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Organizational Health and Teacher Efficacy: A Qualitative Analysis of Two Measures in
Elementary Schools

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Organizational Health and Teacher Efficacy: A Qualitative Analysis of Two Measures in Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study examined perceived organization health and teacher efficacy in two rural New York State schools using quantitative and qualitative measures. Quantitative data was collected using the Organizational Health Inventory for Elementary Schools (OHI-E) and the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form). Qualitative data was collected using interviews developed by the researcher addressing the specific areas of organizational health and teacher efficacy assessed by the measures. Quantitative data obtained from measures and qualitative data obtained from interviews and observer perceptions were compared to determine if differences between schools existed, if the measures accurately assessed the variables in the schools, and if categorizations provided by the normative data was representative to the current sample. Results of this study indicated that quantitative differences did exist between schools with regard to organizational health; however, significant differences between schools did not exist for teacher efficacy. Qualitative data provided further insight into each school's profile and teacher response patterns. Combining qualitative analysis with quantitative data collection was shown to be a resourceful approach in further assessing participant response patterns and perceptions.

Organizational Health and Teacher Efficacy: A Qualitative Analysis of Two Measures in Elementary Schools

Chapter 1: Introduction & Review of the Literature

Teacher efficacy has been shown to be a powerful construct related to student outcomes such as achievement (Armor, Conroy-Oseguera, Cox, King, McDonnell, Pascal, Pauly & Zellman, 1976; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992), motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer & Eccles, 1989) and sense of efficacy (Anderson, Greene & Loewen, 1988). Of the many factors contributing to teacher efficacy is the concept of organizational health. Teacher efficacy and school health are the two major constructs of this study. The purpose of this study was to add to the knowledge base relating to teacher efficacy and organizational health by examining these variables in rural schools. This investigation was intended to build upon Hoy's and Woolfolk's (1993) study on urban and suburban samples; however in this study rural schools were studied qualitatively. To date, research has failed to study these constructs in rural schools using these measures. The method used provides a more tangible depiction of internal factors observed and reported by teachers from two rural schools.

Self-efficacy

Self-evaluation is a concept that encompasses perceptions about various aspects of humanness (Judge, Bono & Locke, 2000). Through self-evaluations, people form perceptions about their self-worth, the amount of control they have over their own affairs, and about the value of life and their personal vulnerability (Steyn & Mynhardt, 2008). Additionally,

individuals form perceptions about their capacity to accomplish goals and overcome obstacles, a concept that Bandura refers to as self-efficacy perception (2002).

Bandura (1997) makes a clear distinction between the two concepts of self-efficacy and self-esteem that are often used interchangeably. Bandura identifies perceived self-efficacy as one being “concerned with judgments of personal capability,” whereas self-esteem is identified as concern “with judgments of self-worth” (p. 11).

Self-efficacy theory states that individuals with similar skills may perform quite differently depending on their personal beliefs of self-efficacy. Furthermore, effective functioning is thought to require both skills and self-efficacy beliefs. The ability to alter and modify pre-existing skills is necessary to be successful. As Bandura indicates, “perceived self-efficacy is not a measure of the skills one has but a belief about what one can do under different sets of conditions with whatever skills one possesses” (1997, p. 37).

Mone, Baker and Jeffries (1995) proposed that perceived personal efficacy predicts the goals people set for themselves as well as their performance attainments, whereas self-esteem affects neither. Bandura’s Model of Self-Efficacy Expectations (1977, 1997) postulates that self-efficacy expectations have at least three behavioral consequences (approach vs. avoidance behavior, quality of performance of behaviors, and persistence in the face of obstacles or disconfirming experiences). The model would then indicate that low self-efficacy expectations regarding a behavior would lead to avoidance, poorer performance, and a tendency to abandon the behavior when faced with difficulty or failure.

Bandura identifies four sources of efficacy information which lead to the initial development of efficacy expectations: performance accomplishments, vicarious learning

(modeling), emotional arousal (anxiety), and social persuasion/encouragement (1977, 1997).

These four sources can also be used to increase efficacy expectations in an individual or group (Betz, 2004).

Teacher Efficacy

Teacher efficacy is based on Bandura's concept of self-efficacy. Teacher efficacy has been defined as "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly & Zellman, 1977, p. 137), or as the "teachers' belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Guskey & Passarao, 1994, p. 4). Bandura (1977) found that teacher efficacy beliefs influence the amount of effort put forth, length of persistence in challenges, level of resiliency when dealing with failure, and the amount of stress and/or depression experienced when coping with demanding situations.

From a social-learning theoretical base, work by Rotter (1966) indicated that teachers with a high level of self-efficacy believed that they could strongly influence student achievement and motivation. Early studies related to this theory found teacher efficacy to have a strong positive effect on student performance, project goals achieved, and amount of teacher change (Armor et al., 1976; Berman et al., 1977). Research focusing specifically on Rotter's theory indicated a scheme of internal-external locus of control concerned with causal beliefs regarding outcomes and actions (Tchannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Bandura (1997) on the other hand specifically identifies locus of control as a separate concept from self-efficacy. Bandura indicates that perceived self-efficacy is a strong predictor of behavior, whereas locus of control is a weak predictor. Beliefs about whether one can produce

certain actions (perceived self-efficacy) are not the same as beliefs about whether actions affect outcomes (locus of control) (Tchannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998).

Teacher Efficacy & Student Outcomes

Teacher Efficacy (TE) “measures the extent to which teachers believe their efforts will have a positive effect on student achievement” (Ross, 1995, p. 228). Teacher efficacy has been found to consistently predict students’ cognitive growth, even when ability is controlled.

Teacher efficacy has also been found to be associated with affective factors such as enhanced student motivation, increased self-esteem, improved self-direction, and positive attitudes toward school. It is important to note that the associations between teacher efficacy and achievement have only been found to be correlational; therefore, unexamined variables may be present.

Research suggests that teachers with high teacher efficacy set higher standards for themselves, which would thereby indicate that they would adopt more challenging goals and increase persistence (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, Bandura’s theory suggests that these individuals would set higher standards for their students, persist until goals were reached, and would make students accountable for behaviors (Ross, 1995). In addition, it is likely that a reciprocal relationship between student success and teacher feelings of competence and anticipation of success for the future exists.

Development of Teacher Efficacy

Research suggests that self-efficacy beliefs, once developed, are somewhat resistant to change. Watters and Ginns (1995) found that coursework and practica have differential impacts on teaching efficacy. Their research suggests that general teaching efficacy (efficacy related to beliefs about the task) are more likely to change when students are exposed to vicarious learning

experiences or social persuasion such as experienced during coursework. However, actual teaching experiences such as student teaching practica have been found to have a greater impact on personal teaching efficacy, also known as their personal skills and abilities (Housego, 1992; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1990). Bandura's theory (1977) suggests that teacher efficacy would be most malleable early in learning, which logically leads to a discussion of the importance of preservice training.

Student teaching experiences and practica provide an excellent opportunity for training teachers to make evaluations about themselves in an effort to increase teaching capacities. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk and Hoy (1995) indicate that the manner in which the preservice teacher is immersed into the field may be detrimental to his or her future as a professional. They stress the importance of training programs allowing for more actual experiences with proper supervision and guidance.

Bandura (1986, 1997) describes four sources of self-efficacy information: mastery experiences, physiological and emotional arousal, vicarious experience, and social persuasion. Mastery experiences can be described as the perception that an experience has been successful. Bandura (1986, 1997) states that efficacy is increased when success is achieved on difficult tasks, with little assistance, early in learning. Interestingly, Bandura (1986, 1997) indicates that not all successful experiences strengthen efficacy. Efficacy is not enhanced when a task is successful with extensive external support, the task is unimportant, or occurs late in learning. This research indicates that teacher training should foster independence with guided support and should occur early. Physiological and emotional arousal has been found to improve performance when occurring at moderate levels resulting in increased attention and energy (Bandura, 1997).

However, high levels of arousal typically result in stress and impaired functioning. Therefore, early training experiences should include tasks that are challenging for the individual, but not overwhelming in nature. Mentors should provide emotional support and trainees should be encouraged to remain aware of the physical and emotional well-being. Vicarious experiences occur when a trainee watches another individual teach. By observing other individuals teach, a trainee can not only gain knowledge of strategy and skill, but by observing a teacher who is competent and confident, a trainee can actually increase personal teaching competence (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Finally, verbal persuasion can result in increased effort and even a willingness to try new things. Bandura (1982) indicates that persuasion from a competent, trustworthy, and credible source is most successful. Additionally, self-perceptions may actually be lowered as a result of harsh feedback. Therefore, the manner in which guidance and feedback is delivered may directly be related to self-perceptions of the trainee.

It is thought that these four sources are major contributors to a teacher's analysis of a task as well as to teaching competence self-perceptions. Furthermore, a training model including the guidance and observations of a competent, trustworthy, credible, and self-efficacious teacher may contribute to the trainee engaging in self-comparison and self-analysis thereby promoting personal growth as well as the growth of teaching skills and methods.

