SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGISTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATORS’ LEADERSHIP
STYLES AND OTHER FACTORS IMPACTING JOB SATISFACTION

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Education Department
Carson-Newman University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education
By
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March 2017
Dissertation Approval

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Abstract
The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles and the other factors of years of experience, role diversity, and number of school placements impacting job satisfaction of school psychologists working at public schools in the state of Tennessee. Overall, 96.44% of school psychologists indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job. Participants in this study indicated no significant differences in their job satisfaction ratings based on their preferred administrative leadership style. The overwhelming majority of school psychologists indicated a preferred administrative leadership style of transformational leadership with the most desired characteristic being inspirational motivation. When considering variables such as years of experience, role diversity, and number of school placements that have previously been found to have a positive impact on school psychologists’ job satisfaction in relation to preferred administrative leadership style, no significant differences were noted until all the variables were considered together. A significant main effect was found with role diversity, indicating that school psychologists with low role diversity (70% or above of time spent in assessment) reported significantly lower job satisfaction ratings than those who reported medium or high role diversity.
Dedication

From an early age, I was introduced to the world of school psychology as I saw my dad go to work each day. He taught me that every child has a purpose, value, and the ability to learn and grow regardless of their circumstance. Now that I have followed in his footsteps, I am continually humbled by the people who pour their lives into students. From the front office staff to janitors, teachers, teaching assistants, counselors, and administrators, each day I am surrounded by adults cheering on and fighting for students to achieve their dreams. This work is dedicated to those who believe in a world where every child’s social, emotional, and academic dreams are important.
Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my dissertation committee members for their efforts and expertise in this process. Dr. Brenda Dean, my dissertation chair, has been a source of encouragement as she set high standards for the end result. Dr. Christopher Shon and Dr. Michael Sobiech have given willingly of their time to offer feedback and support.

To my parents, Mark and Susan Whorley, the words thank you are truly not enough. You have offered a listening ear daily as I have worked to balance work, school, and relationships. Thank you for loving me unconditionally and telling me you’re proud of me even on my hardest days. To my dad, you are the reason I am passionate about the field of school psychology. Thank you for setting the bar high within your own practice. To my mom, thank you for showing me what a strong and dynamic leader looks like in the workplace. I see myself becoming more like you each day and that makes me proud.

To my brother, Lieutenant Commander Brett Whorley, thank you for your example of dedication and service to our country. I have always looked up to you and I am incredibly proud of what you have accomplished. Thank you for your example of leadership and determination even over the many years when you have had to serve away from your family.

To my boyfriend, Jeff, thank you for your encouragement and support on many hard days. You have been my shoulder to lean on and a place where I can feel safe when the world seems chaotic. Thank you for continual kindness, love, and support.

To Dr. Laura LaChance, your leadership and friendship are the catalyst that set this work in motion. You are truly the definition of a transformational leader. Thank you for casting a wonderful vision for our students and motivating your staff to work well beyond our own expectations. I miss working with you each day, but am incredibly grateful for all that you have invested in me.

To my friends, Joanna, Melanie, Sarah, Cara, Rebecca, Amanda, Alicia, Sally, Michelle, Aarti, Cory, Nicole, and many more that would take up the rest of this page. Thank you for the memories and laughter you bring to my world each day. My life is fuller because you are in it. You are my home away from home.

Finally, to the school psychologists that I serve beside within our public schools. You are the unsung heroes that often walk the hallways with little recognition from students or staff. Thank you for your dedication to students with social, behavioral, and academic needs. You came into this field to make a difference and you truly do.
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Chapter One

Introduction and Background of the Study

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2010) described the basic training of a school psychologist as encompassing six dynamic roles within an educational environment. At a systemic level the individual helps to improve school-wide assessments for academic and behavior, helps create a positive and safe school climate, and strengthens the relationships between families and the school. At a student level, school psychologists are expected to support the diverse learning needs of students while improving academic achievement and promoting positive mental health and behaviors. These roles have expanded in the past decade with the changing of federal guidelines in IDEA as well as the expanded use of Response to Intervention models (VanVoohis & Levinson, 2006). At the core of these roles is a simple premise: school psychologists are depended on to make critical and important decisions about children which can have life-long effects (Levinson, Fetchkan, & Hohenshil, 1998).

In addition to the numerous roles that school psychologists play, they must also balance the expectations of a variety of individuals. School psychologists are members of multi-disciplinary teams which often include general education teachers, special education teachers, speech-language pathologists, consultants (i.e. behavior and autism), physical therapists, academic coaches, occupational therapists, and administrators (Gilliam & Coleman, 1981). These teams vary depending on the school placement. A traditional placement involves two to three schools that can range from preschool to high school. NASP recommends one psychologist for every 1,500 students with an explicit recommendation of 500 to 700 students for those...
psychologists attempting to deliver comprehensive and integrative services (NASP, 2010).

School psychologists must balance the job demands and expectations placed upon them by multidisciplinary team members as well as the parents and children (Wise, 1985). All of these placements require the school psychologist to maintain the function of coordinating and working with various systemic and school subsystems without explicitly belonging to any one subsystem (Niebrugge, 1994). Considering these job demands, it is not surprising that Connolly and Reschly (1990) reported a relatively high turnover rate within the field with attrition rates ranging from 5% (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014) to 35% (Knoff, 2002). Trends also show insufficient numbers of school psychologists completing graduate programs to replace those retiring (Curtis, Grier, Abshier, Sutton, & Hensley, 2002).

In order to strengthen the retention of school psychologists, it is important to recognize the factors that contribute to job satisfaction and strengthen their prevalence within the school setting. Niebrugge (1994) found that a school psychologists’ satisfaction with their supervisor was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction. The relationship between administrators’ leadership style in relation to school psychologists’ job satisfaction is important when considering the substantial impact that school administrators have on the educational environment.

**Statement of the Problem**

This study’s research problem examined how school psychologists’ job satisfaction was impacted by their perceptions of administrator leadership styles. Administrator leadership styles have been found to have a significant impact on teachers’ job satisfaction (Hallinger, 2007; Hardman, 2011) as well as student outcomes (Hill, 2013). Yet, little research has been conducted
on the relationship between administrator leadership styles and school psychologists' job satisfaction.

From the field's inception in 1890, there has been a significant gap between the demand of school psychologists and the number of individuals available to fill the positions (Fagan, 2004). Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) reported a deficit of approximately 3,500 school psychologists per year that will continue through the year 2025. With increasing retirement rates and a small number of individuals enrolling in graduate training programs, a concerted effort must be made to retain school psychologists and promote the field. With the practical implications of schools operating without school psychologists on a day to day basis, administrators at both a building and systems level must consider how to recruit and retain these professionals (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014). One avenue is to understand the factors that directly impact school psychologists' job satisfaction. This study focused on filling the gap in the research by understanding what role various factors play in impacting school psychologists' perceptions of administrative leadership styles as well as school psychologists' job satisfaction.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x) survey (Avolio & Bass, 2004) and the effect on job satisfaction of school psychologists working at public schools in the state of Tennessee as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). The variables of this study were determined by reviewing the previous literature and are a reflection of the research questions that drove the purpose of the study. Role diversity, experience, and relationships with coworkers all have a direct impact on school psychologists' job satisfaction. The present study sought to
understand what role these various factors played in impacting school psychologists’ perception of administrative leadership styles.

**Significance of the Study**

Numerous studies have considered the role of administrative leadership styles and its impact on teacher job satisfaction (Hauserman, Ivankova, & Stick, 2013; Hill, 2013; Richards, 2005). However, there has been limited data collection regarding school psychologists’ perceptions of administrator leadership styles in relation to job satisfaction. This is unfortunate when considering the important role school psychologists play in decisions regarding adherence to state and federal law with students with disabilities. As Niebrugge (1994) discussed satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction for school psychologists. The relationship between school psychologists and administrators is important to examine when considering the substantial and varied impacts that school administrators contribute to the educational environment in which the psychologist practices. By investigating school psychologists’ perception of administrator leadership styles and the effect on job satisfaction, increased clarity in communication of goals and expectations may occur. In addition, this information can be used to help recruit and retain effective school psychologists.

**Theoretical Foundation**

Job satisfaction and leadership styles have been defined as multifaceted and complex concepts across a variety of fields. For the purpose of this study, the theoretical foundation for job satisfaction is based on the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954), theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), and the range of affect theory (Locke, 1976). These theories of job satisfaction are viewed in conjunction with the predictors of job satisfaction specific to school psychologists. Finally, the theoretical foundation for educational
administrative leadership is based on Bass’s (1985) and Avolio’s (1999) definition of leadership theory which delineates between transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is the essential concept in the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954). Organized into five levels, Maslow attributed an individual’s behavior to a combination of environmental and motivational factors. These needs are described as: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem, and self-actualization. Individuals who achieved self-actualization have a belief in a cause and devotion to a vocation, including being satisfied with one’s job (Hill, 2010; Maslow, 1954).

The theory of work adjustment developed by Dawis & Lofquist (1984) described the relationship of an individual to their work environment. This theory is built on the idea that a reciprocal relationship is found between an individual and their environment; a person impacts their work environment and their work environment impacts the person. Individuals participate in work as an avenue to meet their needs. This thought is similar to Maslow’s (1954) theory of human motivation. However, Maslow’s hierarchy is described as a common set of needs for all people, while the theory of work adjustment views needs as unique to the individual.

Locke’s (1976) range of affect theory was founded on the understanding that job satisfaction is determined by the relationship between what one wants in a job and the extent to which the job matches those wants. The range of affect theory shares similarities with Dawis & Lofquist’s (1984) theory of work adjustment in that the interaction between aspects of the work environment and the individual dictates the individual’s job satisfaction. Higher levels of job satisfaction are seen when the individuals’ expectations closely align with the facets of the job (Locke, 1976). Locke believed that each employee gives priority to one aspect of the job and that
prioritization is different for every individual. In order to guarantee job satisfaction, the most important facet must be identified for each employee, and the employer must ensure this facet is met (Ray & Ranjan, 2011).

VanVoorhis and Levinson (2006) completed a meta-analysis to understand job satisfaction for school psychologists. Of the 2,116 school psychologists surveyed, 85% of participants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their job. When considering the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954), theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), and the range of affect theory (Locke, 1976) in relation to school psychologists, it appears that there are prominent predictors at both the individual and group level. Greater job satisfaction is reported when psychologists are involved in activities beyond that of assessment (Proctor & Steadman, 2003; Badhesha & Wilson, 2013). This was reiterated by school personnel who in addition to assessment expressed a need for more consultation, collaboration on pre-referral interventions, and counseling services (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Hgemeier, Bischoff, Jacobs, & Osmon, 1998).

More experienced school psychologists also reported higher job satisfaction than psychologists with less than five years in the profession (Mackoniene & Novile, 2012; Wilczenski, 1997). Mackoniene and Novile (2012) stated more seasoned school psychologists feel a greater sense of assurance in their job skills and receive less negative feedback. This is consistent with Gerken and Landau (1979) who reported school psychologists with at least four years of experience were perceived as more effective by supervisors and classroom teachers. These more experienced psychologists may be more cognizant of the concept of adapting as compared to their younger colleagues (Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, & Osborne, 2008).
VanVoohis and Levinson (2006) also reported higher levels of job satisfaction when school psychologists expressed positive relationships with their coworkers. This was consistent with Wright and Gutkin’s (1981) research that saw a higher contribution of job satisfaction when strong interpersonal relationships were reported between school psychologists and other school personnel. Components of these interpersonal relationships included effective communication with whom the school psychologist had frequency contact. In addition, a positive relationship with immediate supervisors was noted. Niebrugge (1994) found that satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction among school psychologists and accounted for 30% of the variance in factors. Those who expressed satisfaction with supervisors stated these individuals provided feedback, technical assistance, and support.

Clear goals and feedback from coworkers were also noted as contributors to job satisfaction (Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, & Osborne, 2008). This seems inherent when considering that school psychologists must balance the job demands placed upon them by administrators, teachers, parents and children (Wise, 1985). These job demands can often seem in direct opposition to one another. Huebner (1992) reported a significant relationship between burnout, of which job dissatisfaction is a contributor, and feelings of being caught between a child’s various needs and the administrative constraints.

Jantzi and Leithwood (1996) developed six dimensions of leadership practices in the school setting. These dimensions included articulating a clear vision, promoting cooperation among staff members and asking them to work together to achieve goals, and providing individualized support to staff members rooted in respect and concern for their personal feelings and needs. Richards (2005) found that the same five administrator leadership styles were
articulated by teachers regardless of variables such as career stage. These styles were consistent with Bass’s (1985) definition of transformational leadership.

Burns (1978) defined leadership as the complex relationship that considers the dynamics of conflict and power that is linked to a collective purpose within an environment. Leadership is judged by social change that occurs as well as the satisfaction of human needs and expectations. Burns was the first to introduce the concept of a transformational leader. Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) expanded upon Burns’ work to define leadership as a range of leadership behaviors and styles. Three distinct views of leadership are described: transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire. Transactional leadership is considered an exchange between two people that requires extraneous reward(s) for the services that have been rendered (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership focuses on the empowerment of individuals by collaborating and sharing decision making. Laissez-faire leadership is considered the most inactive style and involves the absence of a relationship between the leader and their follower (Avolio, 1999).

Leaders within the educational environment who demonstrate characteristics of transformational leadership have been described as positive and effective leaders (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002). Although transformational leadership styles are encouraged with various leadership practice recommendations (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996), the impact of administrative leadership styles on school psychologists’ job satisfaction has limited research. Therefore, few conclusions can be drawn about the type of administrator leadership styles that school psychologists desire in order to positively affect their job satisfaction. In addition, it is uncertain whether various factors such as role diversity, number of school placements, and years of experience further effect school psychologists’ perception of administrative leadership styles.
Research Questions and Null Hypotheses

These research questions were developed based on a review of literature as well as to address the purpose of this study. This study was designed to answer the following research questions.

1. What is the relationship between administrator leadership styles as perceived by school psychologists and school psychologists’ job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who have greater role diversity within their school and perceived administrator leadership styles?
3. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who travel to more than one school and perceived administrator leadership style?
4. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists with varying years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?
5. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?

These hypotheses will investigate the potential relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction, school administrators’ leadership style, and school psychologists’ demographic variables.

H1-A1

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on administrator leadership styles.

H1-A0
There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on administrator leadership styles.

H2-A₁

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity within their schools and administrator leadership styles.

H2-A₀

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity within their schools and administrator leadership styles.

H3-A₁

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on number of school placements and administrator leadership styles.

H3-A₀

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on number of school placements and administrator leadership styles.

H4-A₁

There are statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

H4-A₀

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

H5-A₁
There are statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity, school placement, years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

H5-A0

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity, school placement, years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

Limitations and Delimitations

Instrumentation. This study only analyzed the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Other scales included in the MSQ would show information about job satisfaction in more specific areas rather than a global overview. In addition, leadership styles are defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) which reflect the leadership styles measured by the MLQ5x survey (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Other scales that measure alternate leadership styles may reveal information about school psychologists’ perceptions of leadership styles that were not addressed by this survey tool.

Characteristics of Responders. Survey and questions will be collected using a convenience sample of school psychologists within the state of Tennessee. This limited geographical sample may affect the ability to generalize the results of this study to larger populations or alternate regions. Additionally, school psychologists cannot be randomly assigned into groups because the groups (e.g. school placement, role diversity, etc.) already exist. Although survey information will be sent to all practicing school psychologists listed in the Tennessee Association of School Psychologists (TASP) listserv, the specific characteristics of those who choose to complete the survey cannot be controlled. In addition, only school
psychologists employed in a school setting were asked to take part in this study. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to school psychologists in alternate settings.

**Population.** The target population only included practicing school psychologists in the state of Tennessee. Tennessee school psychologists’ perception of administrative leadership styles may differ from those practicing in other regions of the United States. In addition, with the recent implementation of RTI² as the model for identifying students with learning disabilities, school psychologists may have different needs from their administrators during this time period.

