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CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHER SATISFACTION AND THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO AND PREDICT SATISFACTION

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CHARTER SCHOOL TEACHER SATISFACTION AND THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO AND PREDICT SATISFACTION

By

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DEDICATION

"And once the storm is over you won't remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure, in fact, whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about."—Haruki Murakami.

When I started this journey, Dr. Roth told me that it would be transformative beyond my imagination. I was told that anything that could go wrong will go wrong. However, I was also told that despite these obstacles, I was in that first doctoral class for a reason. I was there to not only begin my doctoral degree program, but to finish it. Of course, there were periods of serious doubt that I would be able to find the energy and drive to continue this journey. Without the overwhelming support of my family, friends, and colleagues, completion of this monumental achievement would not be anywhere near possible.

My parents have always been my ultimate source of inspiration and motivation, supplying me with unconditional love and support in all of my endeavors. To my parents, thank you for always reinforcing the notion that I am capable of achieving the goals I set for myself. Thank you to my father, Micky, who suddenly passed away while I was in the midst of my doctoral coursework. I hope you know that without you, I would not be where I am or who I am without your love, guidance, and unwavering belief in my potential to excel in anything I do. While I am saddened that you are not here to share this moment with me, I still do everything

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the overall job satisfaction level and the most robust predictors of overall satisfaction of K-12 charter school teachers. Understanding the overall satisfaction level of charter school teachers and what makes up their overall satisfaction may assist charter school leaders in being more informed to address teacher attrition, mobility, and retention in charter schools. This quantitative study utilized a survey research method to address five research questions. Teachers in K-12 charter schools located in the state of Florida were invited to complete a survey on teacher satisfaction which included the 20 items of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire—Short Form. The 114 K-12 charter school teachers surveyed were found to be significantly satisfied with their jobs. "The chance to do things for other people" and "work independence" were found to be the most statistically significant job factors of which participants felt most satisfied. Additionally, "working conditions" and "supervisory/workplace" were found to be the most robust predictors of overall charter school teacher satisfaction at a statistically significant level. Implications of the study include strategies for recruiting, growing, and retaining high quality teachers working in charter schools.

Keywords: teacher satisfaction; charter schools; autonomy; altruism; empowerment; retention; mobility; administrative support; working conditions

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I. INTRODUCTION

Charter school enrollment has nearly tripled nationwide over the last decade (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2017). While charter school teachers only make up approximately 3.5% of all public school teachers, charter school teacher population is on the rise due to high community demand for more charter schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). Research has also indicated that charter school teachers differ from their traditional public-school counterparts in a variety of ways (Goldring, Gray, Bitterman, & Broughman, 2013; Loewus, 2017). Charter school teachers have been identified to be younger, less educated, less experienced, more racially diverse, while also earning less money and working a shorter tenure at their schools (Furguson, McCullough, Wolfendale, & Gill, 2014). Charter school teachers have also been associated with higher turnover rates; however, this trend has recently abated over time with more charter school teachers staying with their schools and fewer moving to new schools (National Center of Educational Statistics, 2010). Data from 2012 of the same follow-up survey has yet to be analyzed by the National Center of Education Statistics (NCES), but the question remains: Are charter school teachers satisfied with their positions? How satisfied are they? Finally, what job factors are influencing their satisfaction level?

Teacher satisfaction or dissatisfaction can have tremendous impact on a school's professional and educational environments, teachers' personal job performance, and student

achievement. With an understanding of overall charter school teacher satisfaction, as well as identifying specific predictors of their satisfaction, educational leaders can make more informed decisions regarding recruitment and retention of teachers as well as creating a more productive, efficient, and enjoyable workplace.

Background of the Study

This researcher first became interested in charter school teacher satisfaction during his tenure teaching at a charter middle school on the gulf coast of Florida beginning in 2011. Since then, this researcher has become the longest-tenured teacher at the school with just six years of employment. Throughout this time, this researcher has watched other teachers come and go in this relatively short span of time, sometimes knowing the reasons for his colleagues' departure from the school and sometimes not. Because of this, the researcher became interested in the question "Why are teachers leaving a high performing charter school so quickly?" To answer this question objectively, the researcher spoke to the school's administration to gather data through a teacher satisfaction survey to identify reasons for job dissatisfaction and attrition but was denied. The researcher chose to broaden the quest for his answers by addressing the question to other Florida charter schools through doctoral coursework and dissertation research. Currently, limited research exists on charter school teacher satisfaction and the factors that influence their satisfaction (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

For the 2017-18 school year, a need was manifested for 300,000 new teachers nationally. Over the next ten years, approximately three million students will enroll in the U.S. school system (Sutcher et al., 2016). The amount of teaching vacancies is a cause for concern as teacher attrition rates are steadily rising and are much higher than other countries on the international stage (Sutcher et al., 2016). Specifically, the southern United States experiences an even higher

turnover rate than other geographical areas of the country (Sutcher et al., 2016). The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (2016) projected that education will be one of the areas that will gain the most available jobs by 2021. However, college-level education-program enrollment in the state is decreasing, and schools are facing multiple critical teacher shortage areas (Florida Department of Education, 2016a).

Teacher satisfaction has been shown to be a primary predictor to subvert teacher turnover, mobility, shortage, and burnout while also attracting and retaining newer and higher qualified teachers (Lee, 2002). Banerjee, Stearns, Moler, and Mickelson (2016) found that teacher satisfaction also directly affects student achievement in reading and math. Identifying and understanding the factors of teacher satisfaction is equally as important as it provides a means to ensure high levels of teacher satisfaction within a school to retain teachers, support a positive school climate and environment, and raise student achievement.

A great deal of research has been conducted on teacher job satisfaction. For the theoretical basis in much of the previous research, both the Theory of Motivation (Maslow, 1943) and Motivation-Hygiene Theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) are common underlying forces in defining what job satisfaction is and how high levels of satisfaction can be achieved based on human need. Herzberg built his theory as a sort of response and continuation of Maslow's work. Maslow's (1943) hierarchy was sequentially-ordered from physiological need through self-actualization. While Maslow's theory was not substantiated with quantitative data, Herzberg expanded Maslow's work by conducting studies utilizing empirical evidence and including the concept of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Lee, 2002). Maslow's and Herzberg's theories have been previously referenced in determining teacher satisfaction and have been used to identify satisfaction levels and the predictors of satisfaction level regarding teaching and the

school environment (Nias, 1981). Additionally, the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) incorporates the ongoing, dynamic relationship between the individual and his or her work environment (Dawes, England, & Lofquist, 1964). Job satisfaction is a key indicator of work adjustment. Through intrinsic and extrinsic factors, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) can identify overall satisfaction levels while also identifying specific indicators of the overall satisfaction level (University of Minnesota, 2018b).

Charter schools have forever changed the dynamic of education in America. Charter schools can differ greatly from traditional public schools as well as from charter school to charter school. A charter school is a "public school that operates under a performance contract, or a 'charter,' which frees them from many regulations created for traditional public schools while holding them accountable for academic and financial results" (Florida Department of Education, 2017, para.1). While the charter school design has undoubtedly transformed the student experience, the organizational design also has also changed the instructional and work experience (Hoxby, 2002). Teaching at a charter school is said to be desirable due to the unique benefits the charter school innately presents (Bulkley & Fisler, 2002). From a teacher's perspective, benefits of working in a charter school include but are not limited to higher levels of classroom control, autonomy, and influence (Torres, 2014).

The first Florida charter school opened its doors in 1996 (Harris, 2007). As of October 2016, 652 charter schools existed in Florida, serving over 270,000 students with approximately 38% of these schools reported as high-performing (Florida Department of Education, 2016a). While charter schools may be diverse in mission, structure, and approach from school to school, they appear to share a collective identity regarding teacher demographics and characteristics. Charter school teachers are typically younger, have less teaching experience than traditional

public-school teachers, and undergo a more rigorous hiring process (Harris, 2007). Harris (2007) also found that charter school teachers are also more likely to have attended a more selective university and are more diverse in terms of demographics such as ethnicity or gender.

A paucity of comprehensive research exists with regard to charter school teacher job satisfaction, especially for grades K–12. According to the NCES (2013) and the U.S. Department of Education (2008), charter school teacher turnover has declined since 2004 yet is still higher than in traditional public schools. However, in 2008, the NCES discovered through the School and Staffing Survey (SASS) that charter school teachers were less satisfied, and more likely to not only leave the profession willingly, but also be involuntarily terminated than their public-school counterparts. Stuit and Smith (2012) found that dissatisfaction of charter school teachers was associated with lower pay, teaching assignment, and work environment. The same survey data from the 2012 SASS had yet to be released or analyzed at the time of this report. Relevantly, Lee (2002) discovered that Florida charter school teachers of grades 6-12 were significantly more satisfied than previously SASS-surveyed public-school teachers, yet they were also significantly dissatisfied with their coworkers, nature of their work, and pay. The lack of comprehensive research on these differences calls for action to find out if any changes in the trends have occurred. Additionally, further research is required to conclude as to whether this difference exists. Lee's (2002) recommendations for future research explicitly included the need for evaluation of satisfaction of K-12 charter school teachers.

The demand for teachers is rising while the supply of teachers and enrollment of students in teacher preparation programs is declining. Charter school teachers are leaving the teaching profession twice as fast as their traditional school counterparts in the state of Florida (Miller, Dana, Thornquist, & Xu, 2015). Knowing the level of satisfaction of charter school teachers and

what contributes to their satisfaction can potentially yield diverse and purposeful findings for charter school stakeholders including but not limited to the students, teachers, administrators, and the communities that they serve. With these findings, charter school administrators can adjust their practices and promote positive change in the workplace environment and school culture accordingly to better serve their current teachers, recruit new teachers, and retain highly effective, dedicated teachers who not only agree with each school's unique mission, but foster and promote it. Higher teacher satisfaction levels will not only build better learning environments within schools, but better living environments within communities.

Purpose Statement

By identifying the overall job satisfaction level and predictors of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers, administrative-level educators can be more informed to act with the purpose of reversing current trends of teacher mobility and attrition and increasing teacher retention, especially in charter schools.

Research Questions

K-12 charter school teachers in Florida were invited to participate in a non-experimental, quantitative survey research project to identify the level of job satisfaction of K-12 Florida charter school teachers and identify the most robust predictors of satisfaction. The focus of the study relied on answering the following research questions:

1. Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, to what degree do charter school teachers perceive themselves satisfied with their positions?
2. Regarding individual survey items, which item was perceived by study participants as having reflected the greatest degree of satisfaction?

3. Of identified survey domains, which domain was perceived by study participants as reflecting the highest level of overall satisfaction?
4. Of individual survey items, which item represented the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers with their positions?
5. Of the identified survey domains, which represented the most robust correlate and predictor of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction with his/her position?

Methods

This study was descriptive, nonexperimental survey research. A-priori power analyses were conducted to determine ideal sample size for statistical significance. A sample size of n = 40 was determined to be sufficient. Since multiple regression was to be utilized and splitting the data would be considered, a higher sample was desired (n = 100). A purposive, judgmental sample of teachers was drawn from K-12 charter schools in the state of Florida. To recruit participants, emails were initially sent to charter school leaders explaining the study research and requesting their school's participation in the study. When a school agreed to participate, the school administrator released the survey link to their teachers. Dependent variables included mean responses to survey items and domain composite mean scores. Independent variables were derived from added demographical questions and included age, gender, geographical region, grade level taught, and total years teaching.

Florida teachers working in K-12 Florida charter schools were invited to participate in an online-based survey which included the 20 items of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Short Form. The MSQ Short Form is a free-to-use research instrument available for public use under a Creative Commons, non-commercial international license. The instrument serves to

provide individualized satisfaction reports by identifying specific intrinsic and extrinsic job aspects that bring each worker satisfaction (University of Minnesota, 2018a). The 20 items on the MSQ Short Form are representative of the 20 scales originally utilized in the 100-question MSQ Long Form. After a factor analysis of three factors—intrinsic, extrinsic, and general satisfaction—internal consistency coefficients of the MSQ Short Form across professions possessed a median reliability .86 for intrinsic satisfaction, .80 for extrinsic satisfaction, and .90 for general satisfaction, respectively. Since the MSQ Short Form is representative of the long form, validity and reliability testing reflect that of the long form since the same scales are represented in both forms.

Participants were also asked demographic questions regarding age, gender, years teaching, grade level taught, and geographical setting, as well as one additional question to rate their overall satisfaction as a charter school teacher. The scale was slightly altered to be reordered as a numerical Likert scale that rates responses on a scale of 1-5.

Analysis

Data Analysis

Prior to addressing the stated research questions in the proposed study, preliminary analyses will be conducted. Specifically, missing data, internal consistency (reliability) of participant response to survey items, essential demographic data, and dimension reduction of survey items will be analyzed and reported.

Preliminary Analyses

Missing data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages comprised the primary statistical methods of analysis and interpretation. Little's MCAR test statistic was utilized to evaluate the randomness of subsequent missing data. An

MCAR value of $p > .05$ was considered indicative of missing data that were sufficiently random in nature.

The internal consistency of participant responses to the survey items were addressed through the application of Cronbach's alpha *(a)* test statistic. The statistical significance of *a* was assessed through the use of an *F* test. The value of $p < .05$ was considered statistically significant.

The study's essential demographic information was assessed using descriptive statistical techniques. The mean, standard deviation, frequency counts (*n*), and percentages represented the primary methods of descriptive analysis.

The reduction of the survey's items into dimensions or factors was conducted using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Principal components analysis (PCA) represented the specific EFA technique used. Both KMO and Bartlett's sphericity values were interpreted as the means of assessing the factoring model's fitness. KMO values of .40 and greater were considered indicative of sampling adequacy for the factoring process. Bartlett sphericity values of $p < .05$ were considered indicative of sufficiency of strength of correlations necessary for the factoring process.