For experienced teachers, support and improvement with regard to teacher efficacy is vital. Tschannen-Moren, Woolfolk-Hoy and Hoy (1998) focus on teaching competence defined as verbal persuasion in the form of professional development coupled with the development of new skills. Ross (1994) identifies implementation of change to be a time when increased supports are necessary including opportunities to engage in activities such as role play with

feedback. These practices and supports are identified as being vital in the rebound of efficacy beliefs during stressful or challenging times.

Teacher efficacy is not commonly treated as a unitary trait, but rather is distinguished by two traits of efficacy when quantitative data is obtained and analyzed (Ross, 1995). Personal teacher efficacy (PTE) is a teacher's expectation that he or she can bring about student learning. General teacher efficacy (GTE) is the belief that teachers are able to do so despite the impact of environmental factors beyond their control (Ross, 1995).

Measurement of Teacher Efficacy

From the two earlier discussed theories, Rotter's social-learning theory and Bandura's social-cognitive theory, a body of research in scale development emerged. A number of scales used to assess levels of teacher efficacy were consequently developed. Scales such as the Teacher Locus of Control (Rose, 1981) and Webb Efficacy Scale (Ashton, Olejnick, Crocker & McAuliffe, 1982) were developed from Rotter's concept of generalized expectancies of reinforcement (Tchannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Bandura's concept of self-efficacy served as the basis for such scales as the Teacher Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001), Ashton Vignettes (Ashton et al., 1982), and Bandura's Teacher Efficacy Scale (1998).

Gibson and Dembo (1984) developed a 30-item scale to assess teacher efficacy. Factor analysis yielded two independent dimensions: (1) outcome expectations about the consequences of teaching labeled as "general teaching efficacy"; and (2) self-efficacy expectations in relation to one's own teaching labeled "personal teaching efficacy." This first identified dimension reflects a general belief about power of teaching and attitudes toward education (GTE), whereas the second scale dimension is more representative of a teacher's personal sense of efficacy

(PTE). Gibson and Dembo (1984) predicted that teachers who score high on both dimensions (PTE and GTE) would be active and confident in their responses to students, be persistent, provide a greater academic focus in the classroom, and provide influential feedback. The researchers conversely proposed that teachers scoring low on both dimensions would be more likely to give up and give in during challenging times. Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) have used an abbreviated form of the measure including 10 items: five PTE and five GTE. Reliability for the abbreviated version subsets was in the range of the longer measure.

Research using the Gibson and Dembo instrument has assessed the impact of teachers' sense of self-efficacy on their behaviors and attitudes and on student achievement. Gibson and Dembo (1984) found that teachers with higher teacher efficacy (high scores on both PTE and GTE) exhibited the following behaviors: less student criticism, persistence during student failure, and leading small group instruction. Allinder (1994) found that PTE was associated with a willingness for instructional experimentation, implementation of innovative methods, high levels of organization and planning, fairness, and enthusiasm in teaching. Moreover, a high PTE is predictive of willingness to work with students experiencing academic difficulty rather than to refer to special education.

With regard to student outcomes, Moore and Esselman (1992) found that second and fifth grade students of teachers with a greater sense of GTE outperformed their peers in math on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. Watson (1991) found an association between teachers with high GTE and student math scores as well as high PTE and reading achievement in majority Black, majority White, and rural schools. Furthermore, Woolfolk, Rosoff and Hoy (1990) found that

teacher efficacy was not only related to student outcomes, but also students' attitudes toward school itself including overall levels of student interest.

Organizational Health

Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) identify four pivotal assumptions addressing students within the contexts of classrooms, schools, and communities.

Assumption 1: Each student is an inseparable part of a small social system.

Assumption 2: Disturbance is not viewed as a disease located within the body of the student but rather, as discordance in the system.

Assumption 3: Discordance may be defined as a disparity between an individual's abilities and the demands or expectations of the environment.

Assumption 4: The goal of any intervention is to make the system work. (p. 489)

With these assumptions in mind, it becomes clear that in order for a system to operate effectively and efficiently, social contexts must be evaluated.

Parsons, Bales and Shils (1953) identified four basic problems that social systems must solve to survive, grow, and develop: (1) acquiring sufficient resources and accommodating to their environments, (2) setting and implementing goals, (3) maintaining solidarity within the school, and (4) creating and preserving a unique value system. Furthermore, Parsons (1967) identifies three distinct levels of control over these needs: technical, managerial, and institutional. The technical level functions to produce educated students and is concerned with the teaching-learning process. The managerial level focuses on the control of internal administrative function, thereby focusing on principals' abilities to develop and instruct loyalty,

trust, commitment, and motivation. Lastly, the connection of the school with the environment occurs at the institutional level.

Defined as “the quality and consistency of interpersonal interactions within the school community that influences children’s cognitive, social, and psychological development,” school climate has been reported to have a great impact on children (Haynes, Emmons & Ben-Avie, 1997, p. 322). Studying school climate focuses not only on the environment’s direct relationship with children’s development, but also on indirect factors as staff support. Research conducted by the Yale Child Study Center found that a positive school climate is especially important for children from low SES backgrounds (Haynes, Emmons & Ben-Avie, 1997).

The concept of organizational health is similar to that of school climate. Hoy and Sabo (1998) define the study of organizational health/school climate as producing a snapshot of behavior (organizational and individual) for the managing and changing of behaviors. In an early analysis of the organizational health of schools, Miles (1969) defined a healthy system as being a framework of an open social system with fairly durable system properties. The study of the health of an organization focuses on the factors that facilitate and impede the development of positive interpersonal relationships within the organization itself (Hoy & Forsyth, 1986; Miles, 1969). A healthy school is described as one in which harmonious relationships exist between individuals of all levels. Not only do healthy schools appear to be high-achieving (Hoy, Tarter & Bliss, 1990) but, school health is identified as an important variable related to school effectiveness (Hoy & Feldman, 1987).

Measurement of Organizational Health

Following the attempts of other researchers to develop scales to assess organizational health, Hoy and Feldman (1987) produced the Organizational Health Inventory. Item generation followed the three-level model proposed by Parsons (1967). At each of the three levels, scale items focus on related issues. For example, at the technical level, items focus on morale, cohesiveness, trust, enthusiasm, support, academic press, order, and achievement. At the managerial level, items focus on principal behavior, specifically task- and achievement- oriented behavior, collegial and supportive behavior, ability to influence superiors, and ability to provide adequate resources for teachers. Finally, institutional-level items focus on the school's ability to cope successfully with outside forces.

Once the items were developed, participants were asked to rate items on a 5-point Likert scale. Seven dimensions of organizational health were identified: institutional integrity, principal influence, consideration, initiating structure, resources support, morale, and academic emphasis. Institutional integrity serves as an indicator of health at the institutional level. Principal influence, consideration, initiating structure, and resource support measure health at the managerial level. Morale and academic emphasis indicate health at the technical level.

Dimensions of Organizational Health

Institutional Integrity (institutional level) is defined as a school's ability to cope with its environment in a way that maintains the educational integrity of its programs. A school scoring high on this dimension would encompass teachers that are protected from unreasonable community and parental demands. Managerial level dimensions are principal influence, consideration, and resource support. *Principal Influence* is the principal's ability to influence the

actions of superiors. Effective principalship is defined as being able to persuade superiors, obtain additional consideration, and unimpeded by the administrative hierarchy. *Consideration* is principal behavior described as friendly, supportive, open and collegial. A genuine concern of a principal for the welfare of the teachers is identified here. *Resource Support* refers to a school where adequate classroom supplies and instructional materials are available and extra resources are supplied readily if requested.

The final two dimensions are regarded as technical level. *Morale* is described as a collective sense of friendliness, openness, enthusiasm, and trust among faculty members. A school rating high in this dimension would encompass teachers that liked each other and their jobs, help one another, feel a sense of accomplishment from their work, and feel pride for their school. *Academic Emphasis* is the extent to which a school is driven by a quest for academic excellence. A school with high levels of academic emphasis would set high, but achievable goals for students, the learning environment would be orderly and serious, teachers would believe in their students' ability to achieve, and students work hard and respect those that perform well academically.

The final version of the original Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) was a 44-item instrument that mapped the organizational health of secondary schools along seven dimensions (Hoy & Feldman, 1987). More recently, Hoy has expanded the development and use of OHI to the OHI-Revised Middle (OHI-RM) a 45-item Likert questionnaire measuring six dimensions of the health of middle schools: academic emphasis, teacher affiliation, principal influence, collegial leadership, resource support, institutional integrity (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). Most recently, the OHI for elementary schools was developed as a 37-item Likert questionnaire measuring five

dimensions of school health: Institutional Integrity, Collegial Leadership, Resource Influence, Teacher Affiliation, and Academic Emphasis (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991; Hoy & Tarter, 1997). Institutional Integrity (II), as previously described, describes a school that is not vulnerable to community interests and teachers are protected from unreasonable outside demands. Collegial Leadership (CL) refers to friendly, supportive, open, and equal principal behaviors. Resource Influence (RI) describes the principal's ability to affect the action of superiors to the benefit of the teachers; teachers are given adequate supplies. Teacher Affiliation (TA) refers to a strong affiliation with the school among teachers. Finally, Academic Emphasis (AE) refers to a school's expectations for achievement.