**Administrative Behaviors.** Within this study, the actual administrator leadership styles with whom the school psychologists work with were not measured. The information collected from the school psychologists are solely their perceptions of what styles they desire from their administrator.

**Assumptions**

There are several assumptions of this study that should be noted. First, the study assumed that the MSQ (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) that was originally developed to be used in a business setting is a suitable instrument to identify levels of job satisfaction of school psychologists who practice in the schools. Next, there is an assumption that the convenience sample used was appropriate for this study. Finally, it is assumed that school psychologists have direct interaction with their administrators that will impact their perceptions of their administrative leadership styles.

**Definition of Terms**

School Psychologist–a professional who is highly trained in psychology and educational assessments and interventions (NASP, 2010). The focus of their work is to collaborate with
educational staff, parents, and students in order to help students succeed academically, socially, and behaviorally.

Job Satisfaction—the congruency between what an individual wants in a job and the extent to which the job matches those wants (Locke, 1976); and the degree to which individuals enjoy their job experience and their perceptions of its discreet aspects. Scores on the MSQ (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967) range from 20 to 100 with larger numbers indicating higher levels of job satisfaction.

Administrator Leadership—the complex relationship that considers the dynamics of conflict and power that is linked to a collective purpose within an educational environment (Burns, 1978). Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) define three distinct leadership styles: transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire.

Experience—represents the years of experience (tenure) in the profession. Experience is defined by four subgroups: (a) up to 5 years, (b) 6 to 10 years, (c) 11 to 15 years, and (d) 16 years or more experience (Wilczenski, 1997).

School Placement—a school psychologist who is assigned to one building in a school district is defined as in-house (Proctor & Steadman, 2003). A traveling school psychologists is assigned to more than one building within a school district.

Role Diversity—variety of roles utilized by school psychologists within their current work environment. These roles include assessment, consultation, intervention planning, counseling, research, and program evaluation (Curtis, Hunley, Walker, & Baker, 1999). Role diversity is defined by three subgroups (low, medium, high) based on reported time spent on assessments: (a) low role diversity—70% or above of time spent on assessment, (b) medium role diversity—
between 69%–40% of time spent on assessment, and (c) high role diversity-39% or below of time spent on assessment.

Summary

School psychologists are members of multidisciplinary teams that focus on both system and student level decisions that help support diverse learning needs of students including their academic achievement and mental health behaviors (NASP, 2010). The field of school psychology continues to experience a significant gap between the demand of school psychologists and the number of individuals available to fill the positions (Fagan, 2004). In order to strengthen the recruitment and retention of school psychologists, administrators at both a building and systems level should understand the factors that directly impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014).

Based on the job satisfaction theories of human motivation (Maslow, 1954), theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), and the range of affect theory (Locke, 1976), predictors of job satisfaction for school psychologists such as role diversity, years of experience, number of school placements, and relationships with coworkers were reviewed. Niebrugge (1994) found that satisfaction with supervision was the best overall predictor of job satisfaction for school psychologists. Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) defined three distinct leadership styles: transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire. Yet, limited research has focused on the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and administrator leadership styles. The research questions of this study focused on understanding how factors such as role diversity, years of experience, and number of school placements impact the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and their perceptions of administrator leadership styles as defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999).
Organization of the document

This research study was organized into five chapters. Chapter One provided an introduction to the study which included the theoretical framework, statement of the problem, and significance of the study. The research questions and hypotheses were presented, followed by the operational definitions. The study’s limitations and delimitations were described. Chapter Two provides an in depth review of the relevant literature regarding job satisfaction, school psychologists’ job satisfaction, and leadership styles. Chapter Three describes the methodology used for this research study. The chapter includes information about setting and selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures. Chapter Four presents the data and details the study’s findings and analysis of the data. Chapter Five provides a summary of the entire study’s results and discusses the significance of the data. Implications for this study as well as recommendations for future studies are detailed.
Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

This chapter provides an overview of the literature that was important to the development of the current study. A brief history of the field of school psychology is presented in order to give an overview of the profession as well as show how a shortage of school psychologists has existed since the field was established. School systems and administrators must consider how to recruit and retain school psychologists. One avenue is understanding the factors that impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Definitions of job satisfaction are reviewed and the theoretical framework of the current study is presented. With these theories in mind, the specific factors that research has shown to effect school psychologists’ job satisfaction (e.g. role diversity, experience, and relationships with coworkers) are detailed. The impact of school administrators is addressed as well. Expectations of administrators within the educational settings are reviewed. A general overview of leadership is presented with specific attention to the definition of leadership utilized in the current study: Bass (1985) and Avolio’s (1999) model of transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The connections between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and administrator leadership styles are also presented.

The Supply and Demand of School Psychologists

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP, 2010) described the basic training of a school psychologist as encompassing six dynamic roles within an educational environment. At a systemic level the individual helps to improve school-wide assessments for
academic and behavior, helps create a positive and safe school climate, and strengthens the relationships between families and the school. At a student level, school psychologists are expected to support the diverse learning needs of students while improving academic achievement and promoting positive mental health and behaviors. NASP’s description of a school psychologist’s expected roles is a massive expansion from the job requirements noted when the profession began in 1890. However, as Fagan (2004) noted, a shortage of school psychologists has been pervasive since the field’s inception.

The birth of modern day school psychology occurred from approximately 1890 to 1970 (Fagan & Wise, 2007). Known as the Hybrid years, practitioners from widely varying backgrounds began using psychometric testing for special education eligibility (Fagan, 2004). In 1933, Symonds proposed the idea of having a school psychologist in every school in order to help meet the educational needs of students (Fagan & Wise, 2007). Although this idea appeared not to have substantial impact, some schools agreed that further personnel were needed. For example, a proposal for New York City Schools posted in the 1930s asked for up to 4,000 additional school psychologists (Fagan, 2004). At that time, the number of trained school psychologists did not exist. In the absence of qualified personnel and in order to fill the need, many schools hired teachers and trained them to perform psychological assessments.

The demand for psychologists within the schools began to substantially increase following World War II (D’Amato, Zaffiris, McConnell, & Dean, 2011; Fagan, 2004; Fagan & Wise, 2007). During that time, school enrollment grew as well as the need for special education services (D’Amato, Zaffiris, McConnell, & Dean, 2011). The establishment of special education services required school psychologists’ services (Fagan, 2004). This created a close tie between the two fields and led to the assessment focused identity of the profession. In 1954, the Thayer
Conference was held in order to define the training and roles of a school psychologist. This conference solidified the field as its own specialty (D’Amato, Zaffiris, McConnell, & Dean, 2011). By 1967 the demand for school psychologists was substantial and the American Psychological Association (APA) Division 16 addressed the shortage at their convention (Fagan, 2004; Farling, 1967). Statistics about the shortage were cited for many states including Ohio. Ohio at the time employed 272 psychologists, but stated that immediate placements were available for over 200 more psychologists if they had been available to hire.

As the field solidified its’ identity and the demand of school psychologists increased, practicing school psychologists continued to push for role expansion within their jobs (Fagan & Wise, 2007). Role expansion was a prominent focus of the 1981 Olympia Conference which was held to investigate the future of school psychology. However, the passage of P.L. 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (1975) had recently re-solidified the focus on assessment skills (Fagan, 2004; Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014). P.L. 94-142 required all public schools to provide equal access to education for children with disabilities; once again increasing the demand for school psychologists. By 1989 there were more than 1,400 school psychology positions unfilled in the United States (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014).

Shortages have remained within the field as legislation continues to solidify the need for school psychologists within public schools. One substantial legislative impact was the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004. IDEA indicated that states could now utilize a Response to Intervention (RTI) model to help identify students with specific learning disabilities (Zirkel & Thomas, 2010). The premise of RTI is that students who show a skill deficit will receive skill specific interventions in order to try and remediate the deficit. If that student does not respond to multiple interventions over time and
their individual rate of improvement continues to show a significant gap between the student and their peers, then the team can consider eligibility for a specific learning disability. This shift in identification for students with learning disabilities opened doors for school psychologists serving in those states to be involved from the initial screening of all students (Sullivan & Long, 2010). School psychologists are now able to contribute from intervention development to special education eligibility. Allowing school psychologists to bridge between general education and special education enables hands on access at the systemic level and incorporates more collaboration and intervention planning with staff.

Prior to the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA, the 2002 Multisite Conference on the Future of School Psychology focused on the increasing shortage of school psychologists. The concern was that shortages were impacting the delivery and quality of services especially within public schools (Curtis, Hunley, Walker, & Baker, 1999; Miller & Palomares, 2000; Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014). Based on the information presented at the Futures Conference, Curtis, Grier, & Hunley (2004) predicted that by 2010, four out of ten school psychologists who were working in the year 2000 would retire. That number would increase to 50% by 2015 and rise to two out of every three school psychologists by 2020. If accurate, this would lead to a substantial increase in the already unfilled positions as well as highlight the small number of students enrolling in school psychology graduate programs.

Ten years after their original analysis, Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) reconsidered the shortage of school psychologists. The National Association of School Psychologists had recently collected their decennial census and an updated analysis was needed. The 2010 data showed 42,539 school psychologists working within the field. A deficit of approximately 1,500 school psychologists were estimated per year, approximately 3.6% of the field. Thus four out of every
100 positions would go unfilled each year. However, when other factors were considered including retirement rates, the small number of individuals graduating from school psychology training programs, and the estimated growth of the public school population, Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) reported a more accurate deficit of 3,500 school psychologists per year; a number that could persist through the year 2025.

In order to gain a clearer understanding of the impact of this proposed shortage, Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) included regional information. In 2010, the East South Central Region which consisted of Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi and Tennessee reported approximately 1,332 school psychologists. This was the smallest number of personnel reported by any region. Although the estimated shortage of school psychologists was not isolated to one region, the estimated 3,500 individuals needed was almost three times as many school psychologists reported employed in the entire East South Central Region.

Fagan (2004) summarized the profession’s dilemma as a pervasive problem that has been persistent since the field’s inception. Fagan stated that the field had never experienced a period when the number of trained school psychologists was adequate to meet the job demands. With this thought in mind and the practical implications of schools operating without school psychologists on a day to day basis, administrators at both a building and systems level must consider how to recruit and retain school psychologists (Castillo, Curtis, & Tan, 2014). One avenue is to understand the factors that directly impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction Defined

The concept of job satisfaction was first defined by Fisher and Hanna in 1931 (Judge, Theoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). After reviewing several case-studies of laborers who were dissatisfied in their current roles, the researchers determined that job satisfaction was inherent
among the majority of individuals. Dissatisfaction was noted as a reflection of severe maladjustment within a dissatisfied individual and attributed to the individual’s temperament. This viewpoint prevailed for almost 50 years until Locke (1976) proposed an alternate definition. Locke defined job satisfaction as the congruency between what an individual wants in a job and the extent to which the job matches those wants. This was the first time that external factors of the job were noted to impact the individual’s internal feelings. Locke understood that a reciprocal relationship existed between the individual and aspects of their job. This new perspective of job satisfaction was widely accepted by researchers and has been used as a foundational definition across a variety of fields including psychology and education (Judge & Klinger, 2007; Saari & Judge, 2004).

Bernstein & Nash (2008) described job satisfaction as encompassing emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors. The emotional or affective factors included the individual’s feelings about their job such as anxiety, excitement, or boredom. These are the individual’s emotional responses to their work or work environment. The cognitive factors included the opinions and knowledge about the work. For example, individuals may consider whether their job is sufficiently challenging or viewed as respectable by others. The cognitive factors of job satisfaction are grounded in the information that the individual has about their job. The behavioral factors are the individual’s actions towards coworkers or towards the job as a whole. This can include punctuality, attendance, and fulfillment of job responsibilities. When considering Fisher & Hanna’s perspective of job satisfaction, their definition only focused on the emotional factors (Judge, Theoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Zhu (2013) in his review of the history of job satisfaction found that emotional or affective components were the only factors considered prior to Locke’s (1976) work.
Since Locke’s (1976) theory, various other definitions have been developed over the years to explain the relationship between an individual’s internal emotional responses and their job. Theories of job satisfaction have explored a variety of components including individual’s attitudes (Herzberg, Maunser, & Synderman, 1959), basic needs (Maslow, 1954), values (Locke, 1976), and attributes of the work environment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Vensel (1981) stated that job satisfaction falls on a continuum where the level of satisfaction moves in response to the presence or absence of various aspects of the job. Thus, job satisfaction can occur by making changes to the job and/or by the individual adapting their values and needs (Anderson, Hohenshil, & Brown, 1984; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Mueller & Kim (2008) delineated two distinct types of job satisfaction. The first is global satisfaction with one’s job. This is a general sense of satisfaction and an overarching snapshot response. The second type of job satisfaction considers the specific facets of the job that may impact the individual’s response. This includes aspects such as relationships with co-workers, salary, and opportunities for advancement. The specific aspects directly impact an individual’s general sense of job satisfaction, but are not always measured.

Although there continues to be various definitions of job satisfaction, one can agree that it is a multidimensional and complex concept (Aziri, 2011). Job satisfaction has been considered across a variety of fields including medical, business, and education (Judge, Theoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Research on job satisfaction was conducted in order for leaders to effectively motivate employees to act in a desired manner and meet the organization’s goals (Butler & Rose, 2011). The impact of a satisfied employee is great. Job satisfaction creates loyalty, confidence, and an overall improved quality in the work output of the individual (Tietjen & Myers, 1998). In addition, it is associated with increased performance rates, higher productivity, decreased
absenteeism, and stronger professional attitudes (Spencer, 1977). Judge & Klinger (2007) noted that people’s professions often drive their identity; thus making an individual’s satisfaction at work a significant consideration for research. Within the current study, the theoretical framework for job satisfaction was established based on the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954), the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) and the range of affect theory (Locke, 1976).

Theories of Job Satisfaction

Maslow’s Theory of Human Motivation

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is the essential concept in the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954). Maslow’s work shifted the focus from isolated components within an individual to focus on the individual as a dynamic and integrated whole (Aanstoos, 2014). Maslow attributed an individual’s behavior to a combination of environmental and motivational factors (Maslow, 1954). An individual’s behavior is a reaction to unfulfilled needs. Higher level needs in the hierarchy only appear once lower level needs are met; the hierarchy is organized into five levels.

The first level represents a person’s basic needs which is defined as the need for food, water, oxygen, sleep, and sex. All other needs and desires are secondary until these basic needs are fulfilled. Once an individual has fulfilled their basic needs, safety needs arise. Safety needs include an individual’s sense of financial security, general health, structure provided by the government/economy, and a general sense of security without worry or fear. The third level of the hierarchy is the need for love and belonging. This need includes having intimacy with friends, family, and the community. This need speaks to a feeling of belonging within the social groups that the individuals wish to be involved. In order for this need to be fulfilled, Maslow stated that individuals must receive these feelings of love and belonging, but must also
demonstrate the behaviors to others. The next level is the need for esteem. Individuals have the need to be respected by others and also have a positive sense of self-esteem. This need is fulfilled through recognition from others, personal achievements and other activities that gives the individual a sense of value. Individuals who do not have this need met, often have low self-confidence. The final level of the hierarchy is the need for self-actualization. Self-actualization represents the need for an individual to recognize their individual potential and then take action to achieve this vision. The idea of self-actualization is that the individual has the ability to recognize their desire, develop a plan to achieve those desires, and then take tangible steps to make their desire a reality.

Maslow (1954) made a key distinction between deficiency motivation and growth motivation. Deficiency motivation is driven by the first four levels of the hierarchy, which are referred to as deficiency needs. Individuals are motivated by a lack of these needs and act in order to fulfill the need. With the exception of psychological needs, there is not a physical signal that these needs are not being met; however, the individual may have an emotional response such as feelings of fear or anxiety. Maslow (1971) stated that individuals typically seek to fulfill the needs just above their current position on the hierarchy. However, exceptions to the hierarchy occur; needs are not always fulfilled in the order presented (Maslow, 1954). For example, lower needs can be addressed, but not fully satisfied and higher needs will still emerge. When deficiency needs are met, they no longer serve as a motivating factor to the individual. These needs disappear from an individual’s thought and are forgotten unless a change occurs. This leads to a gratification process that helps develop the person’s character and overall health and is the catalyst for growth motivation. Motivated by the growth that has occurred, individuals are now motivated to take action towards self-actualization. Maslow described thirteen specific and
observable characteristics of self-actualizing people including more accepting of themselves and others, more appreciative, more perceptive, more creative, and having a richer emotional life.

