers’ to remain or resign as a teacher. Hopefully this study will assist school leaders in aligning future teacher recruitment and teacher retention strategies with key teacher job satisfaction factors.

Before we begin, I want to emphasize that you as well as all the research participants involved in this research will remain anonymous. Moreover, you should be aware that your participation is completely voluntary and you can refuse to answer any question or chose to withdraw from the research entirely at any time. At this time, I would like to for us to review the research participant consent forms.

[Review NEU Consent Forms]

Thank you. Before we begin, I need to say that because your responses are important and I want to make sure to capture everything you say, therefore, I would like to record our conversation today. At this time, I would like to ask your permission to audio record this interview? Is this okay?

[Wait for response]

I will also be taking written notes. However, to assure that I have a complete record of our conversation, I will have a professional transcriptionist transcribe the entire interview. I can assure you audio recording will remain confidential and only a pseudonym will be used when quoting from the transcripts. All audio recordings tapes will be eventually destroyed after they are transcribed. Once the audio recording is transcribed, I will email you a copy for your review. Is this okay?
Finally, I will forward you a copy of my overall findings soliciting your comments or corrections. Will this be okay?

I have planned this interview to last no longer than about 40 to 60 minutes. During this time, I have several questions that I would like to cover. Therefore, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to push ahead and complete this line of questioning. Also, there may be moments where I may probe you to go deeper in your explanations.

As we are about to begin, I want to thank you once again for agreeing to participate in this study and completing the intake questionnaire.

Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions?

Okay, let us begin.

**Part II: Interview Questions**

I am now going to ask you questions focused on the topic of the study, which is about the job satisfaction of teachers. Some of the questions that I am about to ask may have been presented to you on the intake questionnaire. In this case, I would like you to simply restate your answer.

Questions:

1. How long have you been a public school teacher?

2. How long did you work in the Oklahoma City Public Schools District?

3. As a former teacher with OKCPS, please describe areas of dissatisfaction with your job as a public school teacher.

4. As a former teacher with OKCPS, please describe what would have made your job as a teacher or your working environment more satisfying.

5. What made you decide to resign as a teacher working with OKCPS – What about your colleagues?

6. Based on your own perceptions, what factors do you believe are causing teachers to leave the Oklahoma City school district?
7. Based on your perceptions, what factors do you believe keep teachers from leaving the Oklahoma City school district?

8. Based on your experience and perceptions, what motivates teachers? What causes teachers to feel unmotivated?

9. Research suggests that there is a significant drop in the amount of college students wanting to enter the field of teaching. Why do you believe this is happening?

10. What plans could be put into place to increase teacher retention and teacher recruitment in Oklahoma City Public Schools?

11. What can you tell about the effect that Oklahoma’s low teacher salary have on you and your colleagues?

12. If teachers in the Oklahoma City school district were currently paid an ideal/competitive salary (i.e. Texas), how would you describe teachers level of job satisfaction today?

13. Is there anything else you would like to add about the job satisfaction of teachers?

Thank you for participating. I’ll email a copy of your transcript to you within the next week, so that you can review it.
Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your time and willingness to share your experiences with me on (XX-XX-2017). I appreciate the time you spent with me and I also enjoyed learning about your experiences of job satisfaction as a public school teacher. As we discussed, I am sending you this follow-up email so you can review the transcription of the interview for accuracy (please see attached). Please feel free to edit the transcription as necessary, as well as to offer any additional thoughts, ideas, or reflections you may have had since our interview.

When you are finished, please send the transcription with notes back to me as soon as possible. If you have nothing to change or report, please send me a quick email to let me know. You can also contact me by phone at XXX-XXX-XXXX. Again, thank you for your valuable time.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,

Chase Raymond
Doctoral Candidate, Northeastern University
College of Professional Studies
Appendix K: NIH Certificate of Completion

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that Chase Raymond successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course “Protecting Human Research Participants”.

Date of completion: 11/07/2014

Certification Number: 1608796
## Appendix L: Example of Qualitative Codes by Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivators (M)</th>
<th>Hygiene (H)</th>
<th>Hygiene (H)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1 Sense of Achievement</td>
<td>Student success greatness</td>
<td>H3 Working Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2 Recognition/Respect</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>H2 Teacher Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>listen to teachers</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disobedient students - no respect</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal - no show of recognition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrators don't listen</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rude parents</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>value teachers</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative Press</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autonomy - Teaching methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>M3 Work Itself</td>
<td>Life Calling</td>
<td>H3 Org. Policy &amp; Admin</td>
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<tr>
<td>M4 Responsibility</td>
<td>Make a difference</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Burnout</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Not enough time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessment tests</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>M5 Advancement/Promotion</td>
<td>Null</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>M6 Growth</td>
<td>Null</td>
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<tr>
<td>M7 Status</td>
<td>Null</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- No participation
- frustration
- did not protect teachers
- H4 Quality of Supervision
- H5 Job Security
- sad
- H6 Work Life Balance
- H7 Interpersonal Relationships