Organizational Health and Teacher Efficacy

A study by Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) examined the relationships between teacher efficacy and the aspects of a healthy school climate. A random sample of teachers from 37 New Jersey urban and suburban elementary schools completed the Teacher Efficacy Scale and the OHI for elementary schools. Results indicated that a healthy school climate (high ratings on a majority if not all of the six dimensions) was conducive to the development of personal teaching efficacy. Therefore, the results suggest that teachers' confidence that they can successfully reach students is supported by organizational factors. Furthermore, the data indicated that institutional integrity and morale predicted general teaching efficacy, further demonstrating that the two dimensions of teaching efficacy (personal and general) are separate sets of beliefs.

Purpose

The focus of this investigation was to collect qualitative data from two rural schools regarding organizational health and teacher efficacy. Qualitative data collection is useful when

sample size is small and the subject is relatively unstudied. Currently, there is no evidence to show if Hoy's and Woolfolk's measures correspond to what an investigator may gather qualitatively or observe.

The focus of this investigation was to build upon Hoy's and Woolfolk's (1993) study. However, here organizational health and teacher efficacy were studied in two rural schools using both the measures developed and modified by Hoy and Woolfolk followed by participant interviews. Ultimately, the researcher aimed to determine if the instruments dovetail with participant perceptions and researcher observations.

Chapter 2: Method

Research Questions

The following questions were addressed in this research study: (1) Based on the researcher's observations, do the OHI and TE measures appear to have face validity?, (2) Do the two schools differ with regard to organizational health?, (3) Does the OHI accurately capture the differences?, (4) Do the two schools differ with regard to teacher efficacy?, (5) Does the TE measure capture the differences?

Because qualitative research is inductive in nature, it is difficult to hypothesize outcomes. However, good qualitative research typically generates themes. It was hypothesized that this research would capture multiple themes from each school individually as well as general themes from both schools.

Qualitative Research

Qualitative research methods are becoming more accepted in the field of social sciences due to the greater depth of understanding obtained from qualitative analyses (Berg, 1998).

Dabbs (1982) makes a distinction between quantitative and qualitative research indicating that quantitative research refers to counts and measures specifically, whereas qualitative research refers to such things as meanings, characteristics, and descriptions. Using qualitative research to study an agency's meanings and characteristics through examining the social setting and its inhabitants is a procedure that seems more natural to a growing number of social science researchers (Berg, 1998).

Taking a multi-dimensional approach to data collection and analysis (triangulation) strengthens the support for an investigator's/observer's findings (Denzin, 1988). Qualitative methods used by researchers fall along a continuum ranging from controlled (e.g., standardized survey) to uncontrolled procedures (researcher observation). Thus, researchers must evaluate the nature of the study, the social setting, and the inhabitants to determine the specific procedures or combination of procedures to be used (Berg, 1998).

Once collected, data must be organized and analyzed to provide interpretations. Ryan (2003) names *theme identification* as one of the most fundamental tasks in analyzing qualitative research. He defines themes as, "abstract, often fuzzy, constructs which investigators identify before, during, and after data collection" (Ryan, 2003, p. 85). Ryan outlines a number of the theme identification techniques in existence based on such methods as: word analysis, comparison/contrast, and social science approach (2003).

The word repetition approach directly assesses the words people use, by observing the language. Ryan describes words that are used often as salient in the respondents' minds (2003). An informal word repetition analysis would involve simply noting words commonly used by a respondent.

In the compare/contrast approach, investigators note similarities and differences in data obtained. Glazer and Strauss (1967) refer to this as the *constant comparison method*. Using this approach, the investigator would question participants to gain further insight into how one participant's perceptions may compare to another participant's perceptions or the investigator's observations.

A social science approach to qualitative research involves assessing for evidence of such things as social conflict, interpersonal relationships, status, and problem solving (Ryan, 2003). Strauss and Corbin (1990) discuss the importance of an investigator's sensitivity to context and conditions in an effort to fully understand the system or individual being studied.

Qualitative research, although informative, does not predict future behavior. Rather, the approach focuses on describing current behaviors which in turn help us to understand, modify, and possibly prevent some behaviors in the future (Polkinghorne & Gribbons, 1999).

In this study, interviews were created to allow for follow-up and additional data to be collected focusing on the OHI and TE measures. For the OHI, interview questions were developed directly following the five organizational health dimensions outlined by the authors. Each dimension was represented by an interview question (e.g., How do people get along?- Teacher Affiliation). A similar approach was taken for developing the interview questions addressing the TE measure. Based on the definition of teacher efficacy outlined by the authors, four questions were developed to address the teachers' perceptions of strategies and responses to challenges in the field (e.g., What is the most challenging part of your role as a teacher? How do you respond to the challenges?).

Once interviews were complete, participant responses were noted in entirety then analyzed for overall themes, similarities and differences. Additionally, for each participant, interview responses were compared to measure responses to determine the correlation of information and to even assess the validity of responses in some cases. Additionally, school interview responses were assessed for overall themes, similarities and differences. School qualitative data was then compared to quantitative data obtained by the measures to determine if similar results were produced.

Observations and perceptions were also an integral part of this evaluation. The researcher observed, followed-up on interviews, questioned others, and noted perceptions throughout the research process in an attempt to thoroughly assess and report each school's climate and teacher efficacy levels.

As a district intern, the researcher was able to have access to a more thorough observation and assessment of both schools. The researcher worked in both schools and had contact with all teachers through interviews, observation, and informal conversation. In addition, the researcher had access to third-party information that provided insightful and supplemental information in many areas. Observations and perceptions noted and reported in this study are based not only on information obtained from the researcher's current position as district intern, but also based on the ongoing contact with the district since 2006 relating to a year-long field placement experience and an additional research project.

Participants

The participants in this study were 12 teachers from two rural New York elementary schools (School A and School B; 6 teachers from each school) located in the same district.

School A enrolls approximately 495 students (Grades K-5) and School B enrolls approximately 68 students (Grades K-5).

In addition to size, the two schools vary in additional ways. School A is located in an area of higher SES levels. Children attending School A are a mix of children of teachers from the district, medical and business professionals from the area, and some from lower SES families. Children attending School B are primarily low SES. The overall mentality of the district is that School A is the goal location for teachers and students. Families living in the School B area can choose to send their children to School A however, most do not. Additionally, teachers can put in requests to move between schools if openings exist; however, teachers from School A have very infrequently moved to School B and teachers from School B rarely get placed at School A. Most recently, a teacher from School B was moved to School A. This teacher was considered to be exceptional, thereby, justifying the transition. The move caused considerable tension among the teachers of School B.

With regard to appearance, School A is a newly renovated facility with large classrooms, newer desks and equipment, Smartboard technology, two gymnasiums, a large lunchroom with picture windows, two faculty rooms, and a fitness room for faculty and staff. School B is an older building and substantially smaller than School A. There is a faculty room that doubles as a mental health clinic facility operated by a nearby university in the evening, a small gym, and small classrooms containing older furniture and equipment. In addition, construction in School B has been ongoing for a number of months resulting in sections of the school being covered and access denied.

Teachers at School A present themselves professionally in dress, wearing dress pants or skirts each day with the exception of district-wide “dress down days.” Teachers from School B do not appear to as consistently adhere to the dress code policy. During district-wide events, teachers from the schools were not observed to interact across schools, but rather maintained contact with teachers from their respective schools.

Overall, Schools A and B are quite different with regard to size, appearance, teachers, families, and location. Ultimately, from an outsider’s view, one may not realize that the two schools are part of the same district. Consequently, they also appear to operate independently of one another. Furthermore, teachers from School B appear to take great pride in their independence and lack of need for administrative leadership.

The participants varied based on age, gender, educational level, years of teaching experience, and years of experience within the current school. For School A: average teacher age was 32 years, all six participants were female and had obtained a master’s degree, average years as a teacher was ten, and average years teaching in School A was also ten. For school B: average teacher age was 37 years, four participants were female and two participants were male, five participants were master’s level and one was bachelor’s level, average years as a teacher was twelve, and average years teaching in School B was eight.

Variables

Teacher efficacy is defined as a teacher’s belief in his/her ability to have a positive effect on student learning. Organizational health is defined as critical aspects of organizational life that meet the instrumental and expressive needs of the school social system (Hoy, Podgurski & Tarter, 1991; Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991).

Instruments

Variables of general teaching efficacy (outcome expectations about the consequences of teaching) and personal teaching efficacy (reflects self-efficacy expectations in relation to one's own teaching) were measured using the Teacher Efficacy Scale- Short Form (Gibson & Dembo, 1984) as adapted by Woolfolk & Hoy (1988, 1990). A semi-structured interview addressing perceived teacher efficacy constructs as measured by the Teacher Efficacy scale was also conducted (see Appendix D).

The Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) for elementary schools was used to assess dimensions of the schools' health. The OHI is a 37-item instrument that measures five elements of school health: Institutional Integrity, Collegial Leadership, Resource Influence, Teacher Affiliation, and Academic Emphasis. Items appearing on the inventory are descriptive statements in which participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each statement characterized their school along a four-point Likert scale from "rarely occurs" to "very frequently occurs." Responses produce means for each item which can be converted to standardized scores (SdS) for each of the five dimensions using normative data provided by the authors.

Each scale has a relatively high reliability coefficient as indicated by the developers (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Alpha coefficients for each subtest were as follows: institutional integrity (.86), principal influence (.83), consideration (.91), resource support (.87), morale (.89), and academic emphasis (.72).