Individuals who achieved self-actualization have a belief in a cause and devotion to a vocation, including being satisfied with one's job (Hill, 2010; Maslow, 1954). This stage is characterized by a need to find a job that represents their individual values and fulfills their desire. Instead of just encompassing aspects of work, the job is now identified as a calling. In order to be self-fulfilled, an individual must be satisfied with their job. When considering Maslow’s theory of human motivation in connection with the definition of job satisfaction, job satisfaction is a key component for an individual’s overall health and motivation to grow.

**Theory of Work Adjustment.** The theory of work adjustment developed by Dawis & Lofquist (1984) described the relationship of the individual to their work environment. This theory is built on the idea that a reciprocal relationship is found between an individual and the environment; a person impacts their work environment and their work environment impacts the person (Swanson & Schneider, 2013). This thought is similar to Maslow’s (1954) theory of human motivation. However, Maslow’s hierarchy is described as a common set of needs for all people, while the theory of work adjustment view needs as unique to the individual.

Job satisfaction occurs when an individual has correspondence within their environment. Correspondence refers to the individual’s set of needs and values that are met by the work environment (Swanson & Schneider, 2015). The more closely a person’s abilities (e.g. skills, knowledge, experience) correspond with the requirements of their job, the more likely they will perform their job well and be viewed as satisfactory to their employer. In addition, the more closely the rewards of the organization correspond to the values that an individual seeks to satisfy in their work, the more likely the person will perceive their job as satisfying. Dawis &
Lofquist (1984) described six values that individuals seek to satisfy through their work: achievement (i.e. accomplishment and progress), comfort (i.e. lack of stress), status (i.e. recognition and prestige), altruism (i.e. harmony and service to others), safety (i.e. predictability and stability), and autonomy (i.e. personal control and initiative).

Dawis (1996) described how satisfaction motivates an individual’s behavior. When job satisfaction occurs, the individual’s state is maintained and he or she operates within the normal routine. When dissatisfaction with the job occurs, the person has to adjust. The flexibility of the individual drives the extent to which he or she can tolerate the lack of correspondence within the environment. An individual’s flexibility is affected by both their internal traits such as personality as well as external factors such as availability of alternative options. When an individual has experienced an intense level of correspondence and flexibility is no longer viable, the person must adjust. Their response can be active adjustment such as making a change to their work environment or more a reactive adjustment response where a change occurs within themselves. In situations where active and reactive adjustments are not possible, the person must choose whether or not to stay in their current place of employment.

Fried, Shriom, Gilboa, & Cooper (2008) found that employees with higher levels of satisfaction tended to remain at their current positions longer than employees who reported lower levels of job satisfaction; this is a centralizing thought to the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). An individual’s inclination to leave their job is directly related to the level of job satisfaction experienced. In order to measure job satisfaction as theorized by the theory of work adjustment, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) was developed (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). The MSQ is a survey instrument that is used to measure an individual’s satisfaction within the work environment across 20 different areas: ability
utilization, achievement, activity, advancement, authority, company policies and practices, compensation, co-workers, creativity, independence, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervision-human relations, supervision-technical, variety, and working conditions. The MSQ also provides an overall rating of job satisfaction known as the General Satisfaction score. This score is comprised of one question from each of the 20 scales. Brown, Hardison, Bolen, & Walcott (2006) report that the MSQ is the most common instrument used in measuring job satisfaction of school psychologists.

**Range of Affect Theory.** Locke’s (1976) range of affect theory was founded on the understanding that job satisfaction is determined by the relationship between what one wants in a job and the extent to which the job matches those wants. The range of affect theory shares similarities with Dawis & Lofquist’s (1984) theory of work adjustment. Both theories recognize job satisfaction as the connection between aspects within the work environment and the individual’s response. Locke (1976) defined an individual’s job as encompassing the specific responsibilities of the job, the activities that had to be performed, the interactions within the environment, and the rewards or incentives that could be earned. Thus his theory noted that job satisfaction is impacted by the individual’s perception of the components of the job in conjunction with their individual beliefs. In other words, when a person values a particular aspect of the job, a change to that aspect has a greater positive or negative impact on that individual when compared to another employed who doesn’t place value in that particular aspect of the job. Although this is similar to the theory of work adjustment which also addresses the values of the individual, the range of affect theory differs from Maslow’s (1954) theory of human motivation. Locke (1976) stated that is the fulfillment of values, rather than needs that produce satisfaction in
an individual. However, this theory does not address the individual’s ability to meet the needs of the environment as a determinant of job satisfaction.

Locke (1976) focused on the belief that what drives an individual’s thoughts and actions are what he or she values, not what he or she needs. This aspect of the range of affect theory lies in direct opposition to Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy. Locke (1976) criticized many aspects of the theory of motivation including the premise of needs. Locke stated that there was no evidence to indicate that Maslow’s needs are in fact needs for all people. For example, the need for belongingness may not illicit the same response for all individuals. Each individual may seek a different level of community and intimacy depending on the value they place on this aspect in their life.

Locke (1976) was clear about the difference between need and values. Needs were objective and inherent facets that existed regardless of what an individual wanted. Values on the other hand were subjective and defined as a person’s desires. An individual’s values determined their selections and emotional response. Locke described values as having two components: content and intensity. Content was defined as exactly what is valued. Intensity referred to how much the particular component was desired. Wu (2008) noted that when items were rated at a higher intensity they were more influential on an individual’s job satisfaction report than those items noted as less important to the individual. This is consistent with Locke’s (1976) range of affect theory which states that job satisfaction is determined by the relationship between what one wants in a job and the extent to which the job matches those wants.

The range of affect theory described seven different values that contribute to job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). First, the work must be mentally stimulating. This is consistent with Brown, Holcombe, Bolen, & Thomson (2006) who found that role diversity for school
psychologists has a positive impact on the individual’s job satisfaction (Brown, Holcombe, et al., 2006). Yet, this must be considered in conjunction with Locke’s (1976) next value that stated the work cannot be too physically challenging for the individual. In addition to being mentally stimulating, Locke noted that an individual must find interest in the job. This closely ties with the value that the performance requirements which elicit incentives within the job align with the individual’s goals. The fifth value recognized that the working environment must meet the foundation of physical needs for all individuals. This recognized that safe working conditions are a minimal requirement. The sixth value described the need for positive employee self-esteem.

Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, and Osborne (2008) reiterated this value when they found that people who are emotionally stable experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Finally, Locke (1976) described the value of supervisors. Supervisors were able to assist the individuals in attaining the previous job values while also clearly stating job expectations and roles were noted as essential. This value is consistent with Niebrugge (1994) who found that satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction among school psychologists and accounted for 30% of the variance in factors.

**Factors that Influence School Psychologist’s Job Satisfaction**

The first national study of school psychologists’ job satisfaction was conducted by Anderson, Hohenshil & Brown (1984). At that time, 84% of school psychologists reported satisfaction with their profession, leaving approximately 16% experiencing job dissatisfaction. Within this 16% of individuals, many articulated the desire to leave the profession. Although the overall percent of satisfied personnel appeared to be high, Anderson, Hohenshil, & Brown (1984) stated this number was consistent with the general national labor force. Wilczenksi (1997) reported a drop in his investigation of school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Only 77% of school
psychologists reported satisfaction with their job. In 2006, VanVoorhis & Levinson conducted a meta-analysis. Of the 2,116 school psychologists surveyed, 85% of participants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their job, an increase from Wilczenski’s (1997) report. Current levels of monetary compensation, school system procedures, and limited opportunities for advancement correlated to a reduction in job satisfaction (VanVoorhis & Levinson, 2006; Worrell, Skaggs, & Brown, 2006). The most prominent predictors of job satisfaction were role diversity, experience, and relationships with coworkers.

**Role Diversity.** Judge, Theoresen, Bono, & Patton (2001) found that across fields there was a positive relationship between job satisfaction and work performance that increased when an individual’s job was more complex. As a school psychologist, complexity is inherent in the job, but increases with role diversity. As previously noted, school psychologists have pushed for role expansion and made it a prominent discussion of conferences since the early history of the field (Fagan, 2004). Yet, both school psychologists and school personnel report a desire for a wider variety of roles to be utilized by their school psychologists (Boyle & MacKay, 2007; Watkins, Crosby, & Pearson, 2001). Additional diverse services were requested by teachers, in addition, to school psychologists continuing to provide their current level of assessments (Watkins, Crosby, & Pearson, 2001). Teachers indicated that the discrepancy between what school psychologists needed to contribute versus the roles these individuals were able to contribute were due to the limitations of the system.

Boyle & MacKay (2007) stated that school personnel expressed a need for consultation through active listening and facilitation of problem solving. The teachers’ main goal was for school psychologists to help analyze students’ academic and behavior problems in order to construct effective intervention plans. Special education teachers stated a desire for school
psychologists to spend more time collaborating with them regarding pre-referral interventions (Hagemeier, Bischoff, Jacobs, & Osmon, 1998). Over 90% of special education teachers also expressed a desire for hands on assistance in implementing classroom interventions.

Administrator needs were also considered. Hagemeier, Bischoff, Jacobs, & Osmon (1998) found that most administrators reported overall satisfaction with how school psychologists were spending their time. Gilman & Gabriel (2004), however, found that school administrators indicated a desire for more involvement from school psychologists. These administrators stated that school psychologists were needed to help facilitate in-service trainings, parent workshops, and teacher consultation. These roles were noted to be additional expectations to their current roles which included assessments, counseling, and crisis intervention. This was consistent with MacKay & Boyle (1994) who found that administrators reported a need for more involvement in research and development and the school’s overall strategy (MacKay & Boyle, 1994). Secondary administrators requested more involvement with counseling in their building (Hagemeier, Bischoff, Jacobs, & Osmon, 1998). Overall, administrators indicated new roles were welcome as long as they did not supplant the existing priorities, assessment activities (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; MacKay & Boyle, 1994).

Gilman & Gabriel (2004) found an important distinction between administrators’ and teachers’ expectations of school psychologists practice. Although both indicated an overall desire of school psychologists to increase their role within the school setting, teachers’ reported significantly higher desires for involvement. For example, 53% of teachers reported that school psychologists should be more involved in group counseling. This number was in stark contrast to the 73% of school psychologists who endorsed the item, and only 37% of administrators. This same trend was seen when asking about involvement with general education students and
individual counseling sessions. Gilman & Gabriel indicated that these differences may show that the current roles in their school already match the administrator expectation of school psychologists practice. However, it is important to note that Lisbon-Peoples (2014) found that teachers believed that increasing the role of psychologists would be more beneficial to them in the school setting than the roles served by school administrators.

School psychologists report greater job satisfaction when involved in activities beyond that of assessment (Niebrugge, 1994; Proctor & Steadman, 2003). Benson & Hughes (1985) reported that school psychologists typically spend about 50% of their time in assessment related activities and 20% of their time in consultation. All other activities such as counseling, research, and program evaluation, accounted for the remaining 30%. Data taken in 1994-1995 showed that 59% of school psychologist spent more than 70 percent of their time conducting evaluations (Curtis, Hunley, Walker, & Baker, 1999).

MacKay and Vassie (1998) explored how school psychologists’ spent their time following a period of concerted effort in England to expand their job role. School psychologists surveyed in 1998 were asked to compare how they spent their time in comparison to their perceptions of their colleagues practicing in 1982. These individuals estimated that school psychologists in 1982 probably spent twice as much time on individual casework and significantly less time in other areas. Using time sampling methods, the researchers found that regardless of year the time devoted to casework was 82%. Psychometric testing continued to represent one third of the direct assessment time. Even with concerted efforts towards role diversity, school psychology practice in this region remained assessment centered.

Castillo, Curtis, and Golley (2012), however, found a decrease in the number of evaluations completed by school psychologists. Individuals reported conducting an average of
27.3 initial evaluations per year, compared to an average of 39.9 ten years prior. These school psychologists also reported only spending an average of 47 percent of their time on this same activity. This decline in focused assessment may be contributed to the changing legislation such as the reauthorization of IDEA in 2004, which focused on a student’s response to research based intervention as a significant component of the assessment process, rather than an assessment laden evaluation (Sullivan & Long, 2010). All in all, the roles that are currently being required are less than satisfying for many school psychologists (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). The majority of school psychologists’ services are directed toward a small percentage of the school-aged population and remains focused on exceptional student education programs (Castillo, Curtis, & Gelley, 2012). This trend diminishes the diverse training of a school psychologist and the various skill sets that can be utilized to impact student academic, behavior, and mental health within the educational environment.

**Experience.** More experienced school psychologists reported higher job satisfaction than psychologists with less years in the profession (Mackoniene & Novile, 2012; Wilczenski, 1997). Ysseldyke, Burns, Dawson, Kelley, Rosenfield and Telzrow (2006) hypothesized that younger employees may be disappointed in their first job as the practitioner’s job responsibilities are not consistent with their training. Schultz & Shultz (2006) agreed that these younger employees do not find their job responsibilities as a valid representation of themselves. NASP (2006) stated that attrition in the first five years of practice was linked to inadequate supervision, poor working conditions, and the struggle to meet annual yearly progress (AYP) demands under increasing stressors. Mackoniene and Novile (2012) stated the more seasoned school psychologists felt a greater sense of assurance in their job skills and received less negative feedback. This is consistent with Gerken and Landau (1979) who reported school psychologists with at least four
years of experience were perceived as more effective by supervisors and classroom teachers. These more experienced psychologists may have been more cognizant of the concept of adapting than their younger colleagues (Miller, Nickerson, Chafoleas, & Osborne, 2008).

When considering the higher job satisfaction reported by more experienced psychologists, it is important to recognize some of the demographics of the profession. Although age is not always equal to years of experience, VanVoorhis & Levinson (2006) reported a positive correlation between age and job satisfaction. Age currently has a significant impact within school psychology. Curtis, Grier, and Hunley (2004) described what is commonly referred to as the “graying” of the field. This term describes the increasing age of practicing school psychologists, which is due to the small number of new school psychologists recruited into the profession each year.

In 1984, the average age of school psychologists in the field was 38 years old (Smith, 1984). Reschly & Wilson (1995) reported that that average of school psychologists had risen slightly to 41 years of age. The average age took a considerable jump when Hosp & Reschly (2001) reported that the average age of current school psychologists in the field were 47 years old. These averages become more striking when analyzing the breakdown of age groups. In 2004-2005, 45 percent of school psychologists were 51 years or older (Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004). This was a twelve percent increase of this same age group from 1999-2000. When comparing school psychologists in 1989-1990 to 1999-2000, the number of school psychologists with at least 20 years of experience had doubled (Curtis, 2002).

Wilczenski (1997) considered the attrition rate of school psychologists based on their years of experience. The group with the highest attrition rates were school psychologists who had six to ten years of experience. Their vulnerability to attrition increased with each additional
year within the range. School psychologists with 11 to 15 years of experience were the second most vulnerable group. Both groups reported the most common reason for leaving as a need for career advancement. Individuals with more than 15 years of experience were the least likely to leave the profession, except when seeking retirement. Wilczenski (1997) thus far has been one of the few empirical studies to consider attrition in relation to years of experience. Overall, annual attrition rates within the field have little direct empirical evidence. Rates have ranged from reports of five percent (Reschly, 2000) to 35 percent (Knoff, 2002).