Analyses by Research Question

Research Questions 1 through 3 were addressed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Measures of central tendency (mean scores), variability (standard deviations), and percentages represented the primary descriptive statistical techniques to be applied. The single sample *t* test represented the inferential statistical technique by which respective mean scores were evaluated for statistical significance. The threshold value for statistical significance was $p < .05$. The magnitude of effect (effect size) was assessed using

Cohen's *d*. Cohen's conventions represented the guideline for the interpretation of all effect size values yielded in the first three research questions of the study.

Research Questions 4 and 5 were associative and predictive in nature. As such, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to assess the mathematical relationships of respective variables inherent in both research questions. Mathematical relationships manifesting *p* values of .05 or less were considered statistically significant. Multiple linear regression was utilized to assess the predictive aspect of the two research questions. Predictive model fitness was assessed through ANOVA table *F* values. ANOVA values of $p < .05$ were indicative of predictive model fitness. Adjusted R^2 values represented the basis for the evaluation of predictive effect. The formula Adjusted R^2 / *1* – Adjusted R^2 was used to calculate the effect size of the predictive model. Values of .35 or greater were considered large predictive effect sizes. The statistical significance of predictive effect was interpreted through the respective slope (*t*) values of independent predictor variables.

Limitations

While this study will add to the growing knowledge base of teacher satisfaction, specifically charter school teachers, limitations to this study were still present. The sample used for this study was a purposive sample and was assembled from K-12 charter school teachers only within the state of Florida. Furthermore, this study was based on individual perceptions, opinions, and feelings. Consequently, the scope of the study and its sample may not be representative of all charter school teachers in the country.

Definition of Key Terms

Charter School

Charter schools are defined by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) (2017) as, "public schools that operate under a performance contract, or a 'charter,' which frees them from many regulations created for traditional public schools while holding them accountable for academic and financial results" (paragraph 1). These charter schools may vary from homegrown and network charter schools and serve diverse types of communities and populations, but they still fall underneath the same definition provided by the FLDOE.

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Refers to the overall level of satisfaction a charter school teacher reflects on the survey instrument according to their personal attitudes and perceptions towards working in a charter school based on intrinsic and extrinsic factors of the worker's relationship with his or her job.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of literature pertaining to the theoretical framework of the study, charter schools, teacher satisfaction, teacher mobility, turnover, attrition, shortage, and retention, and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire.

Theoretical Framework

Spector (1997) simplistically defined job satisfaction as "the degree to which people like their jobs" (p. vii). While this definition is clear and succinct, job satisfaction in an applicable sense is quite a bit more complicated. Depending on what lens is applied to job satisfaction, the definitions of the term may differ, yet most theories and ideas find common ground in the fact that job satisfaction is multifaceted, multidimensional, and may be influenced by a culmination of human need, motivation theory, and intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2016). A teacher's attitude(s) towards certain aspects of his or her job may have links to provide insight on how to address many issues of the current educational landscape ranging from school climate to student achievement. Understanding teacher satisfaction in different types of schools and/or contexts may reveal the possible solutions to improve or solve unique problems a school may have. By understanding charter school teacher satisfaction and identifying the most robust predictors of teacher satisfaction, researchers and school leaders can work to reverse negative

trends of teacher shortage, recruitment, and turnover while simultaneously finding ways to retain effective teachers to positively affect student achievement.

The theoretical framework of this study explores the conceptualization of human motivation, the relationship between a worker and his or her workplace, and job satisfaction. Much of the research conducted on teacher satisfaction includes repetitious mention of two theories of human need/motivation brought to light by Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1959). The theories explain the physiological and psychological importance of work. Further development and insight on the topic of job satisfaction and work adjustment narrow the scope on how an individual's relationship with the workplace affects his or her attitude and perceptions of work culminating in self-actualization and perceived satisfaction with one's work.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs was introduced in his work *A Theory of Human Motivation*. *A Theory of Human Motivation* was one of the earliest theories applied to job satisfaction. The theory examined factors of job satisfaction and proclaimed the most important factor in human motivation was the urge to satisfy one's needs. Although the theory initially did not explicitly state its applicability to one's job but rather to human motivation in general, the theory has since been applied directly to job satisfaction since its introduction. Maslow's five-tier hierarchy, usually visually presented as a pyramid, was designed as a sequential pattern of human needs where the current (or lowest) tier of need must be met before fulfilling the next (Gawel, 1997). The tiers, in their sequential order, are presented by Maslow as such: physiological needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Gawel, 1997).

While Maslow's (1943) original theory presented a general theory on human motivation, the tiers can be and have been translated into the workplace and, furthermore, to teachers. For

example, salary can be seen as a physiological need as it can be used to buy a worker his or her food and shelter. Once the basic needs are met, a worker can move on to the next tier of safety, which in the workplace can be obtained through aspects such as job security and a safe working environment. In sequence, once the previous tier is satisfied, belonging may be obtained through coworker camaraderie and a worker's sense of belonging within an organization—or school in the case of teachers. When discussing teachers specifically, understanding the dynamics of the school and the leadership's structure of subject or grade-level teacher teams and how productive and effective they are is important. Teachers' esteem may be obtained through their self-perceived value to their coworkers, supervisors, or students. Additionally, student and parent surveys or periodic supervisor evaluations may be additional input for teachers to specifically consider for this tier. Finally, self-actualization can be secured through the worker's internal thoughts and feelings in regard to his or her job based upon the culminating completion or obtainment of the previous tiers.

Herzberg's Theory of Motivation

While many theories have developed over time as to how and why employees are satisfied or dissatisfied with their work, many have also stemmed from Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory. Herzberg's (1959) theory, also popularized as Two-Factor Theory, declared that satisfaction and dissatisfaction were contrasting ideas, effectively defining the two as individual, solitary issues. Herzberg, unlike Maslow, believed that need-fulfillment and motivation were non-hierarchical. Furthermore, Herzberg made an important distinction to state that satisfaction and dissatisfaction were, in fact, not opposites of one another. The opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction, and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction. Herzberg proposed that factors fall into two categories: motivation factors or satisfiers, and hygiene factors

or dissatisfiers. Motivation factors stand as the intrinsic values of the worker while hygiene factors exist as extrinsic aspects of the job. Therefore, in order to raise the satisfaction level of an employee, their work must have a higher abundance or existence of motivation factors and a limited number of hygiene factors. This dichotomy of factors can assist in understanding a person's feelings or attitudes towards their work.

Herzberg presented five factors as predictors of job satisfaction: achievement, recognition, the nature of the work, responsibility, and growth. Motivation factors are factors that when present bring a person satisfaction; however, the lack of satisfiers does not necessarily cause dissatisfaction. For example, the ability to use one's own judgment on the job may bring a higher level of satisfaction, but the lack of ability may not bring an employee dissatisfaction. Conversely, hygiene factors are the factors that contribute to a person's dissatisfaction with his or her job. The seven hygiene factors included company policies, supervision, work relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security. Aspects of work such as company policy, management, pay, interpersonal relationships, and working conditions serve as a worker's hygiene factors that may contribute to his or her level of dissatisfaction with his or her job. For example, a lack of adequate salary may be linked to higher dissatisfaction for an employee. A relatively recent meta-analysis of 92 quantitative studies that included over 15,000 participants by Judge, Piccolo, Podaskoff, Shaw, and Rich (2010) showed a weak correlation between salary and satisfaction, supporting Herzberg's early dichotomic theory on job satisfaction.

Theory of Work Adjustment

"The Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) describes the relationship of the individual to his or her work environment" (University of Minnesota, 2018b, para. 1). In their publication

entitled *A Psychological Theory of Work Adjustment: An Individual-Differences Model and Its Applications*, Dawis and Lofquist (1964) theorized that work is defined as the interaction between the individual and his or her work environment. The nature of this relationship relies on the fact that the work environment possesses tasks to be completed while the worker provides the skills needed for those tasks to be completed. In exchange for completing the tasks, the work requires certain needs to be fulfilled. For example, needs such as compensation and a certain standard of safety and working conditions. This exchange exists as an echo of Maslow's and Herzberg's needs fulfillment. Work adjustment also exists as the process of maintaining the active, complementary relationship between worker and workplace, or correspondence, which is indicated by a worker's satisfaction with his or her workplace. In order to evaluate one's satisfaction, or *satisfactoriness*, with their workplace, four instruments have been developed from Dawis and Lofquist's theory in order to address a variety of aspects in regard to work adjustment.

Public Charter Schools

The definition of charter schools has been and continues to be ambiguous due to the variety and differences in state laws that govern charter schools. However, most charter schools tend to share some overarching characteristics. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), charter schools are autonomous public schools that are publicly funded, part of the state school system, and are held accountable by public entities for their performance (NCSL, 2018). Additionally, charter schools are usually schools of choice and are privately managed by an administration or agency that has a contract, or charter, with an authorizing party (usually the local governing school board) (NCSL, 2018). The National Center for Education

Statistics (NCES) explains that the charter "exempts the school from certain state or local rules and regulations" (NCES, 2018, para. 1) to which other public schools abide.

Charter schools are referred to as an institutional innovation which allows charter schools to operate under a different legal and organizational structure from traditional public schools (Bulkley & Fisler, 2002). Each charter school strives to utilize their own governing structures, autonomy, and legal flexibility to "create educational programs with curriculum, organizational structures, and ways of involving parents and community members [in order to serve as] laboratories developing new educational practices that can later be replicated on a broader scale" (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, p. 2). In essence, the charter school is an empty box in which the organizers of each school get to fill with programs, curriculum, and ideas that will be taught. Charter schools may vary significantly in how they will obtain this goal by leading with different missions, priorities, or educational philosophies. Early predictive benefits of charter schools included the creation or reinvention of schools, more autonomy and flexibility from laws and regulations, more innovation both in practice and leadership, higher accountability to those the charter school served, and improved student achievement through the culmination of these unique aspects (Bulkley & Fisler, 2002).

After being just an educational idea of the 1970s to restructure school districts, the first charter school opened its doors in Minnesota in 1992 after passing its charter school law in 1991 (O'Connor, 2011). Since then, charter school populations have seen explosive growth nationwide. As of February 2017, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NAPCS) reported more than 6,900 charter schools in 48 states with over 3.1 million charter school students attending nationally (NAPCS, 2017). While charter school enrollment has more than tripled over the past decade, its population still only makes up approximately 5% of the total K-

12 student enrollment nationally (NAPCS, 2017). While 300 charter schools opened their doors in 2017, 211 charter schools closed due to reasons ranging from financial issues to low academic performance (NAPCS, 2017).

The purpose and goals of charter school reform have shifted over the years. Gawlik (2016) explained the three phases of charter school reform with regard to their purpose and what charter schools sought to do since the 1980s. Initially, charter schools focused on serving students who were not well served by traditional schools. The second phase of charter school goals focused on organizational aspects accountability and autonomy, while the latest phase is to improve the quality of charter schools (Gawlik, 2016). The trends of charter school reform are difficult to evaluate when it comes to how they have affected student achievement due to a lack of quality research as well as school site nuance(s) being a major hindrance to the alignment and generalization of findings (Gawlik, 2016). The U.S. Department of Education (2004) explains that effective charter schools can affect student achievement by being innovative across the school program while utilizing mission-responsive curriculum and pedagogy, flexible structure and operations, responsive staffing, and a supportive school environment.

Florida Public Charter Schools

The first Florida charter school law was passed in 1996 (Florida Consortium of Charter Schools, 2017). As of 2017, Florida was home to 646 charter school and served 270,691 students, reporting an enrollment increase of more than 300% over the previous ten years (Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, 2017). Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2016) predicted approximately three million students would enroll into the U.S. national school system from 2016 to 2026, generating the most recent need for approximately 300,000 new teachers for the 2017-2018 school year alone.

Florida statutes provide clear principles and purpose for charter schools to follow, promoting schools to focus on improving student learning and achievement, increasing opportunities for students, and creating new professional opportunities for educators (Student and Parental Right and Educational Choices, 2017). While Florida charter schools are exempt from some state statutes, charter schools in Florida are required to adhere to state statutes that pertain to public meetings, inspections, civil rights, students with disabilities, and overall student health and safety (Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, 2017). Like public schools, charter schools are also subject to performance grades (Florida Department of Education, 2016a). High performing charter schools are granted additional freedoms to expand and further their impact in their communities, while low performing charter schools are required to design and implement a school improvement plan (Charter School Corrective Action and School Improvement Plans, 2017).

According to a 2016 Florida Department of Education report of charter school student achievement for the 2015-16 school year, students in charter schools are demographically similar to their public-school counterparts, although they show lower percentages of students who receive free or reduced lunch, are English Language Learners (ELL), or have a disability. Also indicated in the annual report: charter schools have a smaller achievement gap overall as well as within demographical subgroups, students of charter schools who are in the lowest quartile made higher learning gains than students in traditional public schools, and students of charter schools show higher grade level achievement (Florida Department of Education, 2016b).

Charter School Teacher Characteristics

According to the latest U.S. Department of Education National Center of Education Statistics Schools and Staffing Survey (2013), charter school teachers make up 3.4% of all public

school teachers. While traditional public schools and charter schools possess some unique characteristics, evidence has grown to show that the teachers who work at these schools also possess some unique descriptors, setting them apart from one another. According to the same Schools and Staffing Survey (2013), charter school teachers tend to be younger, less educated, less experienced, newer to their schools, paid less, and more racially diverse than traditional public-school teachers. The autonomy of charter schools could be also be attributed to the fact that charter-school teachers also participate in a more diverse catalog of professional development (Goldring, et al., 2013). Typically speaking, charter school teachers are a non-unionized group; however, charter teacher unions are becoming more common in recent years, despite the fact that some charter school advocates argue that these unions attack the core elements of a bureaucracy-free charter school management (Loewus, 2017).