A semi-structured interview was also conducted to obtain additional information regarding OH perceptions. Participants were asked to briefly discuss the five dimensions of organizational health relating directly to the constructs derived from the OHI (see Appendix D).

A demographic survey (Appendix C) was completed by each participant to assess: gender, age, education level, years experience as a teacher, and years employed in the school as a teacher.

Procedure

Participants were selected from the two predetermined elementary schools (School A and School B). Participants were provided with a letter of informed consent briefly describing the research and explaining confidentiality (Appendix E). Upon agreement to participate, the teachers completed the demographic survey, the OHI, and the Teacher Efficacy Scale in the presence of the researcher. The researcher then interviewed and audio taped the participants regarding perceived organizational health and teacher efficacy. Interviews followed the outline described in Appendix D.

Analyses

Qualitative organizational health and teacher efficacy data obtained from the participant interviews were analyzed for themes prior to the computing of scores from the measures in an attempt to control for confounding variables and to increase validity. Interview themes were extracted using the methods outlined by Ryan (2003). Data obtained from the measures and from the interviews were compared to determine if the findings matched and produced similar profiles. In addition, observer perceptions were noted. Demographic data was analyzed using

means to provide a profile of each school's sample. The Organizational Health Inventories and Teacher Efficacy Scales were scored based on the procedures outlined by the authors.

The OHI measure was scored for each respondent resulting in an individual score on each subtest. Then, an average school score for each item was computed to be used to calculate each school's overall health profile. Furthermore, the average school score (for School A and School B) for each subtest was computed, compared using an independent-sample t-test, and then converted to standardized scores using the data provided by the authors. For the TE measure, the scores from all teachers were combined to calculate an average score for both Schools A and B.

Chapter 3: Results & Discussion

Microsoft Excel 2003 was used to calculate the means, standard deviations and t-test statistics. Qualitative data was assessed using theme identification techniques such as: word analysis, comparison/contrast, and the social science approach outlined by Ryan (2003). In addition, observer perceptions were noted.

Teacher respondents appeared to participate in the interviews actively and were engaged in the interview questions. Responses provided appeared to be genuine and honest. When asked to elaborate on certain areas, participants did so without reservation. Some participants responded in ways that would be considered to be somewhat reserved, however were effectively able to express their true feelings through a careful selection of words and phrases. Other participants were very literal in their responses and reported vivid feelings and opinions. Teachers participated on a volunteer basis and were told prior to the interview questions being asked that they were not obligated to answer all interview questions and could refuse to answer

or even end the interview at any point. No participants exercised this right. These observations indicate that the participant responses overall are reliable and useful for interpretation.

Organizational Health

Participants' responses on the OHI were averaged for each of the five subtests for both School A and School B by summing the average school scores as outlined by Hoy, Tartar and Kottkamp (1991). Descriptive statistics for teacher OHI data are summarized in Table 1.

Using the method and data provided by the authors of the measure, subscale means for Schools A and B were converted to standardized scores (SdS) with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. As shown in Table 2, standardized scores yielded categorical comparisons. Based on the normative data provided by the authors used as a comparison, for Institutional Integrity, School B reported near average scores and School A reported lower than average scores. On the dimension of Collegial Leadership, both schools reported higher than average scores, with School A reporting slightly higher scores. For Resource Influence, both schools reported lower than average scores, with School B reporting higher scores overall. On Teacher Affiliation, School B reported higher than average scores while School A reported less than average scores. Lastly for Academic Emphasis, both schools reported similar, lower than average scores.

Overall Health Inventory (HI) scores were determined for both schools by averaging the standardized scores. The authors also provide categorization criteria for standardized scores in this area. As summarized in Table 2, the reported HI for both schools was less than average based on the comparative data provided. School B reported higher scores than School A.

Institutional Integrity (II).

The standardized scores for II differ by approximately one standard deviation with School B reporting slightly higher scores. A t-test indicated that there was not a significant effect for means ($t(10) = 1.54, p > .05$).

Institutional Integrity is defined as describing a school that has integrity in its educational program (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). A school reporting high scores in II would be expected to not be vulnerable to narrow, vested interests of the community groups and to be an environment where teachers feel protected from unreasonable community and parental demands. Therefore, results from the OHI standardization would indicate that School B teachers see slightly greater integrity in their academic programs and feel more protected from unreasonable demands.

Qualitative data was obtained by first asking teachers, “Tell me about the school’s central philosophy.” This question was then followed by more specific questions regarding external demands as the observer deemed necessary in an attempt to gather sufficient data.

Teachers from School B identified such themes as helping students reach his/her goals and potential, encouraging the development of productive individuals, meeting individual needs, and creating problem solvers and life-long learners. Teachers described the school to be like a “family” and mentioned a “nurturing” quality. One teacher responded to this question with, “nice in a nurturing way.” Another teacher identified the school as adaptive, “we roll with the punches...we all adapt easily.” In addition, this teacher indicated that the teachers make many decisions at this school, that parents are supportive and that there are not many outside demands. Another teacher confirmed this by indicating that demands are not an issue, but rather that the

parents are uninvolved, “as long as we have their kids for 7.5 hours of the day they are happy.”

Another teacher stated that school is the only structure many of the children have, “a lot of kids don’t get that extra help at home.”

The teacher interview responses do, indeed, reflect a focus on the children’s education, but likely not in the programming integrity that the authors may have intended. The teachers of School B appear to focus more on educating the children for life beyond the classroom.

Additionally, the protection from unreasonable demands may not have been accurately assessed with the OHI, as teachers indicated an uninvolved parental community. Multiple teachers reported not having parental demands to be protected from. Therefore, the reported II score may not be truly representative for School B.

The reported scores for School A were slightly lower than School B in the area of Institutional Integrity. But, interestingly, School A appeared to the observer to have a stronger sense of academics and integrity of the educational program. Walking into the building of School A one would immediately see a sign that reads, “In this school, children are our first priority.” Teacher reports seem to support this display of integrity. When asked to tell about the school’s central philosophy, teachers from school A reported things such as: commitment, children as the “core,” programs geared towards children, helping children find their way, and proactive approaches. Additionally, teachers from this school commonly referenced some variation of the school’s vision or mission statement when first responding to this question: “All children will grow and succeed in their own way,” “create students to enter the world as creative and critical thinkers and to be successful citizens.”

Addressing the area of external demands, teachers from School A reported that communication and parental inclusion in the classroom is an expectation, parents are vocal and opinionated at times, parents are known to be appeased due to fear of retaliation by parents, and that there is substantial teacher pressure. The teachers identified these external demands from the community as both positive and negative. Although the pressure keeps the teachers working hard and self-monitoring, it was reported as very stressful at times (e.g., “unnerving to be under a microscope”) and even affecting their decision making in the classroom. Overall, however, there seemed to be consensus that the integrity of the program holds up to the outside demands.

It is evident that School A and B are facing very different external demands. School A is facing very involved, active, and vocal parents, whereas School B is facing under-involved, even distant parents who, at times, devalue education and the system. School A appears to respond to its challenges by maintaining open lines of communication and instilling trust in families. School B appears to respond by being the student’s “family” and even working toward instilling educational values in the child. It does not appear that either school truly possesses more Institutional Integrity than the other, but rather, it appears that the OHI has possibly measured two very different aspects of this variable.

A close evaluation of the OHI items for this subscale indicated that the items of the OHI that produce the II score may have been interpreted differently for Schools A and B. One item of the OHI, “The school is vulnerable to outside pressures,” is an example. For School A, participants rated this item (reverse scored) as “often occurs” or “very frequently occurs” which resulted in a low score contributing to the overall II score. School B participants rated this item as “rarely occurs” or “sometimes occurs” resulting in a high score contributing to the overall II

score. Interestingly, School B participants indicated in the interview that there were not outside pressures to respond to, whereas School A participants identified very involved, active, and vocal parents in the community. A similar response pattern existed for, “Community demands are accepted even when they are not consistent with the educational program,” “Teachers feel pressure from the community,” and, “A few vocal parents can change school policy,” with teachers from School A identifying more demands.

Based on the standardized scores, both schools (A and B) were categorized as lower than average on the II dimension with school B approaching the average range. However, based on the observer’s perceptions and the participant interviews, it is unclear as to whether the OHI has accurately measured institutional integrity as it is defined by the authors. School B does not have many outside demands with regard to pressure; therefore, this may not have been an accurate assessment of how the school deals with such demands. Additionally, there are many other demands affecting the integrity of the academic programs that were not assessed on the OHI’s II scale, such as family dynamics and a lack of investment in education from families.

School A appears to have a great deal of community involvement; however, it is unclear from the OHI data if the pressure from vocal parents is viewed as positive or negative by the reporting teachers. The OHI appears to be assessing negative pressure. Teachers in interviews indicated that although difficult at times, the demands and pressures keep them responsible and committed to the educational programs.

In summary, based on the standardized scores, Schools A and B reported similar, lower than average scores with regard to Institutional Integrity. An interesting aspect of discrepancy is the external demands between Schools A and B that surfaced in the qualitative data. This

discrepancy resulted in questions regarding the accuracy of the variable being assessed for School B.