**Relationships with Coworkers.** Relationships with coworkers in the school setting are essential for school psychologists. The job of a school psychologist is unique in that is relatively independent (Zins, Murphy, & Wess, 1989). Traditionally only one school psychologist is assigned to a school or group of schools which leads to lower levels of contact with others in their profession. In addition, direct supervisors often do not share the same area of expertise. In order to circumvent feelings of isolation, Miller, Nickerson, Chafoules, & Osborne (2008) recommend school psychologists take concerted efforts to be available and visible within the school setting. This allows school personnel to gain a better understanding of the school psychologists role (Dickison, Prater, Heath, & Young, 2013) and increase the likelihood that teachers will actively consult with the school psychologist (Gonzalez, Nelson, Gutkin, and Shery, 2004).

VanVoohis and Levinson (2006) reported higher levels of job satisfaction when school psychologists expressed positive relationships with their coworkers. This was consistent with Wright and Gutkin’s (1981) research that saw a higher contribution of job satisfaction when strong interpersonal relationships were reported between school psychologists and other school personnel. Components of these interpersonal relationships included effective communication
with those individuals whom the school psychologist had frequency contact. Proctor & Steadman (2003) considered the number of school placements for school psychologists and its impact on job satisfaction and career burnout. School placement was categorized by those individuals assigned to one school (in-house) and those assigned to multiple schools (traveling). School psychologists who were in-house reported higher levels of job satisfaction as well as lower burnout rates. In-house school psychologists also viewed themselves as more effective than their colleagues who traveled from school to school.

Niebrugge (1994) found that satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction among school psychologists and accounted for 30% of the variance in factors. Those who expressed satisfaction with supervisors stated these individuals provided feedback, technical assistance, and support. However, specific information was not collected in regards to whom the school psychologist considered a supervisor (i.e. lead psychologists, direct central office personnel, or administrators). Brown, Hohenshil, & Brown (1998) also looked at external and internal factors that impact school psychologists' job satisfaction. The two most significant internal indicators of job satisfaction were interactions with supervisor and hands on supervision. Yet, Schroffel (1999) suggested that the level of supervision desired by an employee is related to experience. Those who had more experience in the field wanted less supervision, while those newer to the profession requested higher levels of supervision.

Williams (1990) described feedback as a valuable resource for school psychologists. Feedback provided information about how administrators and other school personnel perceived the school psychologists' work as well as to what degree individual goals were being achieved. Clear goals and feedback from coworkers were noted as contributors to job satisfaction (Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, & Osborne, 2008). This seems inherent when considering that school
psychologists must balance the job demands placed upon them by administrators, teachers, parents and children (Lisbon-Peoples, 2014; Wise, 1985). These job demands can often seem in direct opposition to one another. Huebner (1992) reported a significant relationship between burnout (of which job dissatisfaction is a contributor) and feelings of being caught between a child’s various needs and the administrative constraints.

Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, & Osborne (2008) stated that a greater level of job satisfaction was apparent among all school personnel, including school psychologists, when administrators were deliberate in encouraging collaborative relationships and effective teams. School psychologists and other school staff reported a desire for more effective communication with one another (Dickison, Prater, Heath, & Young, 2013). Rosenfield and Gravios (1996) recommended administrators focus more attention to team functioning which included collaboration, communication, giving and receiving honest feedback, and celebration of positive events. These recommendations seem the most viable in relationship to Clonan, Chafouleas, McDougal, & Riley-Tillman’s (2004) work which stated that success is often dependent on working within the natural environment rather than establishing substantially different or unfamiliar practices. Administrators need to understand the unique impact that their role has in effecting job satisfaction of their staff, especially school psychologists as well as the leadership style they chose to use to motivate employees.

**Impact of Administrators**

The job of administrators has changed dramatically within the educational environment. Cuban (1988) stated the foundation of an effective principal was in finding the correct balance between all of the expectations placed upon them. During the 1980s, educational research became focused on the instructional leadership role of administrators (Hallinger, 2005).
Leadership academies began emerging based on policy reform that linked school improvement to the administrators’ actions. Instructional leaders were noted as those principals who had been successful in showing drastic improvements within their buildings (Bamburg & Andrews, 1990; Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). These leaders were considered culture builders who were goal-oriented and had strong student outcomes. Instructional leaders worked directly with teachers within the classrooms to improve their instructional practices (Leithwood, Begley, & Cousins, 1990). Described as hands-on administrators, this viewpoint was a rational approach to leadership which was focused on the outcome rather than the process (Hallinger, 2005).

However, in the 1990s a shift occurred that considered administrative leadership from a larger context (Hallinger, 2005). In 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) created standards to help strengthen school leadership preparation programs (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). This consortium involved a variety of national education leadership organizations including the Council of Chief State School Officers as well as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The resulting six standards highlighted the expansion of administrator duties from a managerial position to an emphasis on school culture, instructional planning, cultural context, and ethical considerations that all impact student achievement. Each standard stated the specific knowledge, disposition, and performance expectations of the administrator.

In 2008, the ISLLC standards were revised to once again encompass the changing role of the educational leader (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). At the time of the revision, the Council of Chief State School Officers noted that 43 states had used the original standards to create their own state expectations of practice. The 2008 revisions maintained a structure of six
standards with accompanying function of the leader. The most recent revision occurred in 2015 when the name of the ISLLC standards were changed to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). These standards broadened the scope of the administrator’s practice even further with an emphasis on ten standards that included the original focus on vision, instruction, ethics, and management as well as components such as equity and cultural responsiveness.

The focus on standards that drive administrative leadership practice is vital because of the impact that these leaders have within the school environment. Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2004) stated that school administrators were a significant contributor to student achievement; second only to teacher’s classroom instruction. Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson (2010) found that administrators accounted for 25% of the variance in student achievement. For example, an effective school administrator within an average performing school could increase the performance of the students’ by ten percentage points when compared to a school administrator that was considered typical in their performance (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). In addition to student achievement, principals were noted to effect the number of student absences, teacher retention (Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012), teacher performance (Seashore Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom & Anderson, 2010) and graduation rates (Coelli & Green, 2012).

**Administrator Leadership Styles**

Although the 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders clearly states the expectations of practice within the school setting, the style in which the administrator fulfills those roles is not defined. Yet, the school’s success is directly connected to the leadership style that is practiced (Aydin, Savid, & Uysal, 2013; Wahab, Fuad, Ismail, & Majid, 2014).
Leithwood & Jantzi (1999) described leadership as a process that is mutually influenced; administrators respond to their school’s environment and in return their behaviors are shaped by these situations. Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach (1999) also noted that the term leadership is often used in writing and described by a variety of adjectives; however, most authors fail to give a definition of the term. During the 1800s, leadership was defined in terms of an individual’s inherent traits (Creighton, 2005; Horn-Turpin, 2009). This viewpoint centered on the idea that an individual was born with particular traits such as intelligence, integrity, and sociability. These traits thus led individuals to take on leadership positions with little consideration to extraneous factors (Creighton, 2005).

By the mid-20th century, the focus shifted to observable leadership behaviors due to the lack of consistent research supporting the trait theory (Amoroso, 2002). Burns (1978) considered the behaviors of political leaders in order to understand leadership. Burns defined leadership as the complex relationship that considered the dynamics of conflict and power that is linked to a collective purpose within an environment. Burns noted that there was definitive differences between management of individuals and leadership. The delineation was in the individual’s observed characteristics and behaviors. Leadership is judged by social change that occurs as well as the satisfaction of human needs and expectations.

Burns (1978) established two distinct leadership styles: transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership was viewed as a transaction between two individuals. For example, in the political setting, a job could be traded for a person’s vote. Typically, transactional leadership required extraneous reward(s) for the services that have been rendered (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership focused on the empowerment of individuals by collaborating and sharing joint decision making. Burns (1978) described a transforming leader as
an individual who was conscientious of the individual’s needs and/or motives. Unlike transactional leadership, the focus was on what the follower needed, not the leader. Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) expanded upon Burns’ (1978) work to define leadership as a range of leadership behaviors and styles. Bass (1985) and Avolio’s (1999) model considered transactional and transformational leadership styles as well as laissez-faire leadership. Laissez-faire leadership is considered the most inactive style and involves the absence of a relationship between the leader and their follower (Avolio, 1999).

**Transactional Leadership.** Transactional leadership is characterized by a transaction between the leader and the follower (Burns, 1978). The follower receives a reward that is contingent on their performance. Transactional leaders articulate the expectations and tasks that are required for individuals within their role (Bass, 1985). These leaders are able to identify an individual’s needs and wants. This information is then utilized to understand how the individual’s needs and wants can be achieved in conjunction with the leader’s desired outcomes. Once this relationship has been determined, transactional leaders are able to motivate their followers and give them a sense of direction. The purpose of the leader’s motivation is to achieve the plan that allows for the individuals’ needs to be met and the outcomes to be achieved (Bass & Avolio, 2004; Horn-Turnpin, 2009). Thus ensuring that both parties get what they want.

Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) defined two specific types of transactional leaders: contingent reward and management-by-exception: active. Contingent reward leaders focused on constructive interactions with individuals. Clear expectations are set and clarification of these expectations occur within the process. Assistance is provided in exchange for concerted effort from the employee. Specific performance targets are defined as well as the rewards when the
targets are achieved (Avolio & Bass, 2004). When the individual meets their performance targets, the transactional leaders celebrates and recognizes the individual’s achievement.

The second type of transactional leadership described by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999) was management by exception: active. This style of leader is proactive in monitoring individual’s work production and action in order to catch mistakes. When an error is noted, the leader takes immediate action to rectify the action and ensure that appropriate repercussions are given (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Management by exception (active) leadership ensures that individuals are aware of the expectations and standards; however, this is for the sole purpose of ensuring that compliance continually occurs.

Avolio & Bass (2004) noted that there are times when transactional leadership methods are warranted, but are not utilized. This appeared to be a trend and was attributed to a low ability to ascertain mistakes and the individual’s needs. In some instances it was due to discomfort by the leader. Often these leaders would make their corrective action more positive then the situation warranted, causing the individual not to understand the full impact of their errors (Iigen & Knowlten, 1980). At other times, when feedback was provided, the individual stated their manager was unclear or had not actually given them criticism (Greller, 1998). This was in direct opposition to the leaders report that feedback had been clearly communicated.

In addition, Avolio & Bass (2004) described the unintended consequences that can occur from a transactional leadership style. Individuals may choose to cut corners in order to gain the agreed upon reward more quickly. Other individuals may adhere exactly to the requirements without any motivational drive or commitment to the organization. These individuals do not appear to strive for organizational or self-improvement. In instances where management by exception (active) style was utilized, some individuals had a negative reaction to corrective
feedback and reacted with behaviors such as hostility and anger rather than an opportunity for growth.

**Laissez-faire Leadership.** Avolio (1999) described laissez-faire leadership as the most inactive leadership style. Under this type of leader, followers are expected to make the decisions. Thus allowing the leader to avoid decision making responsibilities. Chaudhry & Javed (2012) stated that this type of leader often relinquishes responsibilities. He or she prefers to be uninvolved in the work that is occurring. However, the laissez-faire leader often provides the necessary materials in order for the work to occur (Bartol & Martin, 1994). Laissez-faire leaders will avoid giving feedback, but participate in order to answer any questions that arise. Individuals under this type of leadership have full autonomy in their work (Avolio, 1999). They are free to complete their job responsibilities in whichever way they prefer and have all power in any decisions that arise.

Judge & Piccolo (2014) described laissez-faire leadership as the absence of leadership. Their research found significant negative correlations between individuals who demonstrated laissez-faire leadership and their leader effectiveness scores as well as followers’ satisfaction with their leadership. Based on this information, Judge & Piccolo (2014) determined that an absence of leadership is almost as substantially impactful as the demonstration of leadership. Skogstad, Emarsen, Torsheim Aasland, & Hetland (2007) even characterized this style as destructive. Barnett, Marsh, & Craven (2005) found that laissez-faire leadership style is the least effective when compared to leaders who utilize transactional or transformational leadership practices.

**Transformational Leadership.** Transformational leadership focuses on the empowerment of individuals (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Similar to transactional leadership,
transformational leaders are able to recognize individual’s needs and desires. However, instead of utilizing this information solely to accomplish organizational goals, the transformational leader desires to engage the individual to exceed their own expectations. A distinct focus is placed on collaboration and shared decision making (Leithwood, 1992). Transformational leaders understand that there is mutual influence: their actions impact the individual and the individual’s actions and collaboration may challenge the leader to revisit their mission and goals (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transformational leaders have been described as positive and effective leaders, especially in the educational environment (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996; Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos, 2002).

One of the basis for the characteristics of transformational leadership originated with Weber’s (1947) description of charisma in leaders. Charisma was noted as a gift possessed by an individual that led him or her to do extraordinary things. These individuals demonstrated moral authority and legitimacy when giving orders. Charisma helped these leaders transform the nature of the work being required. Individuals noted that their work became more meaningful and morally correct. Instead of simply focusing on the extrinsic rewards, these leaders helped to cultivate intrinsic motivation (Conger & Kanungo, 1998).

In the same way that individuals with charisma cultivate intrinsic rewards, transformational leaders focus on empowerment. Leithwood (1992) described transformational leadership as a way to create power through an individual, rather than over the individual. Turner, Barling, & Zacharatos (2002) stated transformational leaders promote a greater sense of satisfaction and support in work environments by establishing a mission or vision through a coaching role. Followers readily identify with their leaders vision and strive to achieve the mission with greater self-awareness and higher levels of performance (Avolio & Bass, 2004).
Shamir (1990) reported that individuals serving under transformational leaders often accept more challenging tasks and demonstrate greater self-efficacy. These leaders cause a shift among their followers that challenge the individual to reexamine their orientation or perspective once presented with the leader’s vision. In order to achieve these acts, transformational leaders are defined by the four I’s: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Idealized influence is described as the ability of a leader to identify with their follower and influence them through emotion (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Leaders who exhibit idealized influence are highly admired by their followers and these individuals invest in the vision that is being cast. Trust and confidence are gained and these leaders are able to articulate how extra personnel effort will help fulfill their vision. One of the distinctions made when considering idealized influence is that this factor is not simply charisma. There is an element of social orientation and an expectation that their charismatic nature will be utilized for long term gain. Their goal is not to be idolized by the individuals who follow them, but to encourage development of their followers (Bass & Riggo, 2006). These leaders understand that risk is involved—the risk that he or she will be replaced by individuals who begin to develop into effective leaders in their own right.

Inspirational motivation encompasses the leader’s communication and motivation, and entails how well the leader provides challenge and meaning to their follower’s work (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This factor helps define the overarching vision and the exact steps needed to attain it. Leaders who utilize inspirational motivation are able to share goals and gain mutual understanding among the group. The group is then able to have knowledge of the elements that are important to consider and have clarity on where to focus their efforts.
Intellectual stimulation is how the follower is motivated to be innovative and creative when rethinking the leaders’ ideas and motivations (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This process is encouraged because shared decision making and collaboration is encouraged. Often these leaders ask individuals to consider old problems from a new perspective in order to gain an innovative solution for the problem. Leaders are not afraid of having their followers question ways of completing a task or a procedure that is used in order to provide constructive feedback (Bass & Riggo, 2006). The followers are also encouraged to question their own practices including the assumptions and beliefs that drive their actions. Leaders must create a safe environment for intellectual stimulation to work well among a team of people (Avolio & Bass, 2004). When innovative and creative thinking takes place, experimentation and risk-taking are expected. Experimentation requires an environment where mistakes are allowable and not tied to negative repercussions.

In order to be effective in the area of intellectual stimulation, leaders must be aware of the global functioning of the organization (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This includes recognition of strengths, weaknesses, and areas that could be more effectively utilized. An indicator of a leader who is utilizing intellectual stimulation effectively is determined by the interactions of their followers when the leader is not present. If the leader is operating effectively, the team should be able to move forward with minimal involvement.