Charter School Autonomy and Empowerment

While generalizations about charter schools are difficult to generate due to the individuality of the states or districts in which they exist, or even from school to school, the teachers within charter schools be just as hard to generalize as well (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2017). However, some patterns do seem to exist among these teachers when compared to traditional public-school faculty. The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools (2018, para. 1) defines charter school teachers as those who "have the autonomy to design a classroom that fits their students' needs and are led by dynamic principals who have the flexibility to create a school culture that fosters student performance and parent satisfaction." The elements of empowerment and autonomy have been shown to make teaching at a charter school more desirable.

Two key themes that are presented in research with regard to why some teachers prefer to teach at charter schools fall mainly on empowerment and autonomy. Empowerment in the workplace is defined by Dunst, Trivette, and Deal (1988) as having the opportunities to demonstrate one's own competence. Rather than empowerment simply meaning to be in a higher position of the organizational hierarchy, empowerment for teachers lies within mutual respect of acting like and being treated as a professional while also having the ability and competence for teachers to find the solutions to their own problems. This definition of empowerment possesses not only a freedom from certain aspects of traditional public-school teaching, but also contains core elements of respect, trust, and accountability (Crawford, 2001).

According to Gawlik (2016), autonomy in the educational environment refers to and lends itself to more control at the hands of both teachers and school leaders. Autonomy provides more control as well as an ability to be more innovative when it comes to school governance, curriculum, and pedagogy to increase equity and/or access to new educational opportunities for students. Lubienski (2003) supported this notion of innovation with regard to charter school leadership, stating that leaders of charter schools utilize thematic approaches to education, performance-based pay raises, unique hiring practices, extended school days, and smaller class sizes.

Oberfield (2016) recognized a bargain struck between schools and charter-granting entities for bureaucratic freedom or autonomy; charter schools are held more accountable for student achievement than traditional public schools. Additionally, differences in autonomy between homegrown charter schools and schools that are a part of a charter management organization (CMO) appear to be present. Approximately a third of charter schools are operated by a management organization that operates more than one school (National Alliance for Public

Charter Schools, 2013). Teachers in homegrown charter schools feel that they experience less "red tape," believe they have more autonomy, and deal with less paperwork than those in traditional public schools as well as teachers at charter schools within an educational management organization (Oberfield, 2016). Meanwhile, teacher autonomy appears to be continuously declining at traditional public schools (Walker, 2016).

Charter School Teacher Satisfaction

"Satisfaction with teaching as a career, not merely as a job, is an important policy issue since it is associated with teacher effectiveness, which ultimately affects student achievement" (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006, p. 349). Although some would say that teaching in America is underappreciated, teaching is still a profession that has the capacity to transform society by enriching the children's lives on a daily basis (Tucker & Stronge, 2005). As of February 2013, teacher job satisfaction was at its lowest point in 25 years, decreasing 23% since 2008, leaving just 39% of all teachers very satisfied with their jobs (Richmond, 2013; Strauss, 2013). Job satisfaction, particularly in the teaching profession, is "essential to the continuing growth of educational systems around the world" (Sharma & Jyoti, 2006, p. 349) and therefore has significant ramifications in how effective schools are in educating and meeting the needs of students.

A dearth of information and data exists specifically on the satisfaction of charter-school teachers. While some information is available through recent studies, comprehensive reporting on the topic is still absent. To further this research, an importance lies in the need to uncover what job factors contribute to a teacher's level of satisfaction. Existing research appears to show that traditional public-school teachers and charter-school teachers are fairly similar. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Education Schools and Staffing Survey reported on job satisfaction of both

traditional public school and charter school teachers. The survey noted results of a Likert-type scale that asked participants to rate their agreement with the statement "I am generally satisfied with being a teacher at this school." While 92.9% of traditional public school teachers indicated they somewhat or strongly agreed with the aforementioned statement, charter-school teachers were not far behind, with 89.8% of teachers responding the same.

Lee (2002) sought to discover the differences of satisfaction factors between Florida 6th through 12th grade traditional public-school and charter school teachers. Utilizing the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS), Lee's research findings showed a significant difference in what factors contributed to the satisfaction of a traditional public school teacher compared to a charter school teacher. Results from Lee's study showed that factors of higher autonomy, higher teacher influence in school governance, and stronger student-teacher relationships contributed strongly to a charter school teacher's satisfaction compared to traditional public-school teacher's satisfaction (Lee, 2002).

More comprehensively, Sentovich (2004) compared the satisfaction levels of public, charter, and private school teachers according to policy-based variables, including but not limited to administrative support, resources, parental support, and autonomy. The study, which utilized the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey of over 10,000 teachers, focused on the importance of teacher satisfaction in its relation to workplace relationships, efficacy, classroom effectiveness, and, ultimately, student satisfaction (Sentovich, 2004). Generally speaking, all teachers reflected higher satisfaction with the presence of positive and cooperative interpersonal professional relationships. Other factors that influenced satisfaction included abundant administrative support and leadership, parental and community support, higher classroom autonomy, adequate resources, and adequate salary (Sentovich, 2004).

Ni (2012) quantitatively compared traditional public school and charter school teacher satisfaction based on the 2003-2004 Schools and Staffing Survey data, concluding that the two types of teachers that worked in comparable types of communities similarly focused heavily on a handful of intrinsic and extrinsic contextual factors to determine their satisfaction, including administrative leadership, sense of community, and autonomy. Uniquely, charter school teachers felt they had a larger workload and a higher influence on school policy than traditional teachers. Furthermore, Malloy and Wohlstetter's (2003) qualitative study found that charter school teachers felt that they had autonomy and freedom regarding curriculum, purchasing, and instruction-based decisions. Like in Ni's study, Malloy and Wohlstetter's charter school teachers reported higher dissatisfaction concerning heavy workloads and claimed a higher probability of teacher burnout.

Within the charter school sector, Roch and Sai (2016) examined the job satisfaction levels of teachers who worked at charter schools run by for-profit educational management organizations (EMOs) and non-profit charter management organizations (CMOs) utilizing data from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). Roch and Sai found that teachers who taught in CMO, non-profit charter schools were more satisfied than those who worked in EMO, for-profit charter schools. The largest factors in lower satisfaction in EMO-managed charter schools were lower salaries and limited ability to join a teachers' union (Roch & Sai, 2016).

Over the past 40 years, general teacher satisfaction has fluctuated. The Metlife Survey of the American Teacher (2008) revealed that general teacher satisfaction was at its peak in 2008, with 62% of teachers being highly satisfied. In 2012, the same survey reported that only 39% of teachers felt the same way. This survey did not explicitly state that charter school teachers were included or excluded in the results, nor were the different types of teachers stratified in the final

report. Although research shows that traditional and charter school teachers may have unique intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics, much research is needed to evaluate the satisfaction of charter school teachers specifically.

Factors of Teacher Satisfaction

Identifying and understanding the factors of teacher satisfaction is important as this understanding provides a means to ensure high levels of teacher satisfaction within a school to retain teachers, support a positive school climate and environment, and raise student achievement. While an abundance of research on student motivation has been conducted in the past, the factors of teacher motivation and satisfaction still lack comprehension. The importance of teacher satisfaction in relation to student motivation and academic success cannot be understated. In Demir's (2010) study that surveyed 289 elementary school teachers, Demir found that a teacher's intrinsic motivation is the single most influential predictor of student engagement.

In general, teachers are found to be more altruistic and empathetic types of people (Mateer, 1993). Individuals who choose teaching as a profession do so because they want to make a difference (Meredith, 2016). Much of the previous research done as to why teachers want to teach has revealed a broad sense of altruism, if nothing else (Alexander, Chant, & Cox, 1994). One could logically assume that a teacher's satisfaction would rely heavily on their ability to complete their initial goal of practicing selflessness and helping others. However, as more research is conducted on how satisfied or dissatisfied teachers are with their jobs, more factors are revealed and the complexity of what contributes to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction increases.

Bishay (1996) argued that a lack of teacher satisfaction is unacceptable because "teachers are the single most important group of professionals for our nation's future" (p. 147). Teacher satisfaction factors come in both intrinsic and extrinsic forms. Perrechione, Rosser, and Petersen's (2008) survey research study on intrinsic and extrinsic variables in determining teacher satisfaction found that intrinsic variables such as working with students and professional efficacy appear to drive teacher satisfaction the most. The conclusion of Perrechione et al.'s (2008) study put a spotlight on the importance of these factors and their potential effect on teacher retention and student achievement.

McLaughlin and Wallin's (1992) study explored how school workplace factors can influence student pedagogical response. The study's main findings concluded that teachers, even within the same school or department, garnered different student responses depending on their collegial environment. Specifically, the survey-based research revealed that the professional environment in which a teacher belongs has great influence on the student experience. Teachers who were a part of a positive school climate and work environment that focused on innovative teaching and learning, professional reflection, feedback, and the ability to problem solve yielded favorable results for student learning (McLaughlin, 1992).

Ni's (2012) comparative study of teacher working conditions in traditional public schools and charter schools sought to understand whether working conditions of charter schools were influenced by intrinsic aspects such as autonomy or extrinsic aspects such as school or teacher characteristics. The study revealed that traditional public and charter school teachers view their working conditions quite similarly, but charter school teachers exuded a significantly higher perception of their ability to influence school-based policies and a larger workload compared to their traditional public-school counterparts (Ni, 2012). Additionally, Wei, Patel, and Young

(2014), also compared the perceptions of 2,273 Texas public and charter school teachers to conclude that charter school teachers experienced working conditions that included a more supportive working environment, higher student expectations for learning, and a greater sense of responsibility for student learning.

Teacher job satisfaction may also differ among teacher and school-based demographics. Huysman (2008) utilized the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire to analyze job satisfaction and the factors therein of a rural Florida school district and uncovered that teacher satisfaction was linked to intrinsic variables of altruism, job security, and ability utilization. Teacher dissatisfaction was linked to extrinsic variables of limits in job advancement, salary, policy, and division of power and influence. Finally, Huysman (2008) found that job security, job variety, and ability utilization were the most predictive correlates of satisfaction.

While the geographical context of the school may have influenced these results, other studies, such as one conducted by Renzulli, Parrott, and Beattie (2010), explored the satisfaction level of teachers with regard to the racial composition of a school's student body. Renzulli et al. (2010) not only found that the charter school teachers polled in the 1999-2000 SASS data were more generally satisfied than traditional public-school teachers due to a higher degree of autonomy, but they also found that white charter school teachers were less likely to leave their school that possessed a higher black population than a traditional public-school teacher in the same demographical context. In the same vein, Farinde (2014) conducted a mixed-methods study focusing on black female teacher job satisfaction. Farinde's results concluded that a black female teacher's job satisfaction and decision to stay with their current K-12 school depended significantly on school type (charter versus non-charter), salary, professional advancement, and administrative support.

Charter School Teacher Mobility, Turnover, and Attrition

Teacher attrition rates are steadily rising and are much higher than in other countries on the international stage (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Teachers leave for a plethora of reasons, but mostly because of a lack of administrative support, lower comparative salaries, lack of opportunities for advancement, and general stress and pressures of the job and its conditions (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Based on 2004 data, charter school teachers were twice as likely to leave the teaching profession than their public-school counterparts (Stuit & Smith, 2012). The motivations for such turnover resided in a mixture of both teacher demographics and school-based contextual factors. For example, since charter school teachers are typically younger than traditional public school teachers, the former may desire and need more administrative direction and support (Podgursky, 2006). Torres (2016) echoed the sentiment of administrative support upholding charter school teachers' high expectations with regard to student behavior and how administration should help maintain these high expectations, since student success is a strong indicator of a teacher's self-perceived success in the classroom.

According to a study on Wisconsin charter schools and teachers conducted by the National Charter School Research Project (2010), charter schools lose between 20% and 25% of the faculty every year. The reason for human capital loss was not clear due to the number of factors that could contribute to teacher turnover. However, researchers found that charter school teacher turnover was caused by the type of teachers hired (young and inexperienced) and the type of communities in which they worked (poor and urban) (National Charter School Research Project, 2010). Charter school teachers cited lack of administrator support, workplace

conditions, teaching assignment, job security, and salary as the top five contributors to their dissatisfaction and reason for leaving their charter school.

In a 2012 report entitled "The State of the NYC Charter School Sector," the New York City Charter School Center claimed that New York City charter schools saw higher rates of teacher turnover compared to traditional public schools. The turnover rate was attributed to the newness and uniqueness of the charter school organizational structure. The report did not track how and why teachers left the city's charter schools, but a turnover rate of over 30% was still noteworthy compared to a 16% turnover rate in the city's traditional public schools.

Harris (2007) conducted a secondary analysis of quantitative data collected by the Florida Department of Education and compared the mobility between Florida's charter and traditional public-school teachers. Based upon the Florida school grades, which are assigned to schools according to their success on state standardized tests, Harris found that a Florida charter school teacher is 34% more likely to leave their school for each letter grade decrease assigned to the school's academic success. First-year charter school teachers were 11.8% more likely to leave the profession than third-year charter school teachers. Charter school teachers who worked in high need, high poverty areas were found to be less likely to leave their school than their traditional school counterparts as well as their more affluent-area charter school colleagues. Harris mentioned possibly attributing this unexpected result to the commitment of the schools' teachers and leadership and/or intangible workplace conditions. Ultimately, Harris concluded that a charter school teacher's mobility may be determined more so by working conditions and intrinsic factors rather than salary and other extrinsic factors. If charter school leaders create a more satisfying place to work, then charter school teachers would be more likely to take a pay cut in favor of job satisfaction.