Collegial Leadership (CL).

The standard scores for CL were similar for Schools A and B with teachers from School A reporting slightly higher scores. Results of a t-test indicated that there was not a significant effect for means ($t(10) = 0.164, p > .05$).

Collegial Leadership refers to behavior by the principal that is friendly, supportive, open and guided by norms of equality (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Furthermore, a school rated high in CL would likely have a principal that sets the tone for high performance with known expectations.

Qualitative data was obtained by first asking teachers, “Tell me about the school building leadership.” This question was then followed by more specific questions regarding external demands as the observer deemed necessary in an attempt to gather sufficient data.

Interestingly, the two schools operate very differently in this area. School A has a building principal who previously was employed as a teacher in the building. School B has a building principal who is beginning his second year in the building on a part-time basis. He has dual roles in the district, also serving as the district curriculum coordinator.

In the interviews, teachers from School A identified their building leader to be the building principal. Teachers described this individual as “innovative,” “approachable,” “open to new ideas,” and a “great leader.” Overall, the principal was described as being respected in the building. Furthermore, this individual was described as a “networker” having “connections

with people and with kids” so she “gets what she wants because she has good relationships built.” She was also described as a “mover and a shaker” relating to change.

With regard to negative aspects, teachers indicated that the building principal deals with many external demands that prevent her from making decisions in some cases. However, this too was framed positively. One teacher stated, “I commend her for how she keeps it together, how she handles it... she always has a positive attitude.” Some teachers did indicate that the principal is very busy and is often unavailable due to district commitments at the district office. However, some teachers indicated that the principal is prompt at responding to concerns and will “make time” to address issues as they arise. But others described her as hard to reach and indicated that things could be “done differently” with regard to the delegation of responsibilities.

For school B, one teacher described the day-to-day building principal as “very weak,” strict, and “by the book,” but “trying.” However, multiple teachers indicated that they are comfortable going to him and stated that he interacts with the students and teachers. These teachers also described him as “visible,” “supportive,” and as having an “open door policy.”

When asked to describe the building leadership one teacher responded, “I think all the teachers are leaders at times, there is not a dictatorship. Everyone is sort of an equal. I think everyone is pretty much on the same level.” Another responded, “Our school nurse is a big part of the leadership. She is from our community...knows the kids and the background.”

All items on the OHI that determine the CL subscale begin with, “The principal...;” therefore, the measure clearly identifies the leadership to be evaluated within this subscale. Participants from school B appeared to assess the building principal on the OHI because those

were the clear directions; however, when asked in an interview, they identified a number of other individuals as actual leaders in addition to, and even as opposed to the building principal.

Both Schools A and B rated CL within the higher than average range based on the comparative data provided. For School A, interviews and observer perceptions would yield higher than average results confirming the categorization provided by the OHI on the CL subscale. Participants described the principal from School A to be innovative, approachable, a great leader and respectful.

For School B, participants produced mixed descriptions of the principal. Some participants described him as open and helpful while others described him as weak, unavailable, and focused on policy. They indicated that the principal is often out of the building for other responsibilities, but when he is in the building appears to be available. Based on these interview responses and observer perceptions, it appears that a categorization of average may be more accurate for School B than the OHI categorization of higher than average.

Resource Influence (RI).

An assessment of means for Schools A and B yielded a significant effect ($t(10) = 2.723$, $p < .05$) with School B reporting higher scores for RI. RI refers to the principal's ability to affect the action of superiors to the benefit of teacher. Furthermore, schools rated high in RI would provide adequate classroom supplies and extra instructional materials for teachers (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Qualitative data was obtained by asking teachers, "Tell me about supplies and materials." This question was followed with additional questions and prompts as needed in an effort to obtain thorough information.

An assessment of the OHI scale items for this subscale indicates that two factors are being assessed in this subscale: resources and principal influence over resources. These two factors may be better evaluated by looking at them separately for the schools.

In general, teachers from School B indicated that they had the necessities with regard to resources and materials. They discussed the process of requisitioning for materials and most stated that the money provided them with most of what was needed. Teachers indicated that at the beginning of each year, they created a supply list in which parents were required to provide a number of supplies for students to supplement the needs (minimal supply contribution). Teachers from School B indicated in their interviews that the school is very old and many of the desks and chalkboards are originals. With regard to supplies, they stated that they “are not lacking anything directly,” are “provided with enough to get us by,” and that they “make it work.” When asked about personally supplementing materials, teachers from School B indicated that they utilize the educators’ \$250 tax credit to supplement and spend approximately that amount each year in supplementary materials for the classroom.

On the OHI, items factoring into the RI subscale were responded to as “often occurs” or “very frequently occurs,” producing higher subscale scores on this aspect of the subscale RI. Such items included: “Teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms,” “Teachers receive necessary classroom supplies,” and “Supplementary materials are available for classroom use.” These responses indicated that teachers from School B are satisfied with the materials that they are given and that are available.

When asked about resources, teachers from School A discussed concerns. Overall, teachers indicated that budgets are tight, requisitions provide minimal resources, and that they

rely on parents to provide additional supplies as well as on their own personal monetary supplementations. Specifically, teachers from School A indicated that they spend anywhere from \$500.00 to \$5000.00 per year personally in their classrooms. Teachers indicated that the requisition money “doesn’t go far,” and covers “only the basics,” so they must prioritize materials needed and that funds get smaller each year. Although resources appear to be a concern, most teachers also indicated that they do have comparatively more than most other schools. To the observer, it appears that School A has a great deal of resources. Most classrooms are full of materials, resources, and activity items. There are plenty of textbooks for the children and the library is a large space full of books. Additionally, computers are in all of the classrooms and loaded with many academic programs. It appears that there may be some discrepancy between resources and expectations in School A. However, it should be noted that the observer is unable to determine what resources are provided by the teacher personally as supplemental materials.

For School A, items on the OHI contributing to the RI influence subscale score as it relates to resources and materials specifically, were rated lower than that of School B. Most teachers rated the items (e.g. “Teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms”) as “sometimes occurs.” Receiving the lowest scores was the item addressing the availability of supplemental materials. This finding is interesting, as it appears to the observer that School A has more resources. However, there may be higher expectations for teachers in School A than in School B with regard to supplies, thus producing the discrepancy in data.

For the second aspect of this subscale, influence of the principal over resources, School B teachers indicated most commonly that the principal does not have much influence and indicated

this by low responses to items such as, “The principal gets what he or she asks for from superiors,” and, “The principal is able to influence the actions of his or superiors.” Similarly, teachers of School A also reported minimal influence by most commonly responding by rating the items on this subscale low. As a district, it appears that the superintendent is the governing position with regard to policies, procedures, and resources. Therefore, based on the observer’s perceptions, the responses obtained from teachers of both Schools A and B with regard to the influence of the principal over resources would be accurate. Furthermore, for both Schools A and B, it appears that the overall below average subscale score of RI may be largely affected by the OHI items relating to the second aspect of this subscale, the influence of the principal over resources.

OHI data from both schools A and B indicate that reports for RI are lower than average based on the comparative data, but significantly different, with School B reporting higher scores. From the observer’s perceptions and interviews, there seems to be a discrepancy between the OHI outcomes and the qualitative data. The first issue is that of two aspects being present within one subscale. The subscale is assessing both materials/resources as well as the principal’s influence over resources. It is apparent that the differing responses to these two aspects within the same subscale may have caused some discrepancy in the overall subscale score. In addition, it is apparent that Schools A and B have different opinions and expectations with regard to “adequate classroom supplies.”

Teacher Affiliation (TA).

The standard scores for TA for Schools A and B were different with School B reporting higher scores. Results of a t-test indicated that there was a significant effect for means ($t(10)=2.75, p<.05$).

Teacher Affiliation refers to a sense of friendliness and strong affiliation with the school (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Furthermore, a school rated high in TA would likely have teachers who feel good about each other, have a sense of accomplishment from their jobs and show enthusiasm. Qualitative data was obtained by first asking teachers, “How do people get along?” This question was followed by more specific questions regarding affiliation and accomplishment as needed.

Teachers from School B reported that they get along well and compare their group to a family. One teacher said, “We all get along. We may have a disagreement, but it never lingers and we all get over it.” Another said, “We get along really well. It’s like a family including the students and parents.” Yet another responded by saying, “We are very family- and community-gearred. There are times when we all just sit in the hallway and play games.” This teacher also described the feeling as “homey.” The teachers indicated that a relationship between them exists beyond the classroom; meeting for dinner or other non-school events commonly occurs.

Observer perceptions support these reports. This group of teachers appears to be very united. During district-wide events, they commonly remain as a small group during leisure time or group activities. There appears to be a bond between them and they seem very comfortable together.

Assessing responses on the OHI for this dimension, teachers responded to items such as, “Teachers in this school like each other,” “Teachers in this school exhibit friendliness to each other,” and “Teachers express pride in their school,” most commonly with “often occurs.” A number of responses were endorsed as “very often occurs” with only a few as “sometimes occurs.” Overall, based on OHI responses, it appears that teachers from School B feel very strongly regarding their level of affiliation and pride for their school.