Individualized consideration is the ability of the leader to understand the unique needs of each of their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Leaders who exhibit this characteristic focus on creating an atmosphere where respect and safety is evident. This type of environment helps the leaders to identify specific individual needs and then thoughtfully place the individual into projects or roles that help fulfill their needs. In addition, leaders are able to recognize potential
areas of growth and guide the follower to professional development opportunities that will increase their effectiveness and skill set. Individualized consideration is accomplished through a focus on one to one relationships. By operating in this manner, the leader is able to elicit growth and increase the individual’s self-confidence. The leader may monitor the individual’s progress in order to gauge whether additional instruction or supports are required (Bass & Riggo, 2006). Overall, the leader acts as a coach instead of an authoritarian (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Individualized consideration is considered a key differentiating factor between a manager and a transformational leader.

**Measuring Leadership Styles**

In order to measure the continuum of leadership styles, Bass and Avolio created the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x). Their purpose was to challenge researchers to broaden their definition of leadership and consider a range of leadership behaviors (Avolio & Bass, 2004). With this information, leaders would gain a better understanding of their style, strengths, and areas of growth in order to develop a tangible plan to make them more effective leaders. The MLQ5x contains a self-self-rating form as well as a rater form. Rater forms are important because leadership is about the behaviors that you demonstrate and less about the words the individual speaks (Niqab, Sharma, Ali, & Mubarik, 2015). The content of their followers’ speech about their leadership style provides a strong reflective voice. Hollander (1995) agreed that followers are in the best position to evaluate the leader’s effect on their relationship since they directly experience their actions.

**Transformational Leadership in Education**

Jantzi and Leithwood (1996) looked at transformational leadership within the context of an educational environment. Drawing on transformational leadership practices in non-school
environments, they developed six dimensions of leadership practices pertinent to the school setting. First, administrators are asked to identify and articulate a clear vision. Next, leaders are to promote cooperation among staff members by fostering the acceptance of group goals and asking staff to work together to achieve these goals. Leaders then provide individualized support to staff members which is rooted in respect and concern for the staff members’ personal feelings and needs. From there, the staff members are challenged to reexamine their assumptions about their work and then rethink their performance (intellectual stimulation). After this process, leaders are to provide an appropriate model for staff members. This modeling includes behaviors that reflect the values the leaders are encouraging. The final practice is to set performance expectations that reflect excellence, quality, and high performance from all staff members. The implementation of this model within the school environment found that teachers perceived their occupation as a profession rather than a job (Bogler, 1999). In addition, these six practices elicited positive perceptions’ of administrator leadership (Jantzi & Leithwood, 2006).

Richards (2005) studied the administrator leadership behaviors that encouraged teacher retention based on their career stage (i.e. 1-5 years, 6 to 10 years, and 11+ years). Surprisingly, the teachers articulated the same top five leadership behaviors as most important to their job satisfaction regardless of their career stage. These behaviors were (1) having an open door policy which allowed administrators to be accessible and show a willingness to listen, (2) honesty, fairness, and trustworthiness, (3) showing respect and valuing teachers as professionals, (4) supporting teachers with parents, and (5) supporting teachers in matters of student discipline. These findings were consistent with Jantzi & Leithwood’s (2006) model of transformational leadership in the school setting.
Administrators who practice transformational leadership styles have been found to positively affect teachers’ job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Korkmaz, 2007) and their commitment to the school (Price, 2012). These leaders require a higher level of commitment from school personnel (Marks & Printy, 2003). However, by establishing a common vision, teacher productivity increased (Friedman, 2004) and school personnel were able to perform beyond their original expectation (Northouse, 2001). Teachers also reported that administrators who practice transformational leadership styles were more visible within the school building, especially in the classroom (Hauserman, Ivankova, & Stick, 2007). These administrators were characterized as more fair and consistent when interacting with students and school personnel. Teachers also reported a better understanding of the underlying principles that drove the administrator’s behavior, while focusing on the best interest of the students. Hauserman, Ivankova, & Stick (2007) noted that the teachers who worked with transformational leaders appeared to display more enthusiasm and greater self-efficacy. Overall, transformational leadership practices were sought out and encouraged by teachers even when this was not the predominant leadership style of their administrator. Administrators also described the importance of transformational leadership behaviors within the school setting; however, the majority of them did not apply these characteristics in their daily actions (Akbaa-Altun, 2003).

Sergiovanni (2007) stated that transformational leadership style is the most effective mode of practice within the school setting; however, transactional approaches are often utilized by transformational leaders for a specific purpose (Avolio & Bass, 2004). When low level expectations need to be accomplished, the leader may rely on a reward for these expectations being achieved. Leithwood (1992) stated that transactional leadership practices can help clarify
specific steps that need to be completed to achieve a goal. At times, transactional approaches help positively impact followers’ confidence and motivation.

Within the school environment transactional practices can be key to daily routines (Bass, 1985; Sergiovanni, 1990). For example, administrators can reward staff members with a jeans day for volunteering at an after school event. Thus, transactional practices can be used to compliment transformational leadership practices (Leithwood, 1992). Silverthorne & Wang (2001) stated that schools are more effective when administrators practice adaptability. The difference is for a transformational leader the reward is not the ultimate goal (Avolio & Bass, 2004). The focus is shifted by the administrator so that higher expectations are reached. The teacher is rewarded for attending the after-school program; however, the administrator explains that the teacher’s participation communicates community investment to parents and students.

**School Psychologists’ Job Satisfaction and Administrator Leadership Styles**

Currently there has been limited research regarding school psychologists’ perceptions of administrator leadership styles in relation to school psychologists’ job satisfaction. This relationship is an important one to investigate when considering the substantial and varied impacts that school administrators contribute to the educational environment. As Niebrugge (1994) discussed satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction. However, there no delineation was made in this study between administrators at the school level and central office personnel. Impact of administrators at the school level should be investigated since this is the environment where school psychologists spend the majority of their time.

Dickinson, Prater, Heath, & Young (2009) found that school psychologists listed improving communication between themselves and administrators as an important factor in retaining school psychologists. Effective communication amongst school personnel is even more
important when school psychologists are assigned to multiple schools. Proctor and Steadman (2003) reported that school psychologists who were employed in a single school had higher rates of job satisfaction than those placed at multiple schools. In-house school psychologists also reported higher effectiveness levels due to their more manageable caseloads and role diversity. Although no information was mentioned regarding expectations or communication with administrators, one can hypothesize that in-house school psychologists need to assimilate to only one set of administrator expectations lessened their job stressors.

As VanVoohis & Levinson (2006) reiterate the job satisfaction of school psychologists may have a direct impact on the quality and quantity of school psychological services provided to children. The investigation of school psychologists’ perceptions of administrator leadership styles may clarify communication of goals and expectations. Creating paths for positive interpersonal relationships, administrators can more readily impact job satisfaction and thus the retention of school psychologists.

Summary

Fagan (2004) stated that within the field of school psychology there has never been enough trained school psychologists’ to meet the demand. With an increasing number of school psychologists projected to retire and the small number of individuals graduating from training programs, Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) estimated approximately 3,500 current job openings within the United States. A number that is expected to persist until at least 2025. With this thought in mind including the practical implications of schools operating without school psychologists, on a day to day basis, administrators at both a building and systems level must consider how to recruit and retain school psychologists. One avenue is to understand the factors that directly impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction.
For the purpose of this study, job satisfaction was defined using the theory of human motivation (Maslow, 1954), the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), and the range of affect theory (Locke, 1976). These theories in combination consider the relationship between a person’s individual characteristics and the external factors of the work environment. Research on school psychologists has shown that role diversity (Proctor & Steadman, 2013), experience (Mackoniene & Novile, 2012), and relationships with coworkers (VanVoohis & Levinson, 2006) positively impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Niebrugge (1994) found that satisfaction with supervision was the best predictor of overall job satisfaction among school psychologists and accounted for 30% of the variance in factors.

Expectations of administrators have shifted from a focus on instructional leaders (Hallinger, 2005) to a wider focus which emphasizes school culture, vision, equity, and quality instruction (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). In addition to its impact on school psychologists’ job satisfaction (Niebrugge, 1994), effective administrative leadership is noted as a significant contributor to student achievement (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Yet, the style in which administrators practice is not defined, although a school’s success has been directly connected to the leadership style used (Aydin, Savier, & Uysal, 2013). The current study views leadership through Bass (1985) and Avolio’s (1999) model of transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational leadership styles. Within the educational setting, administrators who practice transformational leadership styles have been found to positively affect teachers’ job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Korkmaz, 2007) and their commitment to the school (Price, 2012). Sergiovanni (2007) stated that transformational leadership style is the most effective mode of practice within the school setting and Hauserman, Ivankova, & Stick (2007) noted that transformational leadership practices were sought out and
encouraged by teachers even when this was not the predominant leadership style of their administrator.

Although research has considered administrator leadership styles and teachers, limited research has focused on the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and administrator leadership styles. The research questions of this study focused on understanding how factors such as role diversity, years of experience, and number of school placements, impact the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and their perceptions of administrator leadership styles as defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999). Chapter 3 presents detailed information on the research methodology used in this study. An in-depth description of the research design, population and sample, and the selected instruments are provided as well as the data collection procedures and analysis. Limitations of the study and ethical considerations are also discussed.
Chapter Three

Introduction

This chapter describes the research method used to investigate the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction, demographic variables of school psychologists, and administrator leadership styles. This chapter presents the research design, population and sample, and the selected instruments. Validity and reliability information for each of the instruments are detailed. In addition, a description of the data collection procedures and analysis are given. Finally, limitations of the study and ethical considerations are discussed.

Research Design

An ex post facto quantitative design was used to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between administrator leadership styles as perceived by school psychologists and school psychologists’ job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who have greater role diversity within their school and perceived administrator leadership styles?
3. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who travel to more than one school and perceived administrator leadership style?
4. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists with varying years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?
5. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?
These questions were asked in order to determine if a significant difference exists in levels of job satisfaction between school psychologists in Tennessee based on role diversity, school placement, years of experience, and their perceptions of administrator leadership styles. This is considered a causal comparative design because differences between preexisting groups are examined. Since there is no manipulation of the independent variable in this study, causality cannot be inferred.

Population and Sample
The population for this study was practicing school psychologists. The participants were a convenience sample of practicing school psychologists within the state of Tennessee. Tennessee has 147 school systems divided into eight regions by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE, 2016). The Tennessee Association of School Psychologists (TASP) organization was contacted in order to gain access to their listserv for school psychologists. TASP maintains a running listserv of all the school psychologists practicing within the state. Only school psychologists who indicated a primary role of a practitioner within a school were included in this study. In order to ensure there was only a 5% chance of incorrectly identifying a relationship between variables the alpha level was set at 0.05. A sample size of approximately 143 school psychologists was considered sufficient when desiring a 90% chance of rejecting the null hypotheses. A 90% chance of rejecting the null hypothesis was chosen due to the relatively small number of school psychologists practicing within the state and a typical response rate of approximately 37% for web based surveys (Castillo, Curtis, Brundage, March, & Stockslager, 2014).

Procedures
Once contact information was obtained from the Tennessee Association of School Psychologists (TASP) listserv, an email was sent to each participant. The email included a
description of the study, consent information, and a link to the survey and questionnaires. The participants accessed the survey and questionnaires through a SurveyMonkey link that included directions on how to complete the measures. Each link was anonymous and did not include any type of tracking information. Participants were sent a pre-notification that they would be invited to participate in an upcoming survey. This strategy, in addition to reminders, has been found to increase the likelihood of participants responding to electronic surveys (Castillo, Curtis, Brundage, March, & Stockslager, 2014; Fan & Yan, 2010). Reminder emails were sent two days, two weeks, and three weeks after receiving the initial email request. Participants were offered an incentive for participation in the survey. Upon completion of all of the questionnaires and surveys, participants could choose to provide their email address if they were interested in enrollment in a raffle. Participants were eligible to win one (1) of four (4) $25 gift cards to Amazon.com. Email addresses gathered when entering the raffle were kept separate from the assessment results. Once the window for data collection was complete, four email addresses were selected and these individuals were contacted in order to claim their raffle prize. A copy of the informed consent is included in Appendix A.

**Instrumentation**

**Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ).** The MSQ short form was used to obtain data regarding levels of job satisfaction of school psychologists. The MSQ measures job satisfaction by assessing 20 areas: ability utilization, achievement, activity, advancement, authority, company policies and practices, compensation, co-workers, creativity, independence, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, supervision-human relations, supervision-technical, variety, and working conditions (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). The MSQ provides an overall rating of job satisfaction known as the General Satisfaction score. This score is comprised of one question from each of the 20 areas, and scores
range from 20 to 100. Participants completed the survey by using the 5-item Likert scale on the MSQ that range from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. Written instructions on the instrument provide the definition for each response. The MSQ short form is written at a fifth-grade reading level and takes approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The MSQ was selected for use in this study because it is the most frequently used measure in evaluating school psychologists’ job satisfaction (Brown, Hardison, Bolen, & Walcott, 2006). The MSQ short form was chosen over the long form since it provides an overall general satisfaction score and administration time is shorter. Reliability data on the MSQ showed a coefficient of .89 on test-retest reliability after a one week interval and a coefficient of .70 after a one year interval (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). Hoyt reliability coefficients on the measure ranged from .87 to .92. Hoyt’s reliability coefficients are used in order to detect the extent to which a pattern of responses are seen within the survey (Clark, 1999). Validity information has also been published for the MSQ. Validation studies that measured construct validity, found that the MSQ measured satisfaction that aligned with the theory of work adjustment (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1967). A copy of the MSQ is included in Appendix B.

Demographic Survey. A researcher-made demographic survey obtained information about variables that impact school psychologists’ practice. This survey collected a variety of information including number of school placements, years of experience, school level placement (elementary, middle, and high school), and job roles. In order to measure role diversity, various job roles were presented. Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of time spent in each role within their current job. The total for all roles reported by participants were combined to equal 100%.
A field test was conducted in order to test the clarity of the demographic survey. This ensured that the information asked on the survey was clear to school psychologists and there was no ambiguity in the questions. Three former school psychologists were contacted and agreed to conduct the field test. Their feedback was reviewed and was integrated into the final version. A copy of the demographic survey is included in Appendix C.

**Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x).** The MLQ5x was used to obtain information regarding school psychologists’ perceptions of preferred administrator leadership styles. The MLQ5x measures three different leadership styles, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership, across nine different components. (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Transformational leadership is comprised of four factors: idealized influence (attribute and behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Transactional leadership is comprised of two factors: contingent reward and management-by-exception: active. The laissez-faire leadership scale is comprised of two factors: management-by-exception: passive, and laissez-faire. In addition, the MSQ5x contains three leadership outcome scales: satisfaction, extra effort, and effectiveness. Since the purpose of this study is to measure school psychologists’ perceptions and not actual administrator styles, only the three leadership constructs were considered.

The MLQ5x asked participants to complete 45 items using a 5 point Likert scale (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Answers range from “not at all” to “frequently if not always”. Administration of the MLQ5x takes approximately 15 minutes. The MLQ5x was selected because of its widespread use across fields (e.g. government, education, manufacturing, etc.) to measure leadership styles as well as its frequent use in research. In addition, this instrument has strong reliability and validity data. Reliability was noted as .74 to .94 for each leadership factor scale and total items.
When considering construct validity, the MLQ5x was created in order to address criticism with previous versions of the scale that reported concerns with high correlation among leadership scales. A confirmatory factor analysis was completed and found that that MLQ5x aligned with Avolio’s (1999) full range model of leadership that details transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. A copy of the MLQ5x is included in Appendix D.

Limitations

**Instrumentation.** This study only analyzed the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ short form (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Other scales included in the MSQ long form would show information about job satisfaction in more specific areas rather than a global overview. In addition, leadership styles are defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999), which reflect the leadership styles measured by the MLQ5x survey (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Other scales that measure alternate leadership styles may reveal information about school psychologists’ perceptions of leadership styles that were not addressed by this survey tool.