Nationally speaking, charter school teacher turnover rates are steadily declining. As recently as 2013, the National Center of Education Statistics (2014) had reported that, despite the fact that charter school teachers are more likely to leave the job or profession entirely, charter school teacher turnover has declined while public school teacher turnover has increased since 2005. Charter school teacher turnover has decreased from 24% annually in 2004 to just 18.4% annually in 2013. Data from the 2012-2013 Schools and Staffing Survey have not yet been explored by the NCES to determine why these trends are decreasing, yet some of the charter turnover rate is attributed to a higher rate of involuntary leave. Since charter school teachers are almost twice as likely to leave their schools or professions due to an involuntary cause such as school closure, the voluntary reasons for leaving the job and the association with teacher satisfaction may yield an even closer turnover rate gap with traditional public-school teachers (Stuit & Smith, 2012).

The cost of teacher turnover not only lies in a growing teacher shortage that will fail to fill vacancies, but also in the negative impact that constant turnover has on student achievement (Ronfeldt, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). Teachers of all types leave their current teaching positions for a variety of reasons; however, lack of administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of professional growth, insufficient time to plan, and lessened decision-making input appear to be the main factors that contribute to a teacher's decision to leave their current school (Moore-Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; Sutcher et al., 2016).

Teacher Shortage

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (2016) projects that education will be one of the areas that will gain the most available jobs in the state by 2021. This issue is not unique to Florida but is a greater problem that is progressively being revealed across the country.

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) reported that 90% of vacancies are created by teachers leaving the profession entirely. Despite the positive, long-term trends of cyclical teacher production and steady growth of teacher production since 1985, those who move within the profession or leave completely make up 46% of teacher turnover (Aragon, 2017). Two-thirds of those leaving the profession leave for a reason other than retirement, with most due to dissatisfaction with their job (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). The largest shortages and highest areas of teaching need remain in science, math, and other STEM-based subject areas. On a wider scope, urban, rural, high-poverty, high-minority, and low-achieving schools also continue to face the most consistent staffing problems (Aragon, 2017).

Recent analysis of the teacher labor market indicates that not only are vacancies opening at an irreplaceable rate, but fewer potential teachers are available to fill those positions. Educational leaders have addressed and the issue and have labeled the impending teacher shortage as both "horrific" and the "biggest threat to schools" (Aragon, 2017, p.2). According to a 2014 survey conducted by American College Testing (ACT) and the United States Department of Education, high school student interest in enrolling in education programs in college decreased by more than a third between 2008 and 2014 (ACT, 2014). Not only that, of the half-million enrollees of these programs, fewer than 200,000 were likely to finish the programs (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2017). The number of graduates was not nearly enough to fill the 300,000 projected vacancies for the 2017-18 school year (Sutcher et al., 2016). According to Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), the U.S. Department of Education reported in 2015 that 35% of all completed education degrees are finished in just five states: Texas, New York, California, Pennsylvania, and Illinois (ASCD, 2017).

Due to the abundance of teacher vacancies as well as the consistently growing student population, many states and districts have implemented questionable and less stringent hiring practices to simply put teachers in the classroom (Suarez, 2018). While the quantifiable need may be met this way, the qualitative need not only still lacks in abundance but may have a significant detriment on the school's environment, working conditions, quality of instruction, classroom management, and student achievement. In some other cases, the high-need for teachers has caused schools to scramble to fill positions in a crisis-like manner well after the school year has begun (Suarez, 2018). The contextual effect of hiring teachers this way, not only makes school leaders more likely hire a less qualified candidate, but also makes a teacher less effective and productive, thus diminishing the potential for student achievement for the rest of the school year (Papay & Kraft, 2015). Starting a job disadvantaged with diminished effectiveness could also play into a teacher's frustration and dissatisfaction with their job.

Sutcher et al. (2016) listed some recommendations for moving forward in addressing the teacher shortage that lingers on the present and looms into the future. Each recommendation provides not only a potential solution to the problem, but also reflects the need to address specific factors of teacher job satisfaction to hire and retain more qualified teaching candidates (the topics of teacher satisfaction factors and retention are discussed later in this chapter). The four recommendations the researchers provided a call for creating competitive and equitable compensation and benefits packages, subsidizing high-need content area teachers to reduce personal and professional monetary stresses, improving organizational supports and working conditions, and developing a standardization to allow for interstate teacher mobility according to market need and demand (Sutcher et al. 2016). These recommendations have merit in theory, but the practicality of these recommendations come into question when bureaucratic,

governmental, and fiscal variables enter the discussion. Another option provided by Darling-Hammond (as cited in Camera, 2016) stressed the importance of keeping highly qualified teachers which are already in hard-to-staff positions satisfied and happy enough to keep them there (Camera, 2016). In short, the answer to the shortage problem should be well thought out and one that comprehensively addresses the issue for the long term rather than repeatedly applying new short-term solutions that perpetuate the perceived crisis.

Retention

Researchers believe that the solution does not reside in continuing to hire unqualified teachers but to pay the necessary price to retain more effective, qualified teachers who are more likely to stay with their schools (Papay et al., 2018). Effective teachers, as described by Tucker and Stronge (2005), possess a long list of characteristics that enhance a student's educational experience and success. Tangibly, effective teachers have formal teacher training, hold professional certifications, and have taught for at least three years, among other qualities. Furthermore, effective teachers are also caring, fair and respectful, hold high expectations for all, and dedicate time to the reflection and improvement of their teaching craft (Tucker & Stronge, 2005).

Papay et al. (2018) conducted a large-scale study of teacher retention across 16 urban public schools in seven states and found that just over half of all new teachers remained in teaching after five years in the classroom. Moreover, their research revealed trends that explain how teacher turnover is no longer just a looming issue but an unsustainable crisis in some areas that demands both monetary and human capital that districts simply cannot afford. The cycle of teacher dissatisfaction, job mobility, and schools being forced to hire less qualified applicants has become self-perpetuating.

By identifying what matters most to a teacher's working experience, educational leaders can solve the problem at its root rather than applying temporary fixes to the issue of turnover and retain better, more highly-qualified teachers. Identifying and understanding what teachers value most about their positions can lend insight into what contributes to their satisfaction or their reasoning for leaving their schools. Moore-Johnson et al. (2012) found that a school's workplace conditions and environment explains much of a teacher's willingness to stay with his or her school. O'Reilly (2014) paraphrased Yee (1990) as well as Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2004), reciting that supportive work conditions are a likely determining factor for satisfaction and retention. Also supporting this notion were the results of Perrachione et al.'s (2008) study which was conducted with 300 elementary school teachers with five or more years of experience in Missouri. Results reported that intrinsic aspects (self-efficacy, working with students, and overall satisfaction) and extrinsic aspects (low salary and workload) of teaching significantly increased teachers' plans of whether or not to stay with their current school. Skinner (2008) similarly found that charter school teachers specifically were more satisfied when they held higher perceptions of schoolwide influence, classroom control and autonomy, and other working conditions.

In a study conducted by Moore-Johnson et al. (2012), researchers found that, on average, one out of five teachers leave their current school for another school due to intangible work conditions, most notably school culture and administrator leadership style. However, teachers who were more satisfied with their working conditions, most specifically social conditions rather than tangible conditions such as access to educational technology, were more likely to stay with their school and consider staying with that school for the foreseeable future. Supportive

environments, which include positive school leadership and coworker relationships, predicted higher rates of student academic growth and success (Moore-Johnson et al., 2012).

Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire

"The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is designed to measure an employee's satisfaction with his or her job" (University of Minnesota, 2018a, p. 1). The questionnaire can be presented in one of two lengths: a long, 100-item form and a short, 20-item form. Beginning in 1957, the University of Minnesota began to study work adjustment, or how well one adjusts to their job, with a focus on two main objectives: to develop diagnostic tools in order to assess the potential work adjustment of individuals and the evaluation of the work adjustment outcomes (Weiss, Dawis, England, & Lofquist, 1966). The Theory of Work Adjustment relies on the relationship and correspondence between one's work personality and working environment to determine one's satisfaction with their job. The theory, in conjunction with the accompanying questionnaire, has been used to more easily identify the specific vocational abilities and needs of workers, as well as individualized predictors of job satisfaction, for over the past five decades.

Short Form Development

Both the long- and short-form questionnaires were derived from the original measures used in the earliest studies of the Work Adjustment Project (Weiss et al., 1966). The Hoppock Job Satisfaction Blank (Short Form), the Employee Attitude Scale, and 22 additional experimental items were originally used in early work adjustment studies to evaluate job satisfaction through the use of a Likert-style survey that pertained to job factors such as work type, worker attitudes, and overall satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1966). The measurement tool, later named the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, was redeveloped to evaluate 20 scales with 100 Likert-type items to measure both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of job satisfaction based on

the responses Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither, Satisfied, and Very Satisfied. The survey items were also refined to contain fewer words and simpler language to maximize readability across subjects. The resulting survey was considered to be at a fifth-grade reading level. Finally, a short form was later refined from the 100-item long form in 1977. The Short Form was developed from the 20 highest correlated, representative items of each of the aforementioned scales of the long form to measure intrinsic and extrinsic factors of satisfaction. One additional item included how the participant perceived his or her general satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1966).

Summary

A teacher's level of satisfaction, made up of intrinsic and extrinsic factors of human need that are innately part of the relationship between a teacher and their workplace, can have tremendous impact on a school's professional and educational environments, teachers' personal job performance, and student achievement (Dawis and Lofquist, 1964; Pawase, 2016; Sahito & Vaisanen, 2016; Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, & Kyndt, 2015; Weiss et al., 1966). While the general theme of teacher satisfaction is by no means a new area of study, the increasing number of unique charter schools, inconsistent success rate of charter schools, and increasing prevalence of school choice makes charter schools a provocative and contemporary matter to study (NAPCS, 2017). By assessing and analyzing these job factors and their relation to a charter school teacher's general satisfaction, research can assist in identifying what charter school teacher needs must be met in order to improve their relationship with their work and be satisfied with their job ultimately culminating in many benefits for all school stakeholders (Herzberg, 1959; Dawis & Lofquist, 1964).

Most recent research regarding charter school teachers has identified that charter school teachers hold unique characteristics compared to traditional public-school teachers in terms of

age, years of experience, and how likely they are to leave their schools (Podgurksy, 2006; Stuit & Smith, 2012). Research has shown that many teachers prefer working at charter schools mostly due to two intrinsic factors: empowerment and autonomy (Lubienski, 2003). Equally important however, charter school teachers are more likely to be less satisfied and move schools or leave teaching entirely specifically due to extrinsic factors of the job such as geographical location (Herzberg, 1959; National Charter School Research Project, 2010; Stuit & Smith 2012). Effectively identifying the most robust predictors of charter school teacher satisfaction is essential to study because intrinsic rewards and job aspects may be much more valuable to teachers than extrinsic job aspects such as their salary (Harris, 2012; Judge et al., 2010). Understanding the level of job satisfaction of charter school teachers and identifying the predictors and correlates of job satisfaction can provide educational leaders with information to not only solve site-based school issues of unique charter schools but expand solutions to combat increasing teacher mobility and attrition, while also simultaneously boosting the retention rate of highly qualified teachers and student achievement.

As Oberfield (2016) and Skinner (2008) suggested, a bargain is struck when a teacher chooses to work at either a charter school or traditional public school. This bargain appears to based on job needs made up of intrinsic and extrinsic factors that can be traced to the works of Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1959). Wei et al. (2014) detailed this bargain by identifying the organizational differences between charter schools and traditional public schools. By opening the "black box" of charter schools to identify and understand the inputs and outputs of charter school success, teacher satisfaction could be revealed as a vital aspect of school success because teacher satisfaction leads to teacher retention which can ultimately lead to improved student achievement. Understanding what teachers value most in their relationship with their work and

workplace can assist in understanding how schools can attract and retain highly qualified and effective teachers for long-term school success.

Chapter 2 served as a backdrop to the contemporary issues of charter schools and their teachers and how research on job satisfaction can be utilized to correct negative trends in the charter school sector. In Chapter 3, the methodology for evaluating the satisfaction level and identifying the factors that predict satisfaction of K-12 charter-school teachers is explained. Additionally, the sample, instrument, procedures, research questions, and accompanying hypotheses is reviewed.

III. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of the nonexperimental, quantitative study was to identify the overall job satisfaction level of Florida K-12 charter school teachers and the most robust predictors of overall job satisfaction. Despite the current upward trends of charter school populations and the increasing general need for teachers in the near future, a lack of research exists regarding charter school teacher satisfaction specifically. In light of the fact that charter schools can be diverse in their management, mission, and program offerings, emerging themes derived from Florida charter school teacher satisfaction can facilitate understanding in what job factors matter most to charter school teachers as a consolidated group and lend information that can promote the reversal of current trends of attrition and enrollment in education-based university programs. Considering the paucity of data supporting charter school teacher satisfaction levels, the survey-based study on charter school teacher perceptions and satisfaction assists in learning more about the uniqueness of the charter school teacher experience, charter school teachers' job satisfaction, and the factors that contribute to their satisfaction.

The chapter contains a presentation and explanation of the methods of research used in this descriptive, nonexperimental, survey research study. The focus of the study relied on the job satisfaction and the factors that contributed to the satisfaction level of K-12 Florida charter school teachers. Cross-sectional survey research was specifically selected as the research

methodology, utilizing the 21-item Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) Short Form to evaluate overall job satisfaction and identify the most robust predictive factors of satisfaction as well as investigate comparisons of overall satisfaction and factors of satisfaction amongst demographical subgroups.

Participants

The sample selected for the study was purposive and judgmental in nature. The target population in the study was full-time employed teachers in K-12 charter schools in the state of Florida. An inclusive list of contact email addresses was obtained through the Florida Department of Education's (FLDOE) Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice Charter School Directory (FLDOE, 2018). A total of 629 K-12 charter schools representing 79 Florida school districts were initially invited to complete the 21-item online survey through Google Forms, utilizing the email addresses obtained.