Teachers from School A reported that, in general, individuals are kind to one another, professional, willing to work together, and working towards common goals. One teacher stated, “We all have common goals. Everyone is kind to each other for the most part...we act professionally.” However, some teachers did indicate the presence of certain groups of individuals not working toward the common goal. One teacher said, “Certain groups don’t work well together.” Another said, “There are different dynamics and personalities and a sense of competition between some teachers.” Another interesting response that occurred addressed the overall lack of interaction that happens in the building. One teacher indicated that she is only close with a few individuals and that “there are many (teachers) that I don’t know very well.” Another said, “You don’t see everyone on a daily basis. I can go all year without seeing some people.”

Assessing responses on the OHI for this dimension, teachers responded to previously noted items most commonly with “often occurs,” while some were endorsed as “sometimes occurs.” Overall, based on OHI responses, it appears that teachers from School A feel that teachers interact well, respect one another, and take pride in their job and accomplishments.

An assessment of interview responses and observer perceptions indicates that the OHI may have accurately assessed TA with regard to Schools A and B. Although both schools appear to employ teachers with a common goal of helping the children be successful, there does appear to be a definite difference between schools based on their levels of affiliation among teachers. Teachers from School B define the relationship among teachers as being “like a family.” They appear to work well together, support each other, and genuinely care about each other on a professional as well as personal basis. Teachers from School B even describe spending time with one another outside of the school. Teachers from School A do not appear to possess the same degree of cohesiveness. Although, they too, are professional and respectful of one another in most cases, there does not seem to be the same degree of affiliation as is seen and reported in teachers from School B. Although size may be a factor in this difference, it appears that the teachers themselves contribute greatly to these relationship standards based on actions and expectations.

Based on the OHI criteria and comparative data, teachers from School B reported Teacher Affiliation to be higher than average, whereas teachers from School A reported TA to be lower than average. Although a difference between Schools A and B clearly exists, and School B does indeed appear to be functioning higher than average with regard to teacher affiliation, the categorical descriptor may not be accurate for School A. Although, some competition and lack of communication and interaction is present, there does not appear to be enough data to support that School A is functioning lower than average on this dimension. Observer perceptions view School A as functioning in the average range for TA. Teachers appear to be interacting and accommodating one another at a level to be expected for a school of its size.

Academic Emphasis (AE).

The standard scores for AE were similar for Schools A and B with a very minimal difference between schools. Results of a t-test indicated that there was not a significant effect for means ($t(10) = 0.133, p > .05$).

Academic Emphasis refers to the school's press for achievement (Hoy, Tarter & Kottkamp, 1991). Schools reporting high scores on this dimension would likely possess an expectation of high achievement. In addition, such expectations would be met by students who work hard, are cooperative, seek extra work, and respect others who get good grades.

Qualitative data was obtained by first asking teachers, "Tell me about the learning environment and goals for students." This question was followed with more specific questions as needed.

Teachers from both schools reported a positive environment that is student-centered. School A reported the environment for learning to be "great and positive," that state standards are reflected on teachers, that classroom resources are dynamic, and that the school provides appropriate accommodations for students. One teacher discussed challenging students in the classrooms. She said, "We try to bring up the struggling kids and those that excel sometimes get left out, but we keep that in mind and try to avoid it." With regard to accommodating all students, one teacher said, "We are open to all types of children with special needs...including them in the classroom." Another stated that the school has many proactive services such as Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and progress monitoring systems "to bridge the gap between students." One teacher focused on the classroom environment as being the vehicle to success. She stated,

My goal is a welcoming, safe and happy environment. They know that I am happy to be here with them. It is important for them to feel that this is a comfortable, safe and friendly place where they are allowed to make mistakes and have a bad day. As long as we are consistently treating everyone with respect and kindness...if we have that environment then the learning will just happen.

Similarly, teachers from School B reported working to make the school a fun place to be for the children, focusing on individual goals for students, and again described their school as a community that fostered academic success. One teacher said, "Our learning goals are related to standards, but it also depends on where they are currently working and where you would like them to be (by a certain time)." Another said, "It is a child-centered environment. We want them to continue learning after school. We focus on individual children and what they like by targeting their interests...waiting for that 'ah-ha moment.'" Although most teachers from School B saw the academics to be challenging, one teacher stated, "There is less pushing because of the lower economic area here." Compared to School A, School B does appear to be more flexible in their curriculum and student goals. As indicated by the teachers, they focus on a more individualized approach rather than focusing to get all students at the same level.

Items on the OHI reflecting AE included: "Students are cooperative during classroom instruction," and, "Students try hard to improve on previous work." Most teachers from both schools endorsed these items as "often occurs." For items, "Students respect others who get good grades," and, "Students seek extra work so they can get good grades," teachers perceived this most commonly as "sometimes occurs." Teachers indicated that seeking extra work is not

often an option due to the amount of work required each day. However, they indicated that many students read or do academic activities at home.

Based on the OHI criteria and comparative data, teachers from both School A and School B reported Academic Emphasis in their schools to be lower than average. Based on interviews and observer perceptions, this descriptor appears inaccurate. Some caution should be taken in the evaluation of this dimension. The measure appears to be evaluating AE based on student behaviors. However, when asked about AE, teachers from School A and School B discussed school environment as well as teacher and school programming or goals. It appears that the OHI is measuring the behaviors of students pertaining to academic emphasis even though the definition set forth by the authors indicates “the school’s press for achievement.” Based on interviews and observations, both schools would more accurately be represented as within the average range for AE.

Health Inventory (HI).

The overall index of school health, Health Inventory (HI), was computed for both schools based on the criteria set forth by the authors. Descriptive criteria provided by the authors categorized the HI of School A as Low and the HI of School B as Average. Results of a t-test indicated that there was not a significant effect for means ($t(8) = 0.537, p > .05$). However, in contrast to the results of the statistical analyses, the qualitative data suggest a notable difference with School B reporting higher overall Organizational Health.

On the OHI, teachers in School A reported the strongest areas in their school to be Collegial Leadership and Academic Emphasis. They reported the weakest areas to be Resource Influence and Teacher Affiliation. Overall, based on the scoring criteria and descriptive

categories of the five dimensions on the OHI for School A, one was above average (CL), one was near average (AE) and three were below average (II, RI, and TA).

The strongest areas reported for School B were Collegial Leadership and Institutional Integrity. The weakest areas reported for School B were Academic Emphasis and Resource Influence. Overall, based on the scoring criteria and descriptive categories of the five dimensions on the OHI for School B, two were above average (CL and TA) and the other three were near average (II, RI, and AE).

Based on observer perceptions and interviews, both schools appear to be functioning as well as or better than other comparative schools in regard to overall health. Both schools' atmospheres are those of child-centered, learning focused educational institutions employing individuals dedicated to educate young minds and develop positive beliefs and values. Although both schools have areas of weakness, it appears that the strengths outweigh the weaknesses.

Teacher Efficacy

As summarized in Table 1, descriptive data for teacher efficacy was similar for Schools A and B with both having means above the measure's midpoint, school B reporting slightly higher scores. These results indicate that teachers from both schools endorsed items on the measure in a way that reflects positive, well-developed efficacy with regard to teaching.

Specifically, items such as, "When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students," and, "If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his/her achievement," evaluated teachers based on their overall sense of ability to reach students academically. Teachers from both Schools A and B responded to these items confidently by endorsing "strongly agree" or "moderately agree" in all cases.

Additionally, the TE measures assessed the level to which teachers feel that parents and home environment limit student success in the classroom. These responses may in fact result in the slightly higher score obtained by teachers from School B overall.

Items such as, “If parents would do more for their children, I could do more,” and, “When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can’t do too much because most of a student’s motivation and performance depends on his or her home,” were responded most commonly with “agree slightly more than disagree” or “disagree slightly more than agree” by teachers from school A, indicating that the teachers feel some sense of loss of control with regard to overcoming external influences on academic success. Responses from teachers of School B indicated a slightly higher sense of control with regard to such external forces. Their responses appeared slightly more neutral or positive, thus endorsing some items as “moderately disagree.”

Scores for the Teacher Efficacy measure were compared using a t-test and the difference between means, ($t(10) = 1.337, p > .05$) was not significant. Therefore, teachers from the two schools appeared to be similar overall with regard to teacher efficacy as measured by the TE measure.

Teachers from both schools were asked to discuss their teaching philosophies and strategies. Follow-up questions addressed challenging roles, responding to challenges, and confidence in abilities and strategies.

A number of teachers from School A identified an important philosophy in teaching to be striving to find a student’s best learning strategy and directing instruction in that manner. Additionally, teachers discussed the need to try different techniques, give students choices in learning (“They need to feel some control over their day.”), to differentiate instruction, and to

communicate with parents (“Keep them informed and involved...keeping them involved is huge!”). One teacher stated, “I believe that all children learn differently, you have to find their best learning pattern. What works for one student doesn’t always work for another. You have to factor in behavior; some need more reinforcement than others.” Another said, “I became a teacher because that is all I ever wanted to do, it is who I am. It’s a love, a passion. I really try to work with them...I just really try to find their strengths and what they need.”