**Characteristics of Responders.** Survey and questions were collected using a convenience sample of school psychologists within the state of Tennessee. This limited geographical sample may affect the ability to generalize the results of this study to larger populations or alternate regions. Additionally, school psychologists cannot be randomly assigned into groups because the groups (e.g. school placement, role diversity, etc.) already exist. Although survey information was sent to all practicing school psychologists listed in the Tennessee Association of School Psychologists (TASP) listserv, the specific characteristics of those who choose to complete the survey cannot be controlled. In addition, only school psychologists employed in a school setting were asked to take part in this study. Therefore, results cannot be generalized to school psychologists in alternate settings.
**Population.** The population for this study was school psychologists; however, the sample only included practicing school psychologists in the state of Tennessee. Tennessee school psychologists’ perception of administrative leadership styles may differ from those practicing in other regions of the United States. In addition, with the recent implementation of RTI² as the model for identifying students with learning disabilities, school psychologists may have different needs from their administrators during this time period.

**Administrative Behaviors.** Within this study, the actual administrator leadership styles with whom the school psychologists work with were not measured. The information collected from the school psychologists are solely their perceptions of what styles they desire from their administrator.

**Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected in this study was analyzed using Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) and when a significant difference was noted, post hoc analyses were used. When considering Hypothesis One, an ANOVA allows the understanding of the variance between the subgroups of the independent variable, administrator leadership style, based on the dependent variable, job satisfaction. The independent variable of administrator leadership style included three discrete groups based on the reported leadership constructs, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, by participants on the MLQ5x. The dependent variable, job satisfaction, was provided as a total score on the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ. An ANOVA allows an overall comparison between the groups in order to determine if the group means differ. This is done as a ratio using the F-test. If the F-value exceeds the critical F-value, then the null hypothesis is rejected and a relationship between the variables is acknowledged (Howell, 2002).
In order to test Hypothesis Two, a two-way ANOVA was used. This Hypothesis examined the impact of two independent variables, role diversity and administrator leadership styles, upon the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Role diversity was defined by three subgroups (low, medium, and high), which was assigned based on the participants’ report of time spent in assessment activities. Similar to Hypothesis One, the administrator leadership style was defined by three subgroups (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) based on the participants report on the MLQ5x. A two-way ANOVA was used because it allows differences to be analyzed between two or more independent variables with a continuous dependent variable. Job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ is a continuous dependent variable.

Hypotheses Three and Four were also tested using a two-way ANOVA. Hypothesis Three considered the relationship between the independent variables of school placement and administrator leadership style with the dependent variable, job satisfaction. School placement was defined by two groups: participants working in one school (in-house) and those working in two or more school (traveling). Hypothesis Four considered the relationship between the independent variables of years of experience and administrator leadership style with the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Years of experience was defined by four subgroups: (a) up to 5 years, (b) 6 to 10 years, (c) 11 to 15 years, and (d) 16 years or more years of experience (Wilczenski, 1997). The independent variable, administrator leadership style, and the dependent variable, job satisfaction, maintained the same definition as mentioned in Hypothesis One and Two.

Hypothesis Five considers the relationship between all of the independent variables, administrator leadership style, years of experience, role diversity, and school placement, on the dependent variable, job satisfaction. The various subgroups of the independent variables have
been noted in the discussion of data analysis for previous Hypotheses. In order to analyze Hypothesis Five, a four way ANOVA was conducted. A four-way ANOVA considers the main effect of each variable after averaging over the levels of other variables. Then the six two way interactions between variables were considered (e.g. role diversity and school placement). The next step considered the two possible three way interactions between variables. Finally, the interaction between all variables were considered. When a significant interaction was noted, the highest level of interaction was considered first, and then each lower level of interaction until it can be determined where the significant difference occurs. Similar to the two-way ANOVAs when a significant interaction was noted, a post hoc analysis was conducted to determine the exact difference between the groups.

When significant differences were noted after running the ANOVAs used for each hypothesis, then a post hoc test was administered. An ANOVA only identifies that differences exist among the groups of the independent variables. The Tukey honest significant difference (HSD) test was used to determine which particular groups of the independent variables showed a difference in scores. In order to control for bias associated with an independent response survey during post hoc tests, the data will be stratified according to district location (urban, rural, suburban).

**Ethical Issues**

All of the participants were treated in accordance to the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) and Carson-Newman University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). Although there were no identifiable risks for participating in this study, the following steps were taken to ensure confidentiality of the subjects. All respondents prior to completing the survey information were electronically presented with an informed consent that
detailed information about the study and how the survey information would be used. Information collected was kept confidential and was only accessed by the researcher and dissertation committee members. Each participant was assigned an ID and was not referenced by name. Survey information was not released to the individual’s school district, administrator or other individuals outside of the overall discussion of results. Participation in this study was voluntary. Subjects had the right to withdraw their participation at any time. A copy of the informed consent is located in Appendix B.

**Summary**

This chapter described the research method used to investigate the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction, demographic variables of school psychologists, and administrator leadership styles. Information about the research design and population and sample were reviewed. The procedure for data collection included distribution of the MSQ, demographic survey, and MLQ5x. The information from these measures were analyzed using the described data analysis. Limitations and ethical considerations were also presented. Chapter Four details the summary of results from the described data analysis.
Chapter Four

Introduction

This chapter describes the results of the demographic survey, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ), and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x) and reports the statistical analysis of the data. The purpose of this study was to examine school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles and the effect on job satisfaction of school psychologists. This chapter is structured so that each research question and hypotheses are presented with accompanying statistical outcomes from the data analysis. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, Analyses of Variance (ANOVA) and Tukey honest significant difference (HSD) test. Descriptive statistics for the demographic survey are presented in Table 4.1. Descriptive statistics for the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ5x) are presented in Table 4.2. Tables 4.3 through 4.7 detail the results of the ANOVAs. The chapter concludes with a summary of the information presented and the overall findings of the study.

Descriptive Statistics

One hundred and sixty nine school psychologists participated in this study. Approximately 450 school psychologists currently practice within the state of Tennessee. The survey was accessed by 182 participants; however, thirteen participants’ data was not able to be used because all items were not completed. This represents an overall completion rate of 93% and a response rate of 38%. Descriptive statistics from the demographic survey is presented in Table 4.1. Overall, 67.45% expressed they were very satisfied with their job according to their responses on the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ. In addition, 28.99% stated they were
satisfied with their job and 3.55% indicated they were dissatisfied. No participants indicated they were very dissatisfied with their job.

Table 4.1
Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Survey of School Psychologists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>90.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>92.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other (Biracial)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience</td>
<td>5 years or less</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>24.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 to 11 years</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 to 15 years</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 or more years</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>38.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of School Placements</td>
<td>1 school</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>30.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 or more schools</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>70.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Diversity as Defined by Assessment Time</td>
<td>Low (30% or less)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>29.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medium (69% to 40%)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>42.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High (70% or more)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>27.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of School Placement</td>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>37.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>24.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Location</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>27.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undeterminable</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 169 except for level of school placement where participants were asked to indicate any level of students that they serve*

The descriptive classification of categories used with the MSQ were based on the interval ranges established by Brown (1998) and Worrell, Skaggs, & Brown (2006).
When specific items of the MSQ were reviewed, four items had an overall mean rating of 4 or above (a rating of 4 on the Likert scale corresponded to “satisfied”). These items were the ability of the job to provide for steady employment (M = 4.49), the chance to do things for other people (M = 4.30), the ability to keep busy (M = 4.30), and the chance to work alone on the job (M = 4.05). There were three items that fell distinctly below the overall average rating per question (M = 3.69). The items with the lowest satisfaction rating were as follows: the way company policies are put into practice (M = 2.94), the pay for the amount of work completed, (M = 2.82) and the opportunity for advancement (M = 2.62).

Each participant's responses on the MLQ5x were averaged across the subscale areas to compute a mean rating for each administrative leadership style. The leadership style with the highest mean was coded as the participant’s preferred administrative leadership style. Of the 169 participants within the study, 97.63% indicated transformational leadership style as their preference. One percent indicated transactional leadership as their preferred style while 1.18% indicated laissez-faire leadership style as their preferred. Mean scores for each leadership style and attributes are presented in Table 4.2.

**Research Question and Hypothesis One**

What is the relationship between administrator leadership styles as perceived by school psychologists and school psychologists’ job satisfaction?

H1-A1

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on administrator leadership styles.

H1-A0
There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on administrator leadership styles.

The first research question explored whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction ratings were noted based on perceived administrator leadership styles. In order to analyze this research question, an ANOVA was used. An ANOVA allows the understanding of the variance between the subgroups of the independent variable, administrator leadership style, based on the dependent variable, job satisfaction. The independent variable of administrator leadership style included three discrete groups based on the reported leadership constructs, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, by participants on the MLQ5x. The dependent variable, job satisfaction, was provided as a total score on the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ.

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics for MLQ5x Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>Descriptor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transformational</td>
<td>Overall Rating</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Idealized Attributes</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Idealized Behaviors</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inspirational Motivation</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intellectual Stimulation</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individualized Consideration</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transactional</td>
<td>Overall Rating</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contingent Reward</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management by Exception - Active</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>Overall Rating</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management by Exception - Passive</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N = 169
A statistically significant difference was not found: \( F(2, 166) = 1.79, p = .172 \). Therefore the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. No statistically significant relationship was found between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and their preferred administrative leadership style. The actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey honest significance difference (HSD) indicated that the mean score for job satisfaction for those preferring transformational leadership (M = 73.77, SD = 11.19) was not significantly different for those preferring transactional leadership (M = 79.50, SD = 2.12). Laissez-faire leadership (M = 60.00, SD = 12.73) did not differ significantly from either transformational or transactional leadership styles. However, it should be noted that group sizes were grossly unequal. Results of the ANOVA are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>221.676</td>
<td>1.779</td>
<td>.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>124.601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>168</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Significant at \( p < .05 \)*

**Research Question and Hypothesis Two**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who have greater role diversity within their school and perceived administrator leadership styles?

H2-A1

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity within their schools and administrator leadership styles.

H2-A0
There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity within their schools and administrator leadership styles.

The second research question considered whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction rating was noted based on school psychologists’ reported role diversity and perceived administrator leadership styles. In order to analyze this research question, a two-way ANOVA was used. Hypothesis 2 examined the impact of two independent variables, role diversity and administrator leadership styles, upon the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Role diversity was defined by three subgroups (low, medium, and high), that was assigned based on the participants’ report of time spent in assessment activities. Similar to Hypothesis One, the administrator leadership style was defined by three subgroups (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) based on the participants report on the MLQ5x.

The interaction effect between role diversity and administrator leadership style was not statistically significant, $F(1, 163) = .026, p = .872$. Therefore the null hypothesis failed to be rejected. A statistically significant relationship was not found between school psychologists' job satisfaction and their preferred administrative leadership style regardless of whether the school psychologist reported low, medium, or high role diversity within their school. When main effects were reviewed, there was neither a statistically significant main effect for role diversity, $F(2, 163) = 2.917, p = .057$, nor a statistically significant main effect for administrator leadership style, $F(2, 163) = 1.023, p = .362$. Although the group sizes of preferred administrator leadership styles were not even and a statistically significant relationship was not indicated, it is interesting to note that the two participants who indicated a preference for the laissez-faire leadership style both reported low role diversity within their schools. Results of the two-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.4.
Table 4.4

Two-Way Analysis of Variance of School Psychologists’ Job Satisfaction School Psychologists’ Perception of Administrator Leadership Styles and Role Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>125.335</td>
<td>1.023</td>
<td>.362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Diversity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>357.309</td>
<td>2.917</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Style x Role</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.184</td>
<td>.026</td>
<td>.872</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant at p < .05

Research Question and Hypothesis Three

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who travel to more than one school and perceived administrator leadership style?

H3-A1

There are significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on number of school placements and administrator leadership styles.

H3-A0

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on number of school placements and administrator leadership styles.

The third research question considered whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction rating was noted based on the number of school placements and perceived administrator leadership styles. In order to analyze this research question, a two-way ANOVA was used. Hypothesis three examined the impact of two independent variables, school placement and administrator leadership styles, upon the dependent variable, job satisfaction.

School placement was defined by two groups: participants working in one school (in-house) and those working in two or more school (traveling). Similar to previous hypotheses, the administrator leadership style was defined by three subgroups (transformational, transactional,
and laissez-faire) based on the participants report on the MLQ5x. The interaction effect between school placement and administrator leadership style was not statistically significant, $F(1, 164) = .125$, $p = .724$. A statistically significant relationship was not found between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and their preferred administrative leadership style when considering whether a school psychologist was in-house or traveled between schools. There was neither a statistically significant main effect for school placements, $F(1, 164) = .001$, $p = .981$, nor a statistically significant main effect for administrator leadership style, $F(2, 164) = 1.542$, $p = .217$. Results of the two-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>192.207</td>
<td>1.542</td>
<td>.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Placement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Style x School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15.571</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant at $p < .05$

**Research Question and Hypothesis Four**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists with varying years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?

**H4-A$_1$**

There are statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

**H4-A$_0$**

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on years of experience and administrator leadership styles.
The fourth research question considered whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction rating was noted based on years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles. In order to analyze this research question, a two-way ANOVA was used. Hypothesis four examined the impact of two independent variables, years of experience and administrator leadership styles, upon the dependent variable, job satisfaction. Years of experience was defined by four subgroups: (a) up to 5 years, (b) 6 to 10 years, (c) 11 to 15 years, and (d) 16 years or more years of experience (Wilczenski, 1997). The independent variable, administrator leadership style, and the dependent variable, job satisfaction, maintained the same definition as mentioned in previous hypotheses.

The interaction effect between years of experience and administrator leadership style could not be calculated due to the high variance between points of data. There were only four participants who indicated a preferred leadership style that was not transformational leadership. When these participants’ data were coded, they were not evenly distributed among each experience level; therefore there were not enough points of data to accurately identify if an interaction effect existed between experience and administrator leadership style. However, main effects were able to be examined. There was neither a statistically significant main effect for years of experience, $F(3, 163) = .663, p = .576$, nor a statistically significant main effect for administrator leadership style, $F(2, 163) = 2.185, p = .116$. Results of the two-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.6.
Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tr>
<td>Years of Experience</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83.080</td>
<td>.663</td>
<td>.576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>273.943</td>
<td>2.185</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction Style x Experience</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significant at p < .05*

Research Question and Hypothesis Five

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?

H5-A1

There are statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity, school placement, years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

H5-A0

There are no statistically significant differences in job satisfaction ratings of school psychologists based on role diversity, school placement, years of experience and administrator leadership styles.

The fifth research question considered whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction rating occurred when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles. Hypothesis Five considers the relationship between all of the independent variables, administrator leadership style, years of experience, role diversity, and school placement, on the dependent variable, job
satisfaction. The various subgroups of the independent variables have been noted in the discussion of data analysis for previous Hypotheses.

In order to analyze Hypothesis Five, a four way ANOVA was conducted. A four-way ANOVA considers the main effect of each variable after averaging over the levels of other variables. Then the six two-way interactions between variables were considered (e.g. role diversity and school placement). The next step considered the four possible three-way interactions between variables. Finally, the interaction between all variables were considered. When a significant interaction was noted, the highest level of interaction was considered first, and then each lower level of interaction until it can be determined where the significant difference occurs.

When main effects were reviewed there was not a statistically significant main effect for administrator leadership style, $F(2, 142) = 1.829, p = .164$, school placement $F(2, 142) = 3.208, p = .075$, or years of experience $F(2, 142) = 0.879, p = .454$. However, a statistically significant main effect was noted for role diversity $F(2, 142) = 4.715, p = .010$. This suggests that differences do exist in school psychologists’ job satisfaction when level of role diversity is taken into account. The low role diversity group (M = 70.12, SD = 11.598) differed significantly from the medium diversity (M = 74.96, SD = 9.697) and high role diversity (M = 75.49, SD = 12.295) groups. However, the medium diversity group did not differ significantly from the high diversity group.