A purposive sample of 114 participants was identified from the initial pool of school districts obtained through the FL DOE Charter School Directory. Recruitment of participants occurred in a single three-week phase that included one initial email and two subsequent follow-up reminder emails being sent to school administrator contact email addresses to be forwarded and disseminated to the full-time, K-12 teaching staff of the school. All emails (see Appendix A) as well as the survey itself (see Appendix B) included a statement of informed consent. In addition to the 21-item survey, participants were also asked to provide several pieces of demographical information including age, gender, years teaching at current charter school, total years teaching, grade level taught, and geographical region.

Instrumentation

"The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) is designed to measure an employee's satisfaction with his or her job" (University of Minnesota, 2018a, para. 2). Two versions of the free-to-use Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International Licensed questionnaire have been published. The MSQ is designed on the concept of work adjustment, or the relationship of the worker and his or her workplace. The MSQ Short Form is a condensed version of the MSQ Long Form which consists of the same 20 scales that evaluate intrinsic and extrinsic factors as well as overall job satisfaction (University of Minnesota, 2018a).

The MSQ Short Form was specifically utilized for the quantitative study for its reliability, validity, simplicity, practicality, efficiency, and alignment to the theoretical framework of the study. The Short Form requires only about five minutes to complete and, like its lengthier counterpart, extracts "specific information on the aspects of a job that an individual finds rewarding" (University of Minnesota, 2018a, para. 2) based on Likert-scale items with five options to reflect their feelings or perceptions on each survey item: Very Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Neither, Satisfied, or Very Satisfied. Each response is represented by a number ranging from 1 to 5. The MSQ is not only suitable for evaluating an employee's satisfaction but is also effective in exploring an employee's job-related needs and constructing details about reinforcers of jobs and work. The MSQ addresses the following intrinsic, extrinsic, and general scales: ability utilization, achievement, activity, advancement, authority, company policies and practices, compensation, co-workers, creativity, independence, moral values, recognition, responsibility, security, social service, social status, human relations supervision, technical supervision, variety, working conditions, and general satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1966).

Normative data for the MSQ Long Form were originally derived from 11 different occupational groups (including teachers) while Short Form normative data were derived from seven. Final test data for the Short Form was obtained from 1,460 workers in the state of Minnesota. Short Form reliability based on internal consistency was "generally high" with a median Hoyt reliability coefficient of .86 for intrinsic satisfaction and .80 for extrinsic satisfaction (Weiss et al., 1964, p. 23). Overall satisfaction resulted in a .90 Hoyt reliability coefficient. Stability data for the MSQ Short Form does not exist; however, since the Short Form uses the same 20 scales as the Long Form, stability data can be inferred from the general satisfaction scale of the MSQ Long Form (Weiss et al., 1966). Validity of the Short Form may also be partially inferred from the Long Form and supported by the absence of statistical significance between the seven occupational groups tested on intrinsic, extrinsic, and general satisfaction scales (Weiss et al, 1966).

For the current study, the survey was hosted and deployed on Google Forms. The survey and responses were password protected and encrypted through the online platform. The survey consisted of 27 total questions: 20 questions which reflected the measured intrinsic and extrinsic job factors, or scales, one question evaluating overall satisfaction, and six demographic questions. A participant's email address was the only personal identifier purposely collected to simultaneously ensure participant response integrity while minimizing any potential risk to the participant in regard to his or her job standing.

Research Questions & Hypotheses

The following research questions and hypotheses were posed in order to address the stated research problem:

1. Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, to what degree do charter school teachers perceive themselves satisfied with their positions?

   $H_0$1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, overall satisfaction will not be manifested to a statistically significant degree.

   H_A1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, overall satisfaction will be manifested to a statistically significant degree.

2. Regarding individual survey items, which item is perceived by study participants to reflect the greatest degree of satisfaction?

   $H_0$2: The item "Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job" is not the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst all items on the research instrument.

   H_A2: The item "Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job" represents the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst all item on the research instrument.

3. Of the identified survey domains, which domain is perceived by study participants as reflecting the highest level of overall satisfaction?

   $H_0$3: The dimension Professional Expression/Importance does not represent the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst the study's four identified dimensions.

H_A3: The dimension Professional Expression/Importance represents the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst the study's four identified dimensions.

4. Of the individual survey items, which item represents the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers with their positions?

   H_04: None of the research instrument's individual survey items represent statistically significant predictors of participant overall job satisfaction.

   H_A4: One or more of the research instrument's individual survey items represent a statistically significant predictor of participant overall job satisfaction.

5. Of the identified survey domains, which represents the most robust correlate and predictor of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction with his or her position?

   H_05: None of the four dimensions of the study's research instrument represents statistically significant predictors of participant overall job satisfaction.

   H_A5: One or more of the four dimensions of the study's research instrument represents a statistically significant predictor(s) of participant overall job satisfaction.

Procedures

Participant responses were obtained through the online tool Google Forms. The survey window was open for a total of three weeks. School administrators were sent an initial email that included a research study overview, voluntary informed consent, and survey link to forward to their K-12 charter school teachers. After one week had passed, a follow up/reminder email was sent once a week for the remaining two weeks of the data-gathering window. When the survey window ended, the Google Forms survey was marked "Not Accepting Responses," and the

survey link was deactivated. Next, participant data were extracted from Google Forms, stored in three password-protected locations: two cloud-based drives and one physical, portable hard drive. Finally, the data was imported into IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 25 for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Prior to addressing the study's research questions, preliminary analyses were conducted. Preliminary analyses included both descriptive and inferential techniques and addressed missing data, internal consistency, participant demographics, and dimension reduction of survey items.

Missing data were analyzed utilizing descriptive statistical techniques. Frequencies and percentages comprised the primary statistical methods of analysis and interpretation. Little's MCAR test statistic was utilized to evaluate the randomness of subsequent missing data. An MCAR value of $p > .05$ is considered indicative of missing data that are sufficiently random in nature.

The internal consistency or reliability of participant to the survey items was addressed through the application of Cronbach's alpha (a) test statistic. The statistical significance of a was assessed through the F test. The value of $p < .05$ was considered statistically significant. The study's essential demographic information was assessed using descriptive statistical techniques. The mean, standard deviation, frequency counts (n), and percentages represented the primary methods of descriptive analysis.

The reduction of the survey's items into dimensions or factors was conducted using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Principal components analysis (PCA) represented the specific EFA technique to be used. Both Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) index and Bartlett's sphericity values were interpreted as the means of assessing the factoring model's fitness. KMO values of

.40 and greater were considered indicative of sampling adequacy for the factoring process. Bartlett sphericity values of $p < .05$ were considered indicative of sufficiency of strength of correlations necessary for the factoring process.

Analysis by Research Question

Research Question 1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, to what degree are charter school teachers perceive themselves satisfied with their positions?

To identify the degree to which Florida K-12 charter school teachers perceive themselves as satisfied with their positions, a single sample *t* test was employed. Statistical significance was marked with an alpha level of .05. Additionally, a *t* test of independent means and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were utilized to examine the statistical significance between subjects according to demographic variables of gender, years of experience, age, geographical setting, level of participant professional practice (elementary, middle, high school). Cohen's *d* was employed to assess the effect size.

Research Question 2: Regarding individual survey items, which item was perceived by study participants as having reflected the greatest degree of satisfaction?

A *t* test was also used in an attempt to identify the individual survey item which was perceived by participants as having the greatest degree of satisfaction. An alpha of .05 was utilized as an indicative threshold for statistical significance. Cohen's *d* was employed to evaluate the magnitude of effect for items considered for statistical significance.

Research Question 3: Of identified survey domains, which domain was perceived by study participants as reflecting the highest level of overall satisfaction?

The third research question relied on identifying emergent domains through the reduction of the survey's items into dimensions or factors using EFA in the preliminary analyses. Like Research Questions 1 and 2, a *t* test was applied to identify which of the emergent domains study participants reflected the highest level of overall satisfaction. An alpha of .05 was utilized as an indicative threshold for statistical significance. Cohen's *d* was utilized to evaluate the magnitude of effect for domains identified for statistical significance.

Research Question 4: Of individual survey items, which item represented the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers with their positions?

The focus of Research Question 4 was to identify the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction amongst individual survey items as indicated by participants in regard to their overall satisfaction with their positions. Research Question 4 is associative and predictive in nature, and, as such, multiple linear regression was utilized to assess the predictive aspects of the research question. More specifically, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to assess the mathematical relationship of inherent respective variables. Statistical significance was indicated with a *p*-value of .05 or less. Predictive model fitness was assessed through ANOVA table *F*-values. ANOVA *F*-values of less than .05 were indicative of predictive model fitness. Additionally, adjusted R^2 values represented the basis for the evaluation of predictive effect. The formula Adjusted R / 1 – Adjusted R^2 was used to calculate the effect size of the predictive model. The statistical significance of predictive effect was interpreted through the respective slope (*t*) values of independent predictor variables.

Research Question 5: Of identified survey domains, which represents the most robust correlate and predictor of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction with his or her position?

The intent of Research Question 5 was to identify the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction amongst emergent survey domains in regard to participants' overall satisfaction with their positions. Since Research Question 5 is associative and predictive in nature, multiple linear regression was utilized to assess the predictive aspects of the research question. More specifically, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to assess the mathematical relationship of inherent respective variables. Statistical significance was indicated with a *p*-value of .05 or less. Predictive model fitness was assessed through ANOVA Table *F*-values. ANOVA *F*-values less than .05 were indicative of predictive model fitness. Additionally, adjusted R^2 values represented the basis for the evaluation of predictive effect. The formula Adjusted R / 1 – Adjusted R^2 was used to calculate the effect size of the predictive model. The statistical significance of predictive effect was interpreted through the respective slope (*t*) values of independent predictor variables.

Summary

Five unique research questions with hypotheses were presented to address the indicated research problem. In Chapter IV, the results of the study are reported. Preliminary analysis including missing data, internal reliability, and demographic information are presented. Additionally, individual research questions will be addressed utilizing the data collected and the methodology described in this chapter. Finally, individual hypotheses were accepted or rejected as a result of the data analysis.

IV. RESULTS

The purpose of the study was to identify the overall job satisfaction level of Florida K-12 charter school teachers and the most robust predictors of overall job satisfaction. By identifying the overall job satisfaction level and predictors of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers, administrative-level educators can be more informed to act with the purpose of reversing current trends of declining university-level education program enrollment and increasing rates of teacher attrition especially in charter schools.

Review of Methodology

This study was descriptive, nonexperimental survey research. A purposive sample of 114 participants was identified and selected from Florida K-12 charter schools across the state. The independent variables were derived from demographical data including personal characteristics (age and gender) and professional characteristics (years teaching at current charter school, total years teaching, grade level taught, and geographical region). The dependent variables included overall job satisfaction as measured by the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) as well as mean responses to survey items and emergent domain composite scores as reported by participants.

Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were utilized in the preliminary analyses. Statistical analyses conducted included missing data, internal consistency (reliability)

of participant response to the study's research instrument (survey), essential study participant demographic information, and dimension reduction of survey items. To properly address dimension reduction of survey items, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted with principal components analysis (PCA) being the specific EFA technique used.

Specifically, Research Questions 1 through 3 were addressed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The single sample t test represented the inferential statistical technique by which respective mean scores were evaluated for statistical significance. The magnitude of effect (effect size) was assessed using Cohen's d. Research Questions 4 and 5 were associative and predictive in nature. As such, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to assess the mathematical relationships of respective variables inherent in both research questions. Multiple linear regression was utilized to assess the predictive aspect of the two research questions. Predictive model fitness was assessed through ANOVA table F values. The statistical significance of predictive effect was interpreted through the respective slope (t) values of independent predictor variables.

Preliminary Analyses and Findings

Analyses conducted prior to addressing the study's research questions included missing data, internal consistency of participant response to the study's research instrument, essential study participant demographic information, and dimension reduction of survey items using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were utilized in the preliminary analyses.

Missing Data

Participant response to the 21 survey items reflected a minimal level of missing data (n = 6; .25%). The missing data are considered sufficiently random in nature (Little's MCAR x2

(120) = 97.70; p = .93). As a result, imputation of missing data points within the survey's item response set using expectancy maximization (EM) or multiple imputations (MI) was not considered necessary for subsequent analytical purposes.

Internal Reliability

Using the Cronbach's alpha (*a*) test statistic, the omnibus internal consistency of participant response to the study's 21 survey items was manifested at a very high level (*a* = .93). Moreover, the omnibus internal reliability level was manifested at a statistically significant level ($p < .001$).

Essential Demographic Information

Regarding the gender of the 114 study participants, 88 participants (77.2%) were female, and 26 participants (22.8%) were male. Nearly half (45.6%) of study participants were employed in charter schools located in suburban geographical regions with the remaining 54.4% approximately split almost evenly between urban and rural geographical regions. Regarding years of service, the single greatest concentration of participants of 30.7% (*n* = 35) taught in their current charter school for four to seven years. Nearly six in 10 participants (57.9%) had served in the charter school educational environment for one to seven years (*n* = 66).

Regarding the age of study participants, 86% (*n* = 98) were 31 years or older. The single greatest concentration of participants by age group was 41 to 50 (32.5%) years of age. Participants who identified as 21-25 years of age accounted for 4.4%. Almost 40% of participants served in either charter elementary (38.9%) and charter middle school (36.3%) educational environments. The remaining 24.8% of study participants self-identified as serving in charter high school educational settings.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Using PCA, the study's research instrument was reduced to four distinct dimensions or factors: Supervisory/Workplace, Professional Expression/Importance, Work Independence, and Remuneration/Privilege. The four dimensions accounted for 66.37% of the explained variance in the construct measured. The factoring model was considered exceptionally sound, reflecting a sufficiently high degree of correlations within items (Bartlett's Sphericity $x^2_{(190)} = 1409.57$; $p < .001$) and ample sample size (KMO = .88). Table 1 contains a summary of findings for dimension reduction of the study's 21 survey items into four distinct domains.