With regard to challenges, Teachers from School A identified a number of different challenges to the career: meeting student needs at different levels, communicating with parents, understanding the diverse home situations and helping the students look past their home lives to the importance of education, and meeting the state education standards. Teachers from School A were able to effectively identify how they respond to such challenges. In response to the challenges presented regarding the variable needs of students, teachers indicated that they utilized a number of different strategies including group work, partner projects, hands-on projects, capitalizing on student strengths, and practicing new teaching techniques. One teacher identified working with the parents to be the greatest challenge of all. She said, “The most challenging part of being a teacher is the parents. You have to have that communication though. Finding a fine line of communicating with them [parents] and keeping them afloat of what is going on in the school... and not crossing the line [so they are] making 20 phone calls a day.”

Teachers also identified the home lives of the children to greatly affect their work in the classroom. One teacher said, “They [children] come from backgrounds without a lot of structure sometimes, school is not made to be important. It’s hard to bat against that.” Another said, “There are students, well parents that just don’t care about homework.” Similarly, meeting the

challenges described as students' "home lives" was described as an even more difficult situation. Teachers identified strategies such as establishing a personal relationship with the children, making school fun, and finding something motivating to students to work on.

With regard to meeting the state standards, one teacher said, "I am required to teach two hours of reading, an hour of math and...What about the kid whose dog got hit last night?...Where do I fit that in? They are children..." Teachers indicated that they do their best to fit in what they can, but also accept that they must be flexible and prioritize. One teacher stated, "Some students need extra practice. I take the time to do extra activities. I find a way to fit it in. Ten minutes is better than nothing."

When asked how confident they were with their teaching abilities and strategies, teachers from School A overall responded very confidently. Two teachers assigned a numeric score to their confidence level, "On a scale of 1 to 10..." Those teachers rated themselves as a 6 and an 8.5. Other teachers stated that they were confident noting that confidence increases with experience and years in the field.

In general, teachers from School A appeared very confident in answering questions regarding challenges as well as ways in which to respond. Furthermore, most indicated room for growth. Based on these reports and observations, it would appear that the Teacher Efficacy measure accurately assessed self-reported TE for teachers in School A.

Similar findings were presented by teachers from School B. Teachers identified similar teaching philosophies and strategies as teachers from School A including: trying different ways to present material, focusing on students' needs, and teaching students to enjoy learning. Some teachers from School B identified a major challenge to be directly related to child motivation

and family world views with regard to academics. One teacher specifically described the challenge as, “Motivating kids to want to come to school everyday and learn.” Another identified the challenge as, “Having them leave knowing and really believing that learning is important.”

Additionally, teachers from School B talked about teaching children to be problem solvers and teaching them how to learn outside of school. One teacher described teaching students to be “life-long learners.” Another discussed creating a learning environment where the students are comfortable, problem-solvers, and love learning. She said,

They see me more often than they see anyone at home. I want to be someone that instills that love of learning for them. There is nothing better than when a kid brings in a book that they have been practicing all week so that they can read it to you.

Another said, “I teach them not only reading and math, but also how to be in the community and that’s something they are going to take on their whole lives.”

Similar to School A, teachers from School B identified their responses to such challenges to include: finding ways to motivate the students, making learning fun, communicating with students and parents, differentiating instruction, and changing classroom dynamics. In addition, teachers from School B focused on the personal approach to teaching. One teacher said, “If I show them that I genuinely care and make it enjoyable for them, it makes them want to be there.” Similarly, another described the importance of showing the students how excited she, as the teacher, was to be at school. She stated, “If they see I am happy to be there everyday, they will be happy and excited, too.”

When asked how confident they were with their teaching abilities and strategies, teachers from School B responded very confidently. Teachers from School B reported more confidence with regard to teaching abilities and strategies than teachers from School A. Similar to School A teachers, some responded with a numeric value (7.5 and 9). Another teacher responded that he is “extremely confident.” Most teachers recognized the factor of experience and its role in confidence. These teachers indicated, “I wouldn’t say I am an outstanding teacher, I think I’m good at it, but it [confidence] is a constantly changing and evolving creature,” “...with more experience maybe higher. Experience increases confidence,” and, “I have much more [confidence] now [than my first year]...now with experience and working with the parents.”

Overall, teachers from School B reported what appeared to be personally effective strategies and responses with regard to challenges. Based on these reports and observations, it would appear that the Teacher Efficacy measure accurately assessed self-reported TE for teachers in School B. Additionally, teachers from School B appeared to report slightly higher levels of TE than School A. These results may be related the reported challenges of increasing positive views of academics and effective communication in addition to meeting the everyday challenges in the classroom. Teachers from School B appear to be responding to these challenges well, in a way that is reflective of their level of teaching efficacy.

Contributions of the Measures

The measures used in this study, The Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) and The Teacher Efficacy Scale (TE), provided useful information into the health of the two schools studied and the efficacy of teachers employed. In comparing quantitative data obtained by the measures for both schools, observations were made regarding areas of strength and weakness for

each school. Comparing quantitative data obtained by the measures to qualitative data obtained by interviews and observer perceptions provided additional data with regard to the utility of the measures with the samples included.

In assessing the five OHI dimensions, data suggested that significant differences existed between schools on two dimensions (Resource Influence and Teacher Affiliation). These results were further assessed using the qualitative data to ensure that the differences were accurately captured. Results for Teacher Affiliation appeared to be accurately represented by the OHI after comparing all data. However, qualitative data for the Resource Influence dimension indicated that participants from Schools A and B may have differing perceptions of adequate resources, thereby, directly affecting the resulting scores. Adding items to the scale assessing actual levels of resources available to a school or staff member may be useful in gaining accurate insight into perceptions of resources and influence over resources.

Additional discrepancies were noted when qualitative data was evaluated. The two schools differed greatly with regard to outside demands (e.g., parent and community demands). Therefore, scores may have been inaccurately reflected due to the perceived increased demands at School A and the perceived absence of demands at School B. Adding items to the scale assessing actual levels of external demands, as well as the nature of the demands (i.e. positive versus negative), may be useful in gaining accurate insight into perceptions of demands and the management of demands.

Similarly, participants from both Schools A and B reported lower than average levels of Academic Emphasis, based on reported student behaviors on the OHI. However, in the interviews, participants reported high levels of Academic Emphasis in discussions relating to

school environment, programming, and district and teacher goals. Therefore, for this dimension, data may not have been accurately assessed by the OHI due to the OHI's narrow focus and definition of this dimension. Adding items to the scale that further assess Academic Emphasis from the approach of school environment, programming, and goals may provide useful data rather than the current items that focus narrowly on student behaviors alone.

The evaluation of Collegial Leadership produced interesting results relating to assumptions surrounding item responses. For School B, teacher participants indicated in interviews a number of individuals whom they consider to be leaders within their school. The OHI assumes that the items contained within this dimension are evaluating the leadership of the building principal. It appears that participants from School B did not respond to the items within this dimension under this same assumption.

Overall Organizational Health levels obtained by the measure for School B appeared to accurately represent School B. However for School A, quantitative data alone produced an under-representative picture of overall health. As previously mentioned, some data obtained by interviews did not match the data obtained by the measure. This lack of agreement has been determined to be greatly influenced by assumptions made or misinterpretations in the measures' questioning or dimensions weak in items addressing a particular concept.

Teacher efficacy in both schools appears to have been accurately assessed using the TE measure. The measure provided data related to responses to challenging behavior and attitudes towards environmental influences on children consistent with that reported in interviews. Quantitative outcomes closely reflected qualitative data obtained through interview and observer perceptions.

Overall, the measures were effective in producing a profile of each school's organizational health on the five dimensions as well as for teacher efficacy levels that could be compared to show strengths and weaknesses between schools. However, categorization labels provided by the authors for standardized scores were interpreted with caution due to the difference between the urban normative sample and the current rural sample. In addition, the normative data categorization resulted in a broad middle area of classification (neither above nor below average) which may have failed to provide an accurate depiction of results.

Implications

Information obtained from the OHI measure may be useful in comparing schools within a district for purposes of professional development or district-wide change initiatives. This study has indicated that standardized results derived from normative comparison data should be interpreted with caution when evaluating schools different from the normative sample; therefore the measures may best be used as a comparative analysis between schools.

Specifically, OHI results can be analyzed along the five dimensions to determine areas of strength and weakness between schools. For example, a school obtaining below the average results on Teacher Affiliation may target teacher relations in an effort to build positive relationships among teachers by developing support groups or team building activities. Strengths could be further assessed to determine strategies to target less developed dimensional areas.

Teacher Efficacy Scale results could be assessed to determine overall levels school-wide as well as specific areas of strengths and weaknesses. Scores provide data reflecting overall levels of teacher efficacy without a concrete comparative criteria, but an evaluation of individual

questions may provide data reflecting specific areas of efficacy (e.g., If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him/her quickly.) Like the OHI data, these results may also provide direction for professional development or peer support groups.

The development and use of qualitative interviews in combination with quantitative measures is a practice which allows for not only the assessment of the validity of the measure with the given population, but also provides additional data beyond what the quantitative measures target. This study shows that participants may perceive items on standardized measures differently than intended, may not feel that an item is applicable to them or their school or that they may wish to elaborate on a response. Such information, lost in purely quantitative data collection, may serve to be critical to the evaluation of a school or group of individuals. The combination of quantitative and qualitative research in schools may provide the most comprehensive data.