Two-way interaction effects among the variables were then considered. Due to the limited number of participants who indicated a preferred administrator leadership style outside of transformational leadership style, interaction effects when considering the independent variable of administrator leadership style could not be calculated. This is due to the fact that the variance
between the points of the data for leadership style are so high that a relevant interaction cannot be considered. However, two-way interactions among the remaining independent variables were reviewed. The interaction effect between role diversity and years of experience was not statistically significant, $F(6, 164) = .966, p = .451$. In addition, the interaction effect between role diversity and school placement was not statistically significant $F(2, 164) = .005, p = .995$; nor was the interaction effect between years of experience and school placement, $F(3, 164) = .110, p = .954$.

The three-way interaction effect between years of experience, role diversity, and school placement was considered next. There was not a statistically significant interaction effect among these three variables, $F(6, 164) = 1.402, p = .218$. Three-way interactions that included the independent variable of administrator leadership style were not able to be calculated. In addition, a four-way interaction effect between years of experience, role diversity, school placement, and administrator leadership style was not able to be calculated due to the previously mentioned high level of variance among participant data when considering preferred administrator leadership style. Results of the four-way ANOVA are presented in Table 4.7.
Table 4.7

Four-Way Analysis of Variance of School Psychologists’ Job Satisfaction by School Psychologists’ Perception of Administrator Leadership Styles, Role Diversity, School Placement, and Years of Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>223.203</td>
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*Note. Significant at p < .05*

Summary

In order to explore the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction scores and administrator leadership styles, years of experience, role diversity, and school placement, statistical analyses using ANOVAs were conducted. The majority of the 169 participants were female (90.53%) and Caucasian (92.30%) who travel between more than one schools (70.41%). Overall, 67.45% of participants indicated that were very satisfied with their job based on their
ratings on the General Satisfaction scale of the MSQ. A significant majority of participants (97.63%) indicated a preference for administrators to utilize a transformational leadership style.

An ANOVA was conducted in order to explore Hypothesis 1. Results of the ANOVA showed that there was not a significant difference between school psychologists’ job satisfaction based on their preferred administrator leadership style. A two-way ANOVA was conducted to test Hypothesis 2 in order to assess whether significant differences in school psychologists’ job satisfaction were found based on preferred administrator leadership style and their reported role diversity (low, medium, and high). No statistically significant differences were noted. Hypothesis 3 was also explored using a two-way ANOVA. Results found there was not statistically significant different ratings of school psychologists’ job satisfaction based on preferred administrator leadership style and school placement (in-house versus traveling).

Hypothesis 4 considered whether significant differences in school psychologists’ job satisfaction were seen based on preferred administrator leadership styles and years of experience. An interaction effect using a two-way ANOVA was unable to be calculated due to the high variance between participant data points. There were not enough points of data to accurately identify if an interaction effect existed between experience and administrator leadership style since preferred leadership styles were not more evenly distributed among each experience level.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using a four-way ANOVA. Hypothesis 5 explored whether a significant difference in school psychologists’ job satisfaction ratings occurred when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience, and perceived administrator leadership styles. A statistically significant main effect was noted among school psychologists’ job satisfaction rating when considering their role diversity (low, medium, high) within the school. The low diversity group showed a significantly different rating when compared to the medium...
and high role diversity groups. However, the medium diversity group did not differ significantly from the high diversity group. No other statistically significant main effects were found.

When interaction effects were considered that included the independent variable of administrator leadership style, the interaction effect was not able to be calculated. There were a limited number of participants who indicated a preference for an administrator leadership style other than transformational leadership. Therefore the variance was too high between the points of data and a relevant interaction could not be considered. When two-way interaction effects were considered among the remaining independent variables, role diversity, school placement, and years of experience, no statistically significant interactions were noted. A three-way interaction that considered the effect of role diversity, school placement, and years of experience on school psychologists’ job satisfaction was also not statistically significant.

In summary, the null hypothesis failed to be rejected for each of the five research questions. Significant differences in school psychologists’ job satisfaction by preferred administrator leadership style, years of experience, role diversity, and school placements were not found. Chapter Five will provide interpretation and further discussions of the results. In addition, consideration of these areas in future research are explored.
Chapter Five

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles and the effect on job satisfaction of school psychologists working at public schools in the state of Tennessee. Role diversity, experience, and relationships with coworkers all have been previously identified in research as having a direct impact on school psychologists’ job satisfaction. The present study sought to understand what role these various factors played in impacting school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles. In order to investigate these variables five research questions were developed.

1. What is the relationship between administrator leadership styles as perceived by school psychologists and school psychologists’ job satisfaction?
2. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who have greater role diversity within their school and perceived administrator leadership styles?
3. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who travel to more than one school and perceived administrator leadership style?
4. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists with varying years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?
5. What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?
Discussion of the findings in relationship to each research questions will be explored in this chapter. In conclusion, implications for practice and suggestions for further research will be addressed.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One

What is the relationship between administrator leadership styles as perceived by school psychologists and school psychologists’ job satisfaction?

Niebrugge (1994) stated that satisfaction with a supervisor was the greatest predictor of overall job satisfaction for school psychologists. Although administrative leadership styles have been found to have a significant impact on teacher job satisfaction, limited research has explored school psychologists’ preferred leadership style. The first research question considered the relationship between school psychologists’ job satisfaction and preferred administrative leadership style. Participants in this study indicated no significant differences in their job satisfaction ratings based on their preferred administrative leadership style. Overall, 96.44% of school psychologists indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job. When considering the three leadership styles defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999), 97.63% of participants indicated a preference for administrators to demonstrate a transformational leadership style. Only 1.18% of participants indicated transactional or laissez-faire leadership styles. Although group sizes were grossly unequal, there was no significant difference in job satisfaction ratings based on preferred administrator leadership style.

Job Satisfaction. Within this study, 96.44% of school psychologists indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job. This is a higher percentage of individuals when compared to VanVoorhis & Levison’s (2006) study that found only 85% of school psychologists
were satisfied or very satisfied with their job. When looking at the specific components that participants reported as contributing factors to job satisfaction, the ability of the job to provide steady employment was the highest indicator. This is not surprising since federal regulations for special education mandates public school districts to employ school psychologists. Participants also noted that the ability to do things for others and the ability to keep busy as high indicators of job satisfaction.

The high rating of school psychologists’ job satisfaction may be indicative of an overall increase of satisfaction among all school psychologists within the field. For the past two years, school psychology was ranked as one of the most desired jobs in the country (U.S. News and World Report, 2017). The field is currently ranked as the best social service job when seven aspects including future job prospects, stress level, and work-life balance were evaluated. However, it is unclear whether this is an overall increase for school psychologists within the field or only representative of school psychologists within this sample. The high rating within the sample is interesting to consider within the context of practice within the state of Tennessee. In 2010, the ratio of school psychologists to students was 1:1,383 as reported in the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) membership survey. The most recent reliable ratios taken from each state showed Tennessee at a ratio of 1:2,534 (Charvat, 2005). Of the 50 states, Tennessee was reported as having the seventh highest ratio of school psychologists to students.

Although ratios within the state are above the national average, school psychologists within the state of Tennessee may be reporting higher levels of job satisfaction due to the recent implementation of the Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI²) model. On July 1, 2014, all K-8 schools within the state were required to use an RTI² model when identifying students
with specific learning disabilities (Tennessee Department of Education, 2017). High schools were required to use this model as of July 1, 2016. As part of the state’s mandate, school psychologists were included as integral components of the process. Recommendations in the state’s implementation manual noted that it was best practice to include school psychologists as members of the school’s data team meetings (TNCORE, 2014). The purpose of these meetings is to review the student data for all students showing deficits in basic academic skills, both general education and special education students. For some counties this heightened the expertise and need for school psychologists in their school buildings. For example, Williamson County Schools as of the 2016-2017 school year was the first county in the state to have a full-time school psychologist in every elementary, middle, and high school within the county. Although a substantial change in practice for school psychologists in Tennessee, this shift may have positively impacted their job satisfaction.

In addition, school psychologists within this study expressed components consistent with previous research that negatively impacted their job satisfaction. Implementation of policies, compensation, and opportunity for advancement were the lowest indicators of job satisfaction for this sample. VanVoorhis & Levinson (2006) and Worrell, Skaggs, & Brown (2006) both reported these three components as having correlations to a reduction in job satisfaction among school psychologists. Walcott, Charvat, McNamara, & Hyson (2016) reported the average wages in the southeast region as $61,212, the second lowest of all reported regions. The highest average wages was in the northeast region which reported an average salary of $75,151. Although school psychologists in this study were in a lower paying region, it appears that the discipline as a whole is dissatisfied with the level of compensation. School psychologists often hold the highest degrees within their building with licensure in most states requiring an educational specialist
degree. Yet, without further certification there is limited availability for school psychologists to move out of their current position.

**Administrative Leadership Styles.** When considering the three leadership styles defined by Bass (1985) and Avolio (1999), 97.63% of participants indicated a preference for administrators to demonstrate a transformational leadership style. This finding is consistent with Hauserman, Ivankova, & Stick (2007) who reported that transformational leadership practices were sought out and encouraged by teachers. Transformational leadership is defined by leaders who practice the four I’s: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass & Avolio, 1994). School psychologists in this study reported inspirational motivation as the most desirable trait. Inspirational motivation encompasses an administrator’s communication and motivation, and entails how well the leader provides challenge and meaning to their follower’s work (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This factor helps define the overarching vision and the exact steps needed to attain the vision. The practice of inspirational motivation is consistent with Miller, Nickerson, Chafouleas, & Osborne (2008) who found that clear goals and feedback were contributors to school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Clear communication by the administrators regarding their vision for general education and special education students can guide school psychologists in the exact work that needs to be accomplished within their building.

School psychologists’ rated transactional leadership as the second most preferred administrative leadership style. There was a clear delineation between the two types of transactional leadership. School psychologists’ showed a clear preference for contingent reward leaders. Similar to attributes noted under inspirational motivation, contingent reward leaders focus on clear expectations and clarification of expectations within the process. When the
individual meets their performance targets, the transactional contingent reward leader celebrates and recognizes the individual’s achievement. Bass (1985) and Sergiovanni (2007) noted that these transactional practices can be key to daily routines within the school environment.

School psychologists in the current study clearly rated laissez-faire leadership style as the least preferred. Both types of laissez-faire leadership had an average rating that indicated school psychologists wanted these attributes “not at all” according to the Likert scale. This finding is consistent with Niebrugge (1994) that found school psychologists were most satisfied with supervisors who provided feedback, technical assistance, and support characteristics that are the antithesis of the laissez-faire leader.

**Research Question Two**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who have greater role diversity within their school and perceived administrator leadership styles?

This research question considered whether a significant difference was noted in school psychologists’ job satisfaction ratings based on their reported role diversity and preferred administrator leadership style. Participants reported no difference in their job satisfaction ratings regardless of their preferred administrator leadership style and their level of role diversity within their school. As previously discussed the vast majority of participants indicated transformational leadership style as their preferred administrative leadership style in the school setting. When considering role diversity the greatest number of school psychologists in this study (42.60%) indicated medium role diversity. Overall, the average amount of time this sample reported in assessment related activity was 54%. This is consistent with Castillo, Curtis, and Gelley (2012) who found that psychologists spend an average of 47% of their time in assessment related activities. Although greater job satisfaction has been reported with higher role diversity in
previous studies (Niebrugge, 1994; Proctor & Steadman, 2003), this was not seen within this study when considered solely in comparison with preferred leadership style.

**Research Question Three**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists who travel to more than one school and perceived administrator leadership style?

Miller, Nickerson, Choafules, & Osborne (2008) recommend school psychologists take concerted efforts to be available and visible within their school buildings. School psychologists can be assigned to one school (in-house) or to multiple schools (traveling). The third research question examined whether a significant difference was reported in job satisfaction based on school psychologists' number of school placements and their preferred administrative leadership style. In-house school psychologists did not report a significant difference from traveling school psychologists on job satisfaction ratings when also considering their preferred administrative leadership style. The vast majority of participants (70.41%) reported traveling between schools. The highest number of schools served by a psychologist was fifteen; this individual reported she was only one of two psychologists in the entire school system. Five psychologists reported assignments in seven or more schools. In addition, most of these individuals stated they were also placed at different levels such as an elementary and middle school placement or middle and high school placement. Very few traveling school psychologists reported consistent school placements across the same school level (elementary, middle, or high).

This finding is inconsistent with Proctor & Steadman’s (2003) study that showed in-house school psychologists’ indicating higher job satisfaction scores than traveling school psychologists. Within their study, both groups indicated at least moderate job satisfaction, but the in-house psychologists also perceived themselves as more effective within their role. As
previously noted, with the changing role of school psychologists in the state of Tennessee with the implementation of RTI², the relationship between coworkers and staff has experienced a shift. With the RTI² model school psychologists are invited to participate in grade or school level data team meetings where student’s progress and interventions are discussed (TNCORE, 2014). Prior to consideration of special education services, a student must show documented failure to remediate their skill deficit even after multiple intervention changes, all of which are discussed in periodic data team meetings. This is vastly different from the discrepancy model where a student’s profile had to show a predetermined numerical gap between their achievement and cognitive processing. Typically, school psychologists were only asked to participate in meetings when the team was recommending an evaluation, not in the earlier intervention planning that is suggested within the RTI² model. Armendariz & Jung (2016) reported that both general education and special education teachers identified the RTI² model as more effective in evaluation a child’s need for special education support. With the involvement of school psychologists from the beginning stages, this may create a new opportunity for collaboration among stakeholders, trust with teachers, and a better understanding of school psychologists’ role and expertise— all positive contributing factors to establishing relationship among coworkers.

**Research Question Four**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists with varying years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?

Schroffel (1999) suggested that the level of supervision desired by an employee was related to their experience within a field. The fourth research question explored whether a significant difference was reported in job satisfaction based on school psychologists’ years of experience and their preferred administrative leadership style. Years of experience was defined
by four subgroups: (a) up to 5 years, (b) 6 to 10 years, (c) 11 to 15 years, and (d) 16 or more years of experience (Wilczenski, 1997). Due to the majority of participants endorsing transformational leadership as their preferred administrative leadership style, the interaction between years of experience and administrative leadership style could not be calculated. However, information regarding the participants years of experience and preferences for administrative leadership characteristics can still be discussed.

Within this sample, 38.46% of individuals reported 16 or more years of experience. The mean number of years within the field across all participants was 14 years. Forty seven school psychologists reported having 20 years of experience with 17 of them serving in the field over 30 years. Curtis, Grier, and Hunley (2004) described what is commonly referred to as the “graying” of the field. This term describes the increasing age of practicing school psychologists who are or will soon be eligible for retirement. Currently within the state of Tennessee there are three accredited universities that have educational specialist level graduate programs in school psychology: the University of Memphis, the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, and Middle Tennessee State University (National Association of School Psychologists, 2017a). Last year these three programs produced only 16 graduates (National Association of School Psychologists, 2017b). Castillo, Curtis, & Tan (2014) reported that approximately 3,500 school psychologist’s job openings per year already exists. If all 17 of the participants in this study who reported 30 or more years of experience chose to retire this school year and graduation rates remained consistent with all of the individuals choosing to practice within state, job shortages in Tennessee would still remain.

When considering specific responses to the job satisfaction survey based on years of experience, those individuals who had worked five years or less stated the most dissatisfying
characteristic of the job was the compensation. All other levels of experience reported limited opportunities for advancement as the least satisfying component of the job. This finding was consistent with Wilczenski (1997) who found that the group with the highest attrition rates were school psychologists who had six to ten years of experience with the second most vulnerable group being school psychologists with 11 to 15 years of experience. Both groups reported the most common reason for leaving as a need for career advancement.

When the most satisfying characteristics were reviewed those who reported five years or less stated being able to keep busy on the job was the most satisfying. Both the group of individuals who had 6 to 10 years of experience and those who had worked 15 or more years reported being able to do things for others as the most satisfying component. This differed from the 11 to 15 years of experience group who reported the provision of steady employment as the most satisfying.