Table 1

Survey Item Reduction into Dimensions

Dimensions	# of Survey Items	Explained Variance
Supervisory/Workplace	9	27.83
Professional Expression/Importance	6	17.42
Work Independence	3	11.20
Remuneration/Privilege	2	9.92
Total	20	66.37%

Findings by Research Question

Research Question 1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, to what degree are charter school teachers perceive themselves satisfied with their positions?

Using the single sample *t* test statistical technique, the participant overall mean score for overall satisfaction with their positions was manifested at a statistically significant level ($t_{(113)} = 13.26$; $p < .001$). Using the Cohen's *d* test statistic to assess the magnitude of effect of

participant response in Research Question 1, the magnitude of effect for overall teacher job satisfaction was considered to be approximating a very large effect ($d = 1.25$).

The *t* test of independent means and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical techniques were used to evaluate the statistical significance of overall satisfaction by the study's demographic identifiers. As a result, all between-subjects comparisons across demographic identifier variables were not found to be statistically significant.

Regarding overall satisfaction by gender, male participants indicated a slightly higher ($MD = .10$) yet non-statistically significant degree of overall satisfaction ($t_{(66.46)} = 0.54$; $p = .59$). Participant years of teaching experience exerted a non-statistically significant effect upon overall job satisfaction ($F_{(4, 109)} = 1.23$; $p = .30$). The highest mean score for overall job satisfaction was manifested with participants who possessed eight to 10 years of teaching experience (4.55). Participant age failed to impact overall job satisfaction at a statistically significant level ($F_{(5, 108)} = 1.60$; $p = .17$). The highest mean score for overall job satisfaction was manifested with participants over 60 years of age (4.60).

With respect to geographical setting of participant educational practice, a non-statistically significant impact for geographical setting upon overall job satisfaction was evident ($F_{(2, 111)} = 1.60$; $p = .21$). On average, participants employed in urban settings manifested the greatest degree of overall job satisfaction (4.49). Level of participant professional practice (elementary, middle, high school) failed to exert a statistically significant effect upon overall job satisfaction ($F_{(2, 110)} = 1.15$; $p = .32$). On average, participants employed in high schools manifested the greatest degree of overall job satisfaction (4.54).

H_0 1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, overall satisfaction will not be manifested to a statistically significant degree.

In light of the statistically significant finding in Research Question 1, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 2: Regarding individual survey items, which item was perceived by study participants as having reflected the greatest degree of satisfaction?

Although nearly all items on the study's research instrument were responded to in a statistically significant fashion, the item "Chance to do things for other people" manifested the single greatest mean score at 4.78 ($SD = 0.51$). Using the single sample t test to evaluate the statistical significance of finding of responses to survey items, the item "Chance to do things for other people" was statistically significant ($t_{(113)} = 37.20$; $p < .001$). Using the Cohen's d test statistic, the magnitude of effect for the item is considered very large ($d = 3.49$).

The lowest degree of satisfaction amongst the study's research instrument was manifested in the item "My pay and the amount of work I do" with a mean score of 3.19 ($SD = 1.36$) the only non-statistically significant finding ($t_{(112)} = 1.52$; $p = 13$) by survey item specifically, with a concomitant small magnitude of effect ($d = .14$).

H_A 2: The item "Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job" will represent the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst all item on the research instrument.

In light of the finding for the item "The chance to do things for other people," the alternative hypothesis was rejected.

Research Question 3: Of identified survey domains, which domain was perceived by study participants as reflecting the highest level of overall satisfaction?

Using the single sample t test, all four dimensions were manifested at a statistically level ($p < .001$). Using the Cohen's d test statistic to evaluate the magnitude of effect for dimensions, the dimension of Work Independence reflected the single most robust effect size at 2.44, closely

followed by the dimension of Professional Expression/Importance at 2.26. Both effect sizes are considered to reflect very large magnitude of effects ($d \geq 1.30$). Table 2 contains a summary of findings for the evaluation of the study's dimensions for statistical significance and magnitude of effect.

Table 2

Overall Satisfaction by Dimension

Dimension	n	Mean	SD	*t*	*d*
Supervisory/Workplace	114	4.14	0.89	13.70***	1.28[b]
Professional Expression/Importance	114	4.47	0.65	24.29***	2.26[a]
Work Independence	114	4.51	0.62	26.11***	2.44[a]
Remuneration/Privilege	114	3.37	1.00	3.95***	.37

***$p < .001$ [a] Very Large Effect Size ($d \geq 1.30$) [b] Large Effect Size (d = .80-1.29)

H_A3: The dimension Professional Expression/Importance will represent the survey item that reflects the greatest degree of satisfaction amongst the study's four identified Dimensions.

In light of the finding for the dimension of Work Independence, the alternative hypothesis (H_a 3) is rejected.

Research Question 4: Of individual survey items, which item represented the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers with their positions?

Using the multiple linear regression test statistic for predictive purposes, three items on the study's research instrument were manifested at a statistically significant level in predicting overall job satisfaction. Of the three, the item "Working conditions" exerted the most robust predictive effect with overall job satisfaction, explaining 17% of the variance in the dependent

variable of overall job satisfaction. For interpretive purposes regarding the finding in Research Question 4, for every full unit of increase in participant response to the item of "Working conditions," a .37 unit of increase in participant overall job satisfaction is predicted.

The predictive model utilized in Research Question 4 was found to be viable ($F_{(20, 87)} = 15.50$; $p < .001$). The confluent-explained variance manifested in all survey items in the model was 78.1%. Variable inflation was minimal, with all independent predictor variables in the model exceeding the acceptable threshold tolerance value of .10 (range: .12 – .78). Table 3 contains a summary of the predictive information for survey items found to be statistically significant predictors of overall job satisfaction for study participants.

Table 3

Predicting Overall Satisfaction from Individual Survey Items

Model	*β*	*SE*	*Standardized β*	R^2
Intercept	1.08	0.78		
Chance to use my own methods on the job	0.25	0.11	.20*	.04
Working Conditions	0.37	0.09	.41***	.17
Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job	0.20	0.09	.19*	.04

*$p < .05$ ***$p < .001$

H_0 4: None of the research instrument's individual survey items will represent statistically significant predictors of participant overall job satisfaction.

In light of the finding for three survey items representing statistically significant predictors of participant overall job satisfaction, the null hypothesis ($H_0$4) is rejected.

Research Question 5: Of the identified survey domains, which represents the most robust correlate and predictor of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction with his or her position?

Using the multiple linear regression test statistic for predictive purposes, two of the four dimensions were manifested at a statistically significant level in predicting overall job satisfaction. Of the two, Supervisory/Workplace was the most robust predictor of overall participant job satisfaction, explaining 25% of the variance in the dependent variable of overall job satisfaction. For interpretative purposes pertaining to the finding in Research Question 5, for every full unit of participant increase in the dimension of Supervisory/Workplace, overall satisfaction increases by .58 units.

The predictive model utilized in Research Question 5 was found to be viable ($F_{(4, 109)} = 64.04$; $p < .001$). The confluent-explained variance manifested in all survey items in the model was 70.1%. Variable inflation was minimal, with all independent predictor variables in the model well-exceeding the acceptable threshold tolerance value of .10 (Range: .44- .72). Table 4 contains a summary of the predictive information for study dimensions regarding overall job satisfaction for study participants.

Table 4

Predicting Overall Satisfaction from Study Dimensions

Model	β	*SE*	*Standardized* β	R^2
Intercept	0.98	0.45		
Supervisory/Workplace	0.58	0.09	.50***	.25
Professional Expression/Importance	0.46	0.12	.29***	.17
Work Independence	0.09	0.10	.06	.00
Remuneration/Privilege	0.12	0.07	.11	.01

***$p < .001$

H_0 5: None of the four dimensions of the study's research instrument will represent statistically significant predictors of participant overall job satisfaction.

In light of the statistically significant finding for two of the four identified dimensions of the study's research instrument, the null hypothesis (H_0 5) is rejected.

V. DISCUSSION

Introduction

The study examined the overall job satisfaction level of charter school teachers and the factors which predict charter school teacher satisfaction. The intent of the study was to identify how satisfied charter school teachers are in regard to their positions and what job factors are the most robust predictors of overall charter school teacher satisfaction. Additionally, grouped factors, or emergent domains derived from survey data analysis, were also evaluated as predictors of charter school teacher job satisfaction. Since charter schools can differ greatly in their management, mission, and program offerings, emerging themes derived in this study can add to the understanding what job factors matter most to charter school teachers as a consolidated group and lend information that can assist in reversing current trends of attrition specifically in charter schools as well as enrollment in education-based university programs. Considering the dearth of research with respect to charter school teacher satisfaction, this survey-based study on charter school teacher perceptions and satisfaction assists in learning more about the uniqueness of charter school teacher experiences, charter school teachers' job satisfaction, and the factors that contribute to their overall satisfaction as school choice becomes more prevalent in contemporary America.

Statement of the Problem

As school choice grows in popularity, the number of charter schools and their enrollment

are also increasing at a rapid pace (National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2017). Despite the positive aspects of growth in the charter school sector, teacher attrition continues to rise and education major enrollment at the university level continues to dwindle. The current trends of attrition, mobility, and university program enrollment appear to be causing critical shortage areas in teaching across the country, especially in charter schools, where these trends have had a greater negative impact (Florida Department of Education, 2016a; Sutcher et al., 2016). A teacher's satisfaction or dissatisfaction level can have tremendous impact on a school's professional and educational environments, a teacher's personal job performance, and student achievement (Banerjee et al., 2016; Lee, 2002). The purpose of this non-experimental, descriptive study was to evaluate charter school teacher satisfaction and the most robust indicators of their overall satisfaction. Identifying and understanding charter school teacher experiences, charter school teacher job needs, and the relationship between a charter school teacher and his or her work will perhaps better equip educational leaders with the knowledge and information needed to combat current negative trends of attrition, mobility, and retention in the charter school sector.

Discussion by Research Question

Research Question 1: Considering overall satisfaction of participants regarding their educational positions, to what degree are charter school teachers perceive themselves satisfied with their positions?

The results indicated that the charter school teachers surveyed were generally satisfied with their jobs at a statistically significant level. The effect size for overall satisfaction approximated a "very large" effect. In 2013, teacher job satisfaction (including public and charter school teachers) was reported to be at its lowest point in 25 years, with only 39% of all

K-12 teachers reporting that they were satisfied with their jobs (Richmond, 2013; Strauss, 2013). The finding in the current study regarding overall satisfaction may reflect that teacher satisfaction has increased or that charter school teachers are more generally satisfied than traditional public-school teachers.

Statistical significance aside, mean scores displayed some differences between subjects based on demographic identifier variables. Regarding level of participant professional practice, charter school teachers who taught at the high school level reported the highest overall satisfaction compared to elementary and middle school teachers. Male participants were slightly more satisfied with their teaching positions overall compared to their female counterparts. Demographic variables had an equivocal effect on overall charter school teacher job satisfaction, indicating the ability of charter school teachers to be generally satisfied with their jobs may not be dependent on these factors.

Participants who were 60 years old or older manifested the highest mean degree of overall satisfaction. With respect to years of teaching experience, teacher who had 8 to 10 years of experience yielded the highest degree of overall satisfaction. While previous research has indicated that charter school teachers are likely to be younger and less experienced than traditional public-school teachers, this finding suggests that older, more experienced teachers may be more satisfied in charter schools due to the general unique nature of the charter school environment (Goldring, Grey, & Bitterman, 2013). The National Charter School Research Project (2010) reported that younger, inexperienced teachers were the majority of the nearly 25% of charter school teachers who leave their jobs each year. Additionally, Ni (2012) revealed that charter school teachers typically have a larger workload compared to traditional public-school teachers. Therefore, older, more experienced charter school teachers may possess the experiential

skills and wisdom to excel, thrive, and adapt successfully in a more autonomous, empowering school environment. Furthermore, older and more experienced teachers who work in charter schools may value professional and instructional autonomy more than their less-experienced counterparts because experienced teachers may have a better ability to adapt, utilizing their previous experiences and wisdom, where less experienced teachers may need more rigorous structure and support in the classroom (Burkhauser & Lesaux, 2015; Podgursky, 2006; Torres, 2016).

On average, teachers who taught in an urban school environment exerted the highest degree of overall teaching satisfaction compared to those in rural and suburban geographical settings. This finding is particularly interesting since previous research indicated that poor, urban school geographical areas are not only less desirable places to teach, but also produced the highest amount of teacher mobility and turnover (National Charter School research Project, 2010). Contrarily, this finding in conjunction with the study's overall satisfaction finding supports Harris' (2007) enlightening conclusion that charter school teachers in high-poverty, high-need geographical areas are more likely to stay with their school through a commitment that is strengthened by specific intangible and intrinsic work factors of teacher satisfaction that are met by the school.

Research Question 2: Regarding individual survey items, which item was perceived by study participants as having reflected the greatest degree of satisfaction?

The item "Chance to do things for other people" reflected the greatest degree of satisfaction among participants. Using the *Cohen's d* test statistic, the magnitude of effect for the item is considered very large. The results of research question two imply that teachers are most satisfied with being selfless or altruistic at work. The finding closely and strongly supports

the results of Perrechione et al.'s (2008) study where variables such as "working with students" were found to be the drivers of teacher satisfaction. Previous research has also indicated that teachers are innately altruistic and empathetic types of people and choose to teach because they want to make a positive difference in the lives of others (Mateer, 1993; Alexander et al., 1994).