Ecological validity, the degree to which the behaviors observed and recorded in a study reflect the behaviors that actually occur in natural settings, is assumed to be high in this study due to the qualitative design. Due to the observations of the facilities and the interviewing of participants in their natural setting without controls, the data obtained is assumed to be a reflection of actual behaviors and opinions of participants.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

While the qualitative nature of this study allowed for an in depth examination of two schools, the results can not necessarily be generalized to other school systems. However, the comparative analysis and outcomes of data obtained by standardized measures and qualitative

data makes the results substantive enough to use as a basis for future hypotheses and research designs.

The sample of participants in this study was limited due to the small number of teachers in School B. Therefore, randomized participation was not possible for School B; all teachers were asked to participate. Teachers from both schools volunteered to participate in response to a request recruiting participation.

In this study, qualitative data was obtained by interview questions developed by the researcher using the corresponding measure as a reference guide. Interview questions followed a semi-structured format. Future studies may use modified forms of the interviews to create a structured interview format. Assessing the relationships between data obtained from the measures and data obtained from structured interviews may provide more direct comparisons of the variables.

In this study, interview questions directly addressed each of the five dimensions of OH. Future studies may also consider collecting data with a less direct approach thereby determining if participants do in fact identify the five dimensions proposed by the authors of the OHI and if additional areas are identified. Participants, in this case, may be asked a non-directional question such as, "Tell me about your school." This question would provide an opportunity for an open-ended response in turn allowing for participants to address the areas that they most strongly identify with. The validity of the five dimensions could be assessed with this type of research design. In addition, this approach would yield further information into the utility of the present dimensions.

Two rural schools from one district were studied. Future studies may seek to study a number of rural schools from multiple districts to further assess the applicability of the standardized scoring criteria and labels derived from an urban sample. Additionally, more participants from each school should be included to ensure accuracies in organizational health and teacher efficacy profiles.

Lastly, interview descriptions and observer perceptions noted and described in this study were those of the researcher. Efforts were made to minimize biases including: the use of audio recordings, multiple reviews of interviews, and analyzing qualitative data prior to quantitative data. Future studies may consider training researchers to interview participants and conduct observations to further minimize limitations.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Teacher and School Health Variables

Organizational and Personal Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Institutional Integrity (II)		
School A	13.17	2.71
School B	15.83	3.25
Collegial Leadership (CL)		
School A	28.99	4.79
School B	27.67	5.72
Resource Influence (RI)		
School A	15.66	1.05
School B	19.17	3.13
Teacher Affiliation (TA)		
School A	22.84	1.90
School B	27.67	3.19
Academic Emphasis (AE)		
School A	13.83	1.72
School B	13.99	2.61
Health Inventory (HI)		
School A	20.10	6.21
School B	22.07	5.34
Teacher Efficacy (TE)		
School A	39.83	4.75
School B	44.67	7.47

*Normative data provided by Hoy, Tarter and Kottkamp (1991):

Institutional Integrity	16.06	2.77
Collegial Leadership	24.43	3.81
Resource Influence	20.18	2.48
Teacher Affiliation	26.32	2.98
Academic Emphasis	14.66	1.59

Table 2: Standardized Scores (SdS) for School Health Variables

Organizational Variable	SdS	Descriptor
Institutional Integrity (II)		
School A	395.67	lower than average
School B	491.7	near average
Collegial Leadership (CL)		
School A	619.69	higher than average
School B	585.04	higher than average
Resource Influence (RI)		
School A	317.74	lower than average
School B	459.27	lower than average
Teacher Affiliation (TA)		
School A	383.22	lower than average
School B	545.30	higher than average
Academic Emphasis (AE)		
School A	447.80	lower than average
School B	457.86	lower than average
Overall Health Inventory (HI)		
School A	432.82	Low
School B	450.93	Average

*Scores based on $M = 500$, $SD = 100$

Appendix A

OHI-E

DIRECTIONS: THE FOLLOWING ARE STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH EACH STATEMENT CHARACTERIZES YOUR SCHOOL BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

R0=RARELY OCCURS SO=SOMETIMES OCCURS O=OFTEN OCCURS V=VERY FREQUENTLY OCCURS

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist... | RO SO O VFO |
| 2. The principal gets what he or she asks for from superiors..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 3. The principal discusses classroom issues with teachers..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 4. The principal accepts questions without appearing to snub or quash the teacher.. | RO SO O VFO |
| 5. Extra materials are available if requested..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 6. Students neglect to complete homework..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 7. Students are cooperative during classroom instruction..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 8. The school is vulnerable to outside pressures..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 9. The principal is able to influence the actions of his or her superiors..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 10. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 11. The principal goes out of his or her way to show appreciation to teachers..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 12. Teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 13. Teachers in this school like each other..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 14. Community demands are accepted even when they are not
consistent with the educational program..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 15. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 16. Teachers receive necessary classroom supplies..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 17. The principal conducts meaningful evaluations..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 18. Students respect others who get good grades..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 19. Teachers feel pressure from the community..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 20. The principal's recommendations are given serious
consideration by his or her superiors..... | RO SO O FVO |
| 21. The principal maintains definite standards of performance..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 22. Supplementary materials are available for classroom use..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 23. Teachers exhibit friendliness to each other..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 24. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 25. Select citizen groups are influential with the board..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 26. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of faculty members..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 27. Teachers express pride in their school..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 28. Teachers identify with the school..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 29. The school is open to the whims of the public..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 30. A few vocal parents can change school policy..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 31. Students try hard to improve on previous work..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 32. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 33. The learning environment is orderly and serious..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 34. The principal is friendly and approachable..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 35. There is a feeling of trust and confidence among the staff..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 36. Teachers show commitment to their students..... | RO SO O VFO |
| 37. Teachers are indifferent to each other..... | RO SO O VFO |

Appendix B

Teacher Efficacy Scale (Short Form)*

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix C

Demographic Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your response to the following questions regarding your background by circling the appropriate response at the right of each statement.

1. Gender Male Female
2. Current Age _____
3. Completed Education Bachelors Masters Masters+
4. Number of completed years as a teacher _____
5. Number of completed years as a teacher in *this* school _____

Appendix D

Interviews

Organizational Health

1. If I asked you to describe your school using only two adjectives, which two would you choose?
2. Tell me how you like this work environment.
3. Tell me about the school's central philosophy.
4. Tell me about school building leadership.
5. Tell me about supplies and materials.
6. How do people get along?
7. Tell me about the learning environment and goals for students.

Teacher Efficacy

1. Tell me about your teaching philosophies and strategies.
2. What is the most challenging part of your role as a teacher?
3. How do you respond to the challenges?
4. How confident are you in your teaching abilities and strategies?

Appendix E

Informed Consent- Teacher

Dear Teacher,

My name is Nichol Moses and I am currently working towards completing the doctoral program for the Division of School Psychology at Alfred University. In order to do so, I must create a research project (dissertation) in an area of interest to me, as well as relevant to the field of school psychology. I have designed a project to assess the validity of two measures used to study the organizational health of a school and a teacher's level of efficacy.

The project will include completion of 3 brief surveys and a brief interview. The surveys will include: a demographic survey, a survey assessing the organizational health of the school called the *Organizational Health Inventory*, and a survey assessing teacher efficacy called the *Teacher Efficacy Scale*. The interview will include questions relating to these scales. The entire process should take approximately 20-30 minutes.

Interviews will be audio taped so that responses can be analyzed through notes or transcription. If you are not comfortable with audiotaping during your interview, please do not hesitate to let me know, I am willing to forego taping if necessary.

All information regarding your school including the tapes and rating scale information that you provide will be carefully guarded and remain confidential. Your name or other identifying information will not be included, only a number. Tapes and surveys will be stored in a secure location, only accessible to the researcher or assistants. In addition, assistants will sign out tapes to ensure confidentiality and security. The only individuals who will have access to the surveys and interviews will

be me, research assistants, and my dissertation committee which is comprised of Alfred University professors.

Please note that you will not receive individualized scores or information related to the surveys or interviews. Each participant's information will correspond with a code number not a name. Additionally, schools will not be identified by name or location.

It is unlikely that, as a participant, you will receive any direct benefits of participating in the study. However, it is possible that information gained from this project may contribute to the field of school health and teacher efficacy and training. No risks are known by participating.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. If for any reason you decide that you would like to discontinue your participation, simply tell me that you wish to stop or withdraw from the study.

If you have any questions about this project or would like to withdraw from participation (which you may do at any time without consequence) please contact me, Nichol Moses, at nae1@alfred.edu. In addition, you may also contact my dissertation chairperson, Dr. Cris Lauback, Division of School Psychology, Alfred University at 607-871-2212 or Chair of the Human Subjects Research Committee, Alfred University, Dr. Jana Atlas at 607-871-2212.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nichol Moses, MA

Alfred University

Consent Form

N. Moses Research Project

By signing below, you indicate that you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in this study and that the procedures involved have been described to your satisfaction. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this form for your own reference. In order to participate, you must be at least 18 years of age. If you are under 18, please inform the researcher.

/_____/____

Participant's Signature

Date

By signing below, you indicate that you are voluntarily agreeing to be audio taped during the interview component of this research project.

/_____/____

Participant's Signature

Date