Although no interaction between years of experience and preferred administrative leadership style could be calculated, it was interesting to note that the only individuals who preferred a laissez-faire leadership style had 16 or more years of experience. All other individuals regardless of years of experience reported transformational leadership style as their preference. Transformational leaders are defined by the four I’s: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass & Avolio, 1994). Participant responses on these four subscales were considered in relation to their years of experience and an interesting trend was noted. Regardless of years of experience the participants reported inspirational motivation as the most preferred characteristic. Inspirational motivation encompasses an administrator’s communication and motivation, and entails how well the leader provides challenge and meaning to their follower’s work (Avolio &
This factor helps define the overarching vision as well as the exact steps needed to attain the vision.

A difference was noted when considered the lowest rated characteristic among transformational leadership style. For those participants with the least and most experience, intellectual stimulation was considered the least essential. Intellectual stimulation is defined as how the follower is motivated to be innovative and creative when rethinking the leaders’ ideas and motivations (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This process is encouraged because collaboration and shared decision making is encouraged. For those with 6 to 10 years or 11 to 15 years of experience, individualized consideration was rated the lowest characteristic. Individualized consideration is the ability of the leader to understand the unique needs of each of their followers (Avolio & Bass, 2004). A leader who exhibits this well is able to identify specific individual needs and then thoughtfully place the individual into projects or roles that help fulfill their needs. This is interesting to consider in relation to Wilczenski (1997) who reported those two groups as those with the highest attrition rate with the most common reason for leaving as a need for career advancement.

**Research Question Five**

What is the relationship between job satisfaction of school psychologists when considering role diversity, school placement, years of experience and perceived administrator leadership styles?

This research question considered the relationship among all the previous factors that have been discussed, role diversity, school placement, years of experience, and perceived administrator leadership style, on reported job satisfaction. Interactions among many of the variables were unable to be analyzed due to the vast majority of participants indicating a
preference for transformational leadership style. Since only two school psychologists indicated transactional leadership style and only two indicated laissez-faire leadership style, the variability among responses was too high, and it could not be determined at this time if a relationship existed when preferred administrative leadership styles was considered as a variable. However, interactions among the other factors were able to be considered.

A three-way interaction was considered among years of experience, role diversity, and school placement and the impact on school psychologists’ job satisfaction. No differences were found with school psychologists’ job satisfaction regardless of how many years in the profession, their reported role diversity, and the number of schools they serve. This was interesting to note when considering previous research has found that more years of experience (Mackoniene & Novile, 2012; Wilczenski, 1997), higher role diversity (Niebrugge, 1994; Proctor & Steadman, 2003), and in-house placement (Proctor & Steadman, 2003) have positively impacted school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Prior to running the statistical analysis, an individual could assume that a psychologist who represented these factors would report higher levels of job satisfaction; however, in this study, that relationship was not seen.

Two-way interactions considered whether a school psychologists’ reported job satisfaction was impacted by role diversity and years of experience, role diversity and number of school placements, or years of experience and number of school placements. When considering the school psychologists’ reported level of role diversity and their years of experience, no significant difference was noted in their job satisfaction. In other words, school psychologists with low role diversity and few years of experience reported similar levels of job satisfaction as those who reported over 16 years of experience and high role diversity.
The relationship between role diversity and number of school placements on job satisfaction was also investigated. Again, no significant differences were noted. School psychologists with low role diversity and multiple schools reported similar levels of job satisfaction as those who had low role diversity and practice in-house. This was true across all levels of role diversity and school placements. Finally, the two-way interaction of years of experience and school placements was analyzed. No significant differences were noted in ratings of job satisfaction regardless of the combination of years of experience with number of school placements.

The final consideration of this research question was the main effect of each of the variables (leadership style, role diversity, school placement, and years of experience) on school psychologists’ job satisfaction ratings. In other words, when all of these variables are considered together how does each individual factor impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction. Only one significant effect was noted. School psychologists’ job satisfaction differed based on their reported level of role diversity. Role diversity was defined by the amount of reported time that school psychologists’ spent in assessment related activities. Castillo, Curtis, & Gelley (2012) reported that school psychologists spend an average of 47% of their time on assessment related activities. School psychologists with greater role diversity (lower percentage of time spent in assessment) have been found to report greater job satisfaction (Badhesha & Wilson, 2013; Niebrugge, 1994; Proctor & Steadman, 2003).

Within this sample, differences were noted in school psychologists’ job satisfaction when level of role diversity was taken into account. Job satisfaction ratings of the low role diversity group (70% or more time spent on assessment) differed significantly from the medium diversity (40% to 69% of time spent on assessment) and the high diversity groups (39% or less time spent
on assessment). No difference was noted between the medium and high diversity groups. This reflects that school psychologists who spend 69% of their time or less on assessments report higher levels of job satisfaction. Since this range is consistent with the average percentage of time reported by Castillo, Curtis, & Gellye (2012) it makes sense that the majority of school psychologists in this study as well as previous studies (VanVoorhis & Levison 2006) reported high ratings of job satisfaction overall.

**Implications for Practice**

School psychologists have stated their desire for administrators who are effective communicators and give feedback regarding their performance (Nieburgge, 1994). However, prior to this study there has been limited data collection regarding school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles in relation to job satisfaction. Therefore, it may have been challenging for school psychologists to initiate conversations regarding what they need from their administrators. A simple and intentional action is for school psychologists’ to use this information to help direct conversations regarding their practice within the school. The school psychologists in this study indicated an overwhelming preference for administrators who demonstrate inspirational motivation. Inspirational motivation is the practice of communicating and motivating individuals to help achieve the overarching vision of the school (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

Dickinson, Prater, Heath, and Young (2009) found that school psychologists listed improved communication between themselves and administrators as an important factor to retaining school psychologists. School psychologists can encourage the trait of inspirational motivation by meeting with their administrator at the beginning of the year. Their conversation can center on the administrator’s expectations and school psychologist’s current roles within the
building. Both the administrator and the psychologist, can discuss their ideal practice, and administrators can challenge psychologists to diversify their role within the building by identifying an area of need for the school that aligns with the vision and matches the individual’s strengths. This could include periodic trainings for paraprofessionals or parents, researching a new behavior or academic intervention, or counseling sessions for individuals and/or groups of at-risk students. This is a simple strategy for school psychologists to help advocate for role diversity. Throughout the year the administrator and school psychologist can agree to meet to celebrate successes, dialogue about challenges and roadblocks, and gain feedback about their current services occurring within the school.

Although this study only focused on school psychologists’ preferred administrative leadership style, transformational leadership has been found to positively affect teachers’ job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001; Korkmaz, 2007) and their commitment to their school (Price, 2012). Transformational leadership practices within the school appear to lead to a variety of positive outcomes for the staff and overall school culture. However, although administrators describe the importance of transformational leadership behaviors within the school setting, the majority of them did not apply these characteristics in their daily actions (Akbaba-Altun, 2003). Professional development opportunities for administrators are important to bring awareness to leadership styles and help administrators identify their current practices within the school setting. By identifying their own strengths as well as areas for growth, administrators can strengthen their leadership practice. This also provides an excellent topic for professional learning communities where administrators or aspiring administrators from a variety of school levels and backgrounds can dialogue their implementation of administrative leadership styles within the context of the specific needs of their schools.
Recommendations for Future Research

With the limited research that has been conducted regarding school psychologists’ job satisfaction and administrative leadership styles, the opportunity for continued and expanded research is great. Future research should consider measuring perceptions of administrative leadership styles across a variety of states and regions in order to discover if transformational leadership continues to remain the preferred style. Qualitative research could be beneficial in examining why specific transformational leadership characteristics differed when considering school psychologists years of experience. In addition, comparison between states that currently use a Response to Instruction and Intervention model for identifying students with learning disabilities could be compared with states still using the discrepancy models since the practice of school psychologists within these states may differ and thus their preferred leadership style.

In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of practice within the school setting, actual leadership styles demonstrated by administrators could be measured. This would showcase what specific styles are being implemented in schools or regions with the highest job satisfaction for school psychologists. Research could also consider implementation of administrator leadership training and then measure job satisfaction among staff as well as school psychologists following training and practice of skills. Alternate models of leadership styles could be measured using different scales to gain a more comprehensive picture of styles that are practiced within the school setting and their impact on staff job satisfaction.

Continued consideration of factors that impact school psychologists should be measured and researched. The current study was inconsistent with many factors that earlier studies have found to positively impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction including years of experience and number of school placements. However, the overall rating of individuals who reported being
satisfied or very satisfied was very high in the current study. Continued research should consider factors that influence school psychologists’ job satisfaction as well as their interaction with one another.

Conclusion

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine school psychologists’ perceptions of administrative leadership styles and the effect on job satisfaction of school psychologists working at public schools in the state of Tennessee. Overall, 96.44% of school psychologists indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their job. Participants in this study indicated no significant differences in their job satisfaction ratings based on their preferred administrative leadership style. The overwhelming majority of school psychologists indicated a preferred administrative leadership style of transformational leadership with the most desired characteristic being inspirational motivation. When considering variables that have previously been found to have a positive impact on school psychologists’ job satisfaction in relation to preferred administrative leadership style, no significant differences were noted until all the variables were considered together. A significant main effect was found with role diversity, indicating that school psychologists with low role diversity (70% or above of time spent in assessments) reported significantly lower job satisfaction ratings than those who reported medium or high role diversity.

Within everyday practice, school psychologists and administrators can use these findings to help facilitate conversation about ideal practice within their school buildings. School psychologists have the opportunity to discuss occasions for roles outside of assessment that can positively impact their job satisfaction and ultimately their retention within the field. Administrators can utilize this information to communicate a clear vision for school
psychologists including their expectations for action. Ongoing conversations between these two groups can focus on feedback regarding successes and collaboration in overcoming roadblocks. Future research can expand upon this study by measuring the current administrative styles actually practiced within the school building to determine if different factors including practiced preferred leadership traits impact school psychologists’ job satisfaction.
References


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Appendices
Appendix A

Informed Consent
Informed Consent

Study Title
School Psychologists’ Perceptions of Administrator’s Leadership Style and the Effect on School Psychologists’ Job Satisfaction

Purpose of the Study
You are invited to participate in this study which examines school psychologists’ perceptions of administrator leadership style and its effect on school psychologists’ job satisfaction

What is involved in this study?
You will be asked to complete two questionnaires and a demographic survey. The first questionnaire will measure your current job satisfaction. The second questionnaire will measure your perceptions of desired administrator leadership characteristics. The demographic survey will ask you questions regarding information such as years of experience, current school placement, and roles within your current job. This information will take you approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits
There is minimal risk associated with participation in this study. Your responses will be shared directly with me and neither your fellow colleagues nor current administrators will have access to your responses. I cannot guarantee that you will experience benefits from your participation in this study. However, others including school psychologists and administrators may benefit in the future from the information found in this study.

Compensation
Upon completion of all of the questionnaires and survey, you may choose to provide your email address if you are interested in being enrolled in the raffle. By completing all the questionnaires and survey, you are eligible to win one (1) of four (4) $25 gift cards to Amazon.com. Information gathered for entering the raffle will be separated from the assessment results.

Confidentiality
All information collected in this study will be kept confidential. You will not be asked to provide any identifying information such as name or contact information that could connect you to your responses. At the end of the survey, you have the option to provide your email address if you are interested in being enrolled in the raffle. Information gathered for entering the raffle will be separated from the assessment results.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue survey items. There is no penalty for not participating in this study or discontinuing the surveys.
Who to Contact for Questions:
If you have questions about this study please contact Rachele Whorley at rewhorley@en.edu. Once the study is completed, I am happy to share the results with you upon your request.

By clicking next you are verifying that you have read the above information and agree to participation in this study.
Appendix B

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire
minnesota satisfaction questionnaire

Directions

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you a chance to tell how you feel about your present job, what things you are satisfied with and what things you are not satisfied with.

On the basis of your answers and those of people like you, we hope to get a better understanding of the things people like and dislike about their jobs.

On the following pages you will find statements about certain aspects of your present job.

• Read each statement carefully.

• Decide how you feel about the aspect of your job described by the statement.

  —Circle 1 if you are not satisfied (if that aspect is much poorer than you would like it to be).
  —Circle 2 if you are only slightly satisfied (if that aspect is not quite what you would like it to be).
  —Circle 3 if you are satisfied (if that aspect is what you would like it to be).
  —Circle 4 if you are very satisfied (if that aspect is even better than you expected it to be).
  —Circle 5 if you are extremely satisfied (if that aspect is much better than you hoped it could be).

• Be sure to keep the statement in mind when deciding how you feel about that aspect of your job.

• Do this for all statements. Answer every item.

• Do not turn back to previous statements.

Be frank. Give a true picture of your feelings about your present job.
Ask yourself, How satisfied am I with this aspect of my job?

Very Sat. means I am very satisfied with this aspect of my job.

Sat. means I am satisfied with this aspect of my job.

N means I can’t decide whether I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job.

Dissat. means I am dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.

Very Dissat. means I am very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.

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<tbody>
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<td>1. Being able to keep busy all the time</td>
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<td>2. The chance to work alone on the job</td>
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<td>3. The chance to do different things from time to time</td>
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<td>4. The chance to be &quot;somebody&quot; in the community</td>
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<td>5. The way my boss handles his/her workers</td>
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<td>6. The competence of my supervisor in making decisions</td>
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<td>7. Being able to do things that don’t go against my conscience</td>
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<td>8. The way my job provides for steady employment</td>
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<td>9. The chance to do things for other people</td>
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<td>10. The chance to tell people what to do</td>
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<td>11. The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities</td>
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<td>12. The way company policies are put into practice</td>
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<td>13. My pay and the amount of work I do</td>
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<td>14. The chances for advancement on this job</td>
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<td>15. The freedom to use my own judgment</td>
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<td>16. The chance to try my own methods of doing the job</td>
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<td>17. The working conditions</td>
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<td>18. The way my co-workers get along with each other</td>
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<td>19. The praise I get for doing a good job</td>
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<td>20. The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job</td>
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Appendix C
Demographic Survey
Demographic Survey

1. Gender: ____ Male       ____ Female

2. Ethnicity:
   _____ American Indian/Alaskan Native
   _____ Asian American/Pacific Islander
   _____ Black/African American
   _____ Caucasian
   _____ Hispanic
   _____ Other, please specify ______________

3. Years practicing school psychology (including current year) in a school setting ___

4. How many different school buildings are you currently assigned? _____

5. Current level of school placements (mark all that apply)
   _____ Early Childhood
   _____ Elementary
   _____ Middle
   _____ High

6. What county do you current practice in? ______________

7. What percent of your time is assigned to each job role? (e.g. 15%, 25%, total number should equal 100%)
   _____ Assessment
   _____ Consultation
   _____ Intervention planning
   _____ Counseling
   _____ Research
   _____ Program Evaluation
Appendix D
MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire Rater Form (5x-Short)
MLQ Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire  
Rater Form (5x-Short)  

Name of Leader: ___________________ Date: ___________________ 
Organization ID #: ___________________ Leader ID #: ___________________

This questionnaire is to describe the leadership style of the above-mentioned individual as you perceive it. Please answer all items on this answer sheet. If an item is irrelevant, or if you are unsure or do not know the answer, leave the answer blank. Please answer this questionnaire anonymously.

**IMPORTANT (necessary for processing):** Which best describes you?  
___ I am at a higher organizational level than the person I am rating.  
___ The person I am rating is at my organizational level.  
___ I am at a lower organizational level than the person I am rating.  
___ I do not wish my organizational level to be known.

Five sample items of the forty-five descriptive statements are listed below. The publisher has chosen not to allow the entire instrument to be included or reproduced in any other published material.

Judge how frequently each statement fits the person you are describing. Use the following rating scale:

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<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<td>Not at all</td>
<td>Once in a while</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Fairly often</td>
<td>Frequently, if not always</td>
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**THE PERSON I AM RATING . . .**

1. Provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts ................................................. 0 1 2 3 4
2. Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate .......................... 0 1 2 3 4
3. Fails to interfere until problems become serious .......................................................... 0 1 2 3 4
4. Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards .......... 0 1 2 3 4
5. Avoids getting involved when important issues arise ..................................................... 0 1 2 3 4