The lowest degree of satisfaction amongst the study's research instrument was manifested in the item "My pay and the amount of work I do," with a non-statistically significant finding and low magnitude of effect. While this study focused on satisfaction rather than dissatisfaction, this result aligns well with Herzberg's (1959) theory in that extrinsic hygiene factors such as salary may be more likely to produce dissatisfaction rather than satisfaction. Additionally, teachers may not have a high satisfaction level with their salary, which the results indicate, but the low effect size may be attributed to the idea that salary is more likely to cause an increase in dissatisfaction. Accordingly, extrinsic, or hygiene, factors such as salary simply may not be as crucial (to a certain degree) of a charter school teaching position compared to other benefits a charter school teacher may find worth the bargain such as a greater sense of altruism or autonomy. This result may indicate that charter school teachers need such intrinsic job needs to be met in order to be satisfied with their jobs overall.

Research Question 3: Of identified survey domains, which domain was perceived by study participants as reflecting the highest level of "overall satisfaction"?

The third research question relied on identifying emergent domains through the reduction of the survey's items into dimensions or domains using exploratory factor analysis (EFA). All four emergent dimensions were manifested at a statistically significant level. Cohen's *d* was used to evaluate the magnitude of effect for dimensions, resulting in the dimension of work

independence to be perceived as the domain that reflected the highest level of overall satisfaction. The effect size was deemed to be very large.

Charter school participants in the study reflected the highest level of overall satisfaction with the emergent domain Work Independence. The finding indicates that charter school teachers are most satisfied with their ability or freedom to do things on their own. The dimension of Work Independence is synonymous with teacher autonomy. Based on the very nature of the charter school organizational structure, their autonomy from local governing boards, and previous research of general teacher satisfaction, the importance of autonomy is seemingly that much more important for charter school teachers (Bulkley & Fisler, 2002; National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2018; U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Teacher autonomy is just one intangible job factor or motivation factor that originates with and is relinquished from school-level leaders (Dunst et al., 1994). Teaching autonomy is rooted with trust from school leadership, consigning decision-making and accountability to the teachers (Harris, 2007). Since charter schools are innately autonomous organizations, privately managed, and exempt from certain bureaucratic policies, school leaders are granted a certain level of autonomy that could potentially be transferred to their teachers, dependent on school organizational structure and leadership style. The resulting finding from Research Question 3 appears to show that autonomy is in fact being handed off to charter school teachers due to their high level of satisfaction with the domain of work independence with regard to their job. Since work independence, or autonomy, reflects the highest level of satisfaction for research question three, the findings of this research question complements previous literature in that this domain of charter school teaching makes charter schools more desirable places to work (Oberfield, 2016;

Walker, 2016). Moreover, work independence also continues to appear to be a valuable bargaining chip in hiring, recruiting, and retaining highly effective teachers moving forward.

Research Question 4: Of individual survey items, which item represented the most robust, statistically significant correlate and predictor of overall satisfaction of charter school teachers with their positions?

Research question four was associative and predictive in nature. Overall, the predictive model was found to be viable. Of three job factors that were found to be statistically significant in predicting overall job satisfaction, the survey item "Working conditions" reported the most robust predictive effect with overall job satisfaction. Two other survey items, "Chance to use my own methods on the job" and "Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job," were also found to be statistically significant predictors of overall job satisfaction but were not as robust.

Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) reported that charter school teachers were twice as likely to leave their positions than traditional public-school teachers for reasons related to working conditions such as a lack of administrative support. Conversely, Ni (2012) found that traditional public-school teachers and charter school teachers viewed their work conditions similarly. However, charter school teachers perceived their ability to influence school-based policies to be higher than traditional public-school teachers. This finding, in conjunction with the intrinsic-favoring results of research questions two and three, may support and further solidify Ni's (2012) findings with regard to how charter school teachers perceive their working conditions, relying heavily on intrinsic factors rather than extrinsic factors.

Additionally, Wei et al. (2014) found Texas charter school teachers had experienced working conditions that included a more supportive working environment, higher student expectations for learning, and a greater sense of responsibility for student learning. Further

investigation into the demographics of the charter school teachers who leave the profession for work-condition-related reasons may lend more insight on what kinds of teachers are leaving and how those teachers can be properly supported, trained, and retained to avoid self-perpetuated teacher turnover that disenfranchises students from academic success (Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Torres, 2016).

The two follow-up predictors "Chance to use my own methods on the job" and "Feeling of accomplishment I get from my job" are also noteworthy in the broader relation to charter school satisfaction. For a teacher to have a high satisfaction of having the chance to utilize his or her own methods on the job falls back to school leadership and how much power, trust, and influence the teachers have on their own jobs. Of course, school leaders are in charge, but the results may insinuate that school leaders who are effective leaders, or more aptly *facilitators of the school*, may not only trust their teachers but empower their teachers to their own job satisfaction through intangible, intrinsic means that supersede extrinsic and unchangeable job factors such as salary or geographical setting.

Research Question 5: Of the identified survey domains, which represents the most robust correlate and predictor of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction with his or her position?

Research question five was also predictive and associative in nature; the results indicated that two of four emergent dimensions were manifested at a statistically significant level. The dimension of Supervisory/Workplace was identified to be the most robust predictor of overall charter school teacher satisfaction. Thus, for every full unit of participant increase in the Dimension of Supervisory/Workplace there is a .58 unit of increase in overall participant satisfaction with their jobs.

The results of research question five indicate that the emergent domain of Supervisory/Workplace is the most robust predictor of charter school teacher satisfaction. The Theory of Work Adjustment focuses on the relationship between the worker and his or her job (Weiss et al., 1966). To take it one step further, the result of research question five puts a spotlight on the importance of the relationship between worker and supervisor in the charter school environment. Sentovich (2004) and Ni (2012) reported that teachers reflect higher satisfaction with the presence of abundant administrative support as well as positive and cooperative professional relationships with their administrators and colleagues. Charter school administrators are the possessors and distributors of influence at their schools, more so than traditional public-school administrators due to the additional autonomous freedoms legally granted to charter schools. A charter school administrator's role cannot be understated in such an environment where a teachers' union is usually nonexistent (Roch & Sai, 2016). The absence of bureaucracy may make charter schools smaller than public schools both in the physical and organizational sense. Therefore, the intangible relationship of a teacher and his or her administration may not only be more streamlined but more potent to a teacher's satisfaction with their job. The relationship of a teacher and his or her administrator is multifaceted but simplistically speaking, appears to be perceived as the most important factor in determining a charter school teacher's overall level of satisfaction.

Implications of Results

The study provides insights in how satisfied charter school teachers are with their positions and identifying the factors that make up charter school teacher satisfaction, adding to the growing body of literature concerning teacher satisfaction, specifically pertaining to charter school teachers. Teachers in general are the driving force of schools. Understanding how

satisfied teachers are with their positions and what contributes to their level of overall job satisfaction can assist school administrators in retaining highly qualified teachers; improving the work conditions of schools from an instructional perspective; creating a more desirable, satisfying, and rewarding place to work and learn; and, in turn, utilizing these direct and indirect benefits to potentially increase student achievement. While additional research is needed to form a complete profile on charter school teacher satisfaction, implications can be drawn from the study conducted.

Age, Experience, Administrative Support, and Autonomy

In this study, results showed that charter school teachers who are 60 years or older and charter school teachers who have 8 to 10 years of teaching experience are most satisfied with their positions. Previous research indicates that teacher attrition rates are much higher in America than other developed countries. While charter school attrition trends appear to be dwindling nationally, some states such as Wisconsin have reported up to a 25% loss of their charter school faculty annually (National Center of Education Statistics, 2014; National Charter School Research Project, 2010). Teachers in charter schools are typically younger than traditional public-school teachers and are twice as likely to leave their jobs if they have fewer than five years of teaching experience (New York City Charter School Center, 2012; Papay et al., 2018; Podgursky, 2006; Stuit & Smith, 2012).

Charter school teachers in this study were reported to be statistically significantly satisfied with their work independence (job autonomy). Teacher autonomy refers to the amount of control teachers have regarding school governance, curriculum, and pedagogy (Gawlik, 2016). Previous research has shown that teacher autonomy is an intrinsic job factor that teachers desire to be more satisfied with their jobs and is a benefit of working within a charter school (The

National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2017; Bulkley & Fisler, 2002; Lubienski, 2003). Further research would be needed to identify what age group of participants reported the highest amount of satisfaction with autonomy, as a link could potentially be identified between the amount of young, inexperienced teachers and how satisfied they are with their positions (or how likely they are to leave a charter school) dependent on the level of autonomy the charter school teachers are given. Newer, younger, and less experienced teachers may need more administrative support than the older, more experienced teachers who may better adapt and be more comfortable utilizing their teaching wisdom and autonomy to solve problems they experience at work.

Charter school teachers with more teaching experience may value autonomy even more than less experienced charter school teachers because the autonomy relinquished from charter school administrators comes with a certain level of trust and empowerment (Lubienski, 2003; Crawford, 2001). While all teachers may value the autonomy they are entrusted with, less experienced teachers simply may not be ready to handle the stress and accountability that is attached to it (Crawford, 2001). If newer, inexperienced teachers are given more freedom or autonomy than administrative support and training, then these less experienced teachers may be more prone to be less satisfied with their jobs and leave their charter school. Understanding the relationship between individual teacher experience level, teacher strengths and weaknesses, and their comfortability with work independence is something charter school leaders should do to ensure high satisfaction of their teachers and success of their charter program.

Leadership and Working Conditions that Recruit, Retain, and Empower Teachers

Each charter school is birthed as an "educational laboratory" with its own organizational and governing structure and curricula (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). These

organizational structures have an innate autonomy associated with the fact that charter schools have the decision-making power that traditional publics schools lack to implement a higher level of educational innovation in both practice and leadership (Bulkley & Fisler, 2002). The negative effect of that decision-making power that charter school leadership possesses may have an effect on the amount of charter schools that have been forced to close their doors in recent years for reasons that ranged from financial to academic failure (NAPCS, 2017).

In this study, a statistically significant finding revealed that the job domain Supervisory/Workplace was the most robust predictor of charter school teacher satisfaction. Charter school administrators may be the largest benefactors of autonomy due to their role within the school and the nature of the charter school (Gawlik, 2016). Since administrators are in a leadership role associated with more freedoms, their leadership style and effectiveness and how they deal with their higher level of autonomy in an environment of less regulation may shed light on how school-leader-influenced work conditions differ from traditional public schools and how those conditions are perceived by charter school teachers in relation to their overall job satisfaction.

Work conditions have been previously reported to be a likely factor in determining teacher satisfaction and retention (O'Reilly, 2014). Moore-Johnson et al. (2012) found that, on average, one out of five teachers leave his or her current school for another school due to work conditions that stemmed from school culture and leadership style. The importance of leadership and its effectiveness in charter schools appears to be a key component in both charter school teacher satisfaction and ultimately charter school success.

In order to be proactive in preventing teacher dissatisfaction or attrition, charter school leaders should not only take the time to hire teachers who are adequately qualified for the

position for which they have applied, but also to ensure that the teacher understands the context and nuance of the position he or she is potentially accepting so the norms and expectations of the job and school are clearly communicated. Additionally, administrators should be vigilant in continuously working closely with their teachers to identify and evaluate teacher strengths and weaknesses, especially teachers who are young or lack experience. Mizell (2010) explained that effective professional development for teachers requires premeditated planning and strategic implementation followed by meaningful constructive feedback that not only focuses on teacher learning needs but student achievement needs as well. Educators and their leaders should understand the importance of lifelong learning. Effective professional development that is specific, personalized, and appropriate not only allows teachers to become better educators, but also makes school administrators better leaders (Mizell, 2010). Young and/or inexperienced educators in charter schools, who are most likely to be dissatisfied in charter schools and leave their jobs, may need this additional support to thrive in the more autonomous environments their charter schools.

The Bargain Between Intrinsic and Extrinsic Job Factors to Increase Charter School Teacher Satisfaction

A finding in this study discovered with statistical significance that charter school teachers are most satisfied with their ability to do things for others and their feeling of accomplishment they get from their jobs. Both of these job factors are intrinsic job factors to the teaching profession. Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1954) highlighted the importance of such factors with regard to human need, while Dawes and Lofquist (1964) expanded on these factors with regard to job satisfaction. Since teachers in general are regarded as altruistic and empathetic types of people, it is no surprise that they value and need such aspects of their job to practice selflessness,

helping others, and ultimately be satisfied with their teaching positions (Mateer, 1993; Alexander et al., 1994).

Additionally, Working Conditions and Supervisory/Workplace factors are also intangible, intrinsic factors reflected to be the most robust predictors of a charter school teacher's overall satisfaction. This study's finding supports previous research that teachers, and charter school teachers specifically, immensely value these aspects of their job just as much, if not more than extrinsic, tangible job factors such as salary (Harris, 2012; Judge et al., 2010). Since charter school teachers reflect such an importance on intrinsic job factors, intrinsic factors, such as effective leadership, supportive working conditions, autonomy, and a focus on pedagogy may be valuable bargaining chips in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, which has been a looming crisis for schools in general (Oberfield, 2016; Skinner, 2008; Wei et al., 2014; Aragon, 2017).

Since teacher attrition and turnover has been reported to have a negative impact on student achievement, charter school leaders need to utilize their autonomy, freedom from bureaucracy, and their effective leadership skills to do what is in their power to make their school a more satisfying place to work to not only recruit and retain teachers, but to assist in making teaching a more desirable profession (Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Moore-Johnson et al., 2012; Sutcher et al., 2016). With the natural freedom granted to charter schools and their administrators, a heavy focus on improving intrinsic, intangible job factors such as school culture and conditions may be one key to recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers to hopefully improve school and student success (Gawlik, 2016; Suarez, 2018).

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the review of literature, charter schools and their associated student and employment populations continue to increase at a rapid level with the also-growing prevalence of school choice in the modern context of educational and political domains. As of February 2017, charter schools made up five percent of total K-12 enrollment nationally (NAPCS, 2017). In Florida specifically, charter school student population has increased by more than 300% in the last decade. Despite the rapid growth of charter schools, their effectiveness has revealed mixed results while many continue to close their doors while others open theirs (NAPCS, 2017; Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, 2017). As the charter school sector gains prevalence in the context of American education, the diversified and unique programs, curricula, and structure of charter schools as a whole will have a larger impact on the general population of students. In turn, these schools will also need the necessary research and empirical evidence to make school-based decisions regarding the teachers who work in charter schools. A dearth of research on charter school teacher satisfaction specifically still remains, but as charter schools increase, so should the research that pertains to them.

This study utilized a nonexperimental, descriptive, quantitative design to evaluate the overall satisfaction level of K-12 charter school teachers and to identify the most predictive job factors of overall satisfaction. Initially, this study could be replicated and expanded to other states for a larger, more diverse sample of charter school teachers. The differences from charter school to charter school can be quite distinct. Comparisons between geographical setting, organizational scheme, leadership style, and/or curricular program focus could provide enlightening results. Future research should also utilize a qualitative approach to construct a more comprehensive portrait of charter school teacher satisfaction. Qualitative research may

benefit most by investigating how different levels of teaching experience effects teacher satisfaction with regard to administrative support, autonomy, and empowerment and how these variables effect teacher satisfaction.

Conclusion

Charter schools and their teachers are the legal benefactors of potentially decreased bureaucracy and increased autonomy which, specifically for teachers, makes charter schools more desirable places to work yet enough evidence is not present to show that charter school teachers are highly satisfied with their jobs, or at least more satisfied than their traditional public-school counterparts. Despite the fact that a looming teacher shortage crisis is seemingly on the horizon, the overall trends of teacher turnover, attrition, and mobility show promise that these negative trends are tapering off as time goes by. However, charter school teachers who are younger and have less than five years of teaching experience continue to leave their jobs at alarming rates.

The results of this study show that charter school teachers are in fact satisfied overall with their positions and reflect the most satisfaction with intrinsic job factors, specifically autonomy, working conditions, and supervisory aspects of their job. Their satisfaction seems to rely heavily on job factors that can be heavily influenced by school leadership. In other words, the perceptions charter school teachers hold in relation to their workplace seem to be heavily influenced by the trust, support, and effectiveness of their administrators and leaders. The results of this study may lead to a better understanding of what charter school teachers need and desire when working in such a unique educational setting. Additionally, this study's results may reinforce notion that teachers, specifically those who work in charter schools, are empathetic and

altruistic, searching for a workplace to satisfy their work-based needs have the freedom and support to adequately serve their students.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Charter School Teacher Satisfaction Survey

Voluntary Consent for Online Survey

This survey is designed to gather information for a research project conducted by Dylan Barnes in partial completion of his dissertation. The principle investigator at Southeastern University is Dr. Charles Smith, Associate Professor in the College of Education. Dr. Tom Gollery, the methodologist, is also an investigator in this project.

The purpose of this study is to identify the overall job satisfaction of Florida K-12 charter school teachers. Another goal is to identify the most significant predictors of job satisfaction of the same teachers. In order to gather data and formulate conclusions about charter school teacher satisfaction, the survey used is based on the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Short Form. More information on this instrument can be found through the link at the bottom of this notice.

This survey should only take about five to ten minutes of your time and will serve to further understand the feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of teachers towards specific areas of their jobs in this rather unique educational setting. Please respond truthfully to all the items. The results of individual responses will remain totally confidential and unidentifiable.
Responses will be used only for reporting results in the final dissertation report.

By taking this survey, you certify that you are 18 years of age or older and that you consent to participate.

If you have any questions related to this survey or dissertation, please feel free to contact Dylan Barnes at (732) 664-1734 or dbarnes@seu.edu and/or Dr. Charles Smith at (863) 669-4264 or cksmith@seu.edu. If you would like a copy of the results of the study when it is completed or would like to waive your participation and/or responses, please email Dylan Barnes to do so.

Thank you so much for your participation in this important research project! Your prompt response to the survey is very much appreciated.

Dylan Barnes, M.Ed.
dbarnes@seu.edu
1000 Longfellow Blvd., Lakeland, FL 33801
Weiss, D. J., Dawis, R. V., & England, G. W. (1977). Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from http://vpr.psych.umn.edu/instruments/msq-minnesota-satisfaction-questionnaire

1. **Email address** *

Instructions on Answering Survey Items

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 Florida K-12 charter school teachers like and dislike about their jobs.

On the next page you will find statements about your present job. Read each statement carefully. Decide how satisfied you feel about the aspect of your job described by the statement.

Keeping the statement in mind rate your satisfaction on the following scale:

5 -- Very Satisfied
4 -- Satisfied
3 -- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
2 -- Dissatisfied
1 -- Very Dissatisfied

Remember, keep the statement in mind when deciding how satisfied you feel about that specific aspect of your job. Do this for all statements. Please answer every item. Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your present job.

Questions

Ask yourself: How satisfied am I with this aspect of my job?

5 -- means I am very satisfied with this aspect of my job.
4 -- means I am satisfied with this aspect of my job.
3 -- means I cannot decide whether I am satisfied or not with this aspect of my job.
2 -- means I am dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.
1 -- means I am very dissatisfied with this aspect of my job.

On my present job, this is how I feel about...

2. **Being able to keep busy all the time**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ 5
   - ◯ 4
   - ◯ 3
   - ◯ 2
   - ◯ 1

3. **The chance to work alone on the job**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ 5
   - ◯ 4
   - ◯ 3
   - ◯ 2
   - ◯ 1

4. **The chance to do different things from time to time**
   Mark only one oval.
   - ◯ 5
   - ◯ 4
   - ◯ 3
   - ◯ 2
   - ◯ 1

5. **The chance to be "someone" in the community**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

6. **The way my boss handles his/her workers**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

7. **The competence of my supervisor in making decisions**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

8. **Being able to do things that don't go against my conscience**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

9. **The way my job provides for steady employment**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

10. **The chance to do things for other people**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

11. **The chance to tell people what to do**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

12. **The chance to do something that makes use of my abilities**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

13. **The way school policies are put into practice**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

14. **My pay and the amount of work I do**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

15. **The chances for advancement on this job**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

16. **The freedom to use my own judgment**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

17. **The chance to try my own methods of doing the job**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

18. **The working conditions**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

19. **The way my co-workers get along with each other**
Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

20. **The praise I get for doing a good job**

Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

21. **The feeling of accomplishment I get from the job**

Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

22. **My overall satisfaction as a teacher in a charter school**

Mark only one oval.

- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

Demographic Questions

Before you finish the survey, please tell us a little bit about you and your experience.

23. **Please indicate your age in years**

Mark only one oval.

- 21 - 25
- 26 - 30
- 31 - 40
- 41 - 50
- 51 - 60
- 60 or older

24. **What is your gender?**

Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Other: _____

25. **Please indicate how many years have you been teaching at your CURRENT charter school.**
Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years
- More than 10 years

26. **Please indicate how many total years have you been teaching, including any other public, private, or charter schools other than your current charter school.**
Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 7 years
- 8 - 10 years
- More than 10 years

27. **Please indicate what grade level you teach.**
Mark only one oval.

- Elemenatry (K-5)
- Middle (6-8)
- High School (9-12)
- Other: _____

28. **Please indicate what type of community your school resides**
Mark only one oval.

- Urban
- Surburban
- Rural

Thank you!

Your responses have been submitted and you have completed the survey.

- [ ] Send me a copy of my responses.

Appendix B

Email for Online Survey

Subject: Dissertation Research: Charter School Teacher Satisfaction and Factors that Contribute to and Predict Satisfaction

Hello,

If you are an administrator of an elementary, middle, or high school, would you consider forwarding this survey to your teachers and giving us a few minutes of their time to respond to this survey? The survey is designed to gather information for a research project conducted by Mr. Dylan Barnes as part of his doctoral dissertation. The principal investigator at Southeastern University is Dr. Charles Smith, Associate Professor in the College of Education, and the study has been approved for conduct by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at SEU.

The purpose of this research study is to explore the job satisfaction and the factors that contribute to and predict satisfaction in charter school teachers. By understanding teachers in this unique professional and educational setting, we can better accommodate current trends of charter school teacher turnover, undergraduate education program enrollment, and job quality and satisfaction of charter school teachers.

This survey should take only about 10 minutes of your time and will serve to further understanding of charter school teacher satisfaction. Please respond truthfully to all the items. The results of individual responses will remain totally confidential and will be used only for reporting grouped results in the doctoral dissertation.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time by contacting Mr. Dylan Barnes at 732 664 1734 or dbarnes@seu.edu and/or Dr. Smith at 863 669 4264 or cksmith@seu.edu

By taking this survey, you certify that you are 18 years of age or older and that you consent to participate. If you have any questions related to this survey, please feel free to contact Mr. Dylan Barnes at 732 664 1734 or dbarnes@seu.edu and/or Dr. Smith at 863 669 4264 or cksmith@seu.edu. If you would like a copy of the results of the study when it is completed, please email Mr. Barnes to request.

Thank you so much for your assistance in this important research project! Your prompt response to the survey is very much appreciated. Feel free to forward this message to other charter school teachers you may know.

Note: If you do not wish to receive further email regarding this study, simply reply or forward to cksmith@seu.edu or dbarnes@seu.edu and type 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. Your name will be promptly removed.

Charter School Teacher Survey: https://goo.gl/dKtU2G

Follow Up Email for Online Survey

Subject: Dissertation Research: Charter School Teacher Satisfaction Survey Follow Up

Dylan Barnes
Ed.D Student, Curriculum & Instruction
Southeastern University
1000 Longfellow Blvd.
Lakeland, FL 33801
(732) 664-1734

Dear Administrator,

As a doctoral student at Southeastern University, I am conducting research on *charter school teacher satisfaction* as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Last week, an email was sent to you inviting you to encourage your full time teachers to participate in a research study. This follow up email is being sent to remind you to forward the survey link to your charter school teachers so they can complete the survey if they would like to participate and have not already done so. Subject to change, the survey will be open until March 6, 2018, but prompt completion is greatly encouraged and appreciated.

This short survey should take only about 5 – 10 minutes and will serve to further understanding of charter school teacher satisfaction. The results of individual responses will remain totally confidential and will be used only for reporting grouped results in the doctoral dissertation.

The purpose of this research study is to explore the job satisfaction and the factors that contribute to and predict satisfaction in charter school teachers. By understanding teachers in this unique professional and educational setting, we can better accommodate current trends of charter school teacher turnover, undergraduate education program enrollment, and job quality and satisfaction of charter school teachers.

The survey can be completed at the following link: https://goo.gl/dKtU2G

Informed Consent

A consent document is provided as the first page you will see after clicking on the survey link. The informed consent document contains additional information about my research. By entering your email address and clicking the "Next" button on that page, you indicate that you have read it and would like to take part in the survey.

Contact Information and Unsubscribe

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time by contacting Mr. Dylan Barnes at 732 664 1734 or dbarnes@seu.edu and/or Dr. Smith at 863 669 4264 or cksmith@seu.edu

If you have any other questions related to this survey, please feel free to contact Mr. Dylan Barnes at 732 664 1734 or dbarnes@seu.edu and/or Dr. Smith at 863 669 4264 or cksmith@seu.edu If you would like a copy of the results of the study when it is completed, please email Mr. Barnes to request.

If you do not wish to receive further email regarding this study, simply reply or forward to cksmith@seu.edu or dbarnes@seu.edu and type 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. Your name will be promptly removed.

Subject: Dissertation Research: Charter School Teacher Satisfaction Survey FINAL Follow Up

Dylan Barnes
Ed.D Student, Curriculum & Instruction
Southeastern University
1000 Longfellow Blvd.
Lakeland, FL 33801
(732) 664-1734

Dear Administrator,

As a doctoral student at Southeastern University, I am conducting research on *charter school teacher satisfaction* as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. Last week, a follow up email was sent to you inviting you to encourage your full-time teachers to participate in a research study. ***This email will be the last follow up email sent to remind you to forward the survey link to your charter school teachers so they can complete the survey if they would like to participate and have not already done so.*** Subject to change, the survey will be open for one more week, but prompt completion is greatly encouraged and appreciated.

The survey can be completed at the following link: https://goo.gl/dKtU2G

To those who forwarded the email and encouraged their teachers to participate, I want to personally thank you. I will send a thank you email to those teachers personally once the survey window has closed.

Again, this short survey should take only about 5 – 10 minutes and will serve to further understanding of charter school teacher satisfaction and the factors that contribute to their satisfaction. The results of individual responses will remain totally confidential and will be used only for reporting grouped results in the doctoral dissertation.

The purpose of this research study is to explore the job satisfaction and the factors that contribute to and predict satisfaction in charter school teachers. By understanding teachers in this unique professional and educational setting, we can better accommodate current trends of charter school teacher turnover, undergraduate education program enrollment, and job quality and satisfaction of charter school teachers.

Informed Consent

A consent document is provided as the first page you will see after clicking on the survey link. The informed consent document contains additional information about my research. By entering your email address and clicking the "Next" button on that page, you indicate that you have read it and would like to take part in the survey.

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If you do not wish to receive further email regarding this study, simply reply or forward to cksmith@seu.edu or dbarnes@seu.edu and type 'unsubscribe' in the subject line. Your name will be promptly removed.