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School Climate and Teacher Commitment in Title I Qualifying School Districts in Pennsylvania

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SCHOOL CLIMATE AND TEACHER COMMITMENT IN TITLE I QUALIFYING SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN PENNSYLVANIA

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This quantitative research study examines teachers' professional commitment through the administration of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Mowday, Steers, and Porter 1979) to teachers in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania. Teachers in five school districts, representing various demographic and geographic regions of Pennsylvania, were electronically surveyed to determine their level of commitment. This research expands upon two previous studies that concluded that school climate does influence teacher commitment in Alabama (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009).

In addition to the OCQ, participants also completed the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) (Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland 2002), which determined school climate categories : Achievement Pres, Collegial Leadership, Institutional Vulnerability, and Professional Teacher Behavior, which acted as independent variables for this reasearch. In addition to these independent variables, demographic data was also collected for gender, years of expereince, and grade level taught.

It was concluded that all climate variables influence teacher commitment. Achievement pres (r=.648**, p<.01) had the strongest influence on commitment, followed by Collegial Leadership (r=.58**, p<.01), with the weakest influence found with Professional Teacher Behavior (r=.435**, p<.01). A negative statistically significant

influence was found between Institutional Vulnerability and Commitment (r=-.235**, p<.01). There was also a statistically significant correlation for teacher gender and commitment.

This study rejected the first null hypothesis, *School climate has no influence on teacher commitment*. This hypothesis was rejected because all climate subcategories had a statistically significant relationship to school climate.

The second null hypothesis, *Teachers' demographic information has no influence on teachers' commitment to their schools*, was rejected, as there was a statistically significant finding between male and female teacher commitment.

DEDICATION

To My Son: Kevin Joseph O'Donnell, III. Throughout your life, you will encounter people who will tell you, "You can't." Some people will give you the impression that you *can* do something. Don't pay much attention to either. Because those people who said that you *can't* or that you *can*, either of them may be right. Ultimately, it will be *you* who decides if you can or can't; you are the one who will determine your successes and failures. But that isn't the important part. Remember, son, no matter how good things are, they can be better – and no matter how bad things are, they could be worse. Strap yourself into the driver's seat of your life: Determine the course, enjoy your successes, learn from your failures, and, most importantly, enjoy the ride. I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In completing this dissertation, I owe a great deal of recognition to my dissertation chair, Dr. David Piper. Dr. Piper, you allowed me to drive this dissertation, but when it was clear that the study could take a more significant turn, you guided that process for me and ensured that I ended with a product that was more significant that I had ever imagined. Dr. Rieg and Dr. Paquette ensured my work was held to the highest scholarly standard, and I am forever in debt to you. Dr. Michael E. Lewis took countless hours to read, reread, edit, and encourage me early in this process. I can't thank all of you enough for your help and guidance.

My mother, Denise, and father, Kevin, continued to provide support and express their pride throughout this process. My older siblings, Mike and Nicole, I know it couldn't have been easy with me as a little brother throughout life. Just imagine what it's going to be like now that I have a doctorate.

Indiana University of Pennsylvania's Administration and Leadership Studies Cohort model provided me an opportunity to meet and learn from some amazing academic minds. I spent three years with passionate educators from around the Commonwealth, representing urban, suburban, and rural school districts. The tie that bound us all, though, was the passion to serve students and advance the cause of public education. Dan, I very much appreciate the time we spent riding to and from classes, splitting expenses, and pushing one another. I would not have finished this "little essay" if it not for the support from so many of you.

Finally, and most importantly, I cannot thank my loving wife, Stephanie, enough. You provided support, encouragement, and love that is unlike anything I have ever experienced. When I started this journey, our son was only two years old. Even with the stresses of job changes and moving to a new home, you provided me the opportunity to finish this dream. Even when our son, Kevin, locked you out of his room and you had to FaceTime me in order to unlock the door, you stuck with me and supported me through many difficult moments. I have no idea where life is going to go from here or what the future holds. But, I do know, that wherever it goes, whatever happens, whatever challenges, whatever successes, whatever failures, all of those will be with you. That sounds just fine to me, Momma.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

On December 9, 2013, I began my administrative career as an assistant high school principal. For the next six months, the administrative team quickly rolled out several initiatives in many areas: co-teaching, lesson planning, school discipline, Individualized Education Program writing, and mandated trainings. Later, the administration needed to fill a number of teaching vacancies, in part due to teachers leaving our district to join a new district.

My professional journey took me in another direction, when I became an elementary school principal in another rural, high poverty, Title I qualifying school district. During this time, one of my roles was to participate on a team that hired a number of new teachers, some experienced, some right out of college. All appeared ready to take on the monumental challenges that teachers face in high-poverty schools. At the same time, the administration prepared for a new school year of changes: a new curriculum, a new resource to support curriculum implementation in English language arts, a new disciplinary program, and changes in the master schedule and bell schedule.

One of the new teachers, "Emily," was dynamic in front of the students; she had energy, she was caring, she had command of the curriculum, and she managed the room with ease—and before the middle of the second marking period, she was gone. This event, combined with the amount of teacher turnover I had observed so soon in my administrative career, caused me to question: Are all of these new initiatives impacting

the climate of my building and causing great teachers like Emily to leave the district or profession?

School climate consists of several factors and behaviors that establish the attitude, feeling, and behavior of the people within the school or organization (Hernandez & Seem, 2004). Several characteristics delineate one school from another; organizational climate is one of those delineating factors.

Researchers Croft and Halpin (1962) noted that personality is to the individual what climate is to the building or organization. These researchers initiated a questionnaire, the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991), to quantify school climate. Croft and Halpin identified the relationships and interactions between staff members as important factors in determining organizational climate.

More recently, Smith (2009) noted the changes and revisions that have occurred for the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI). Hoy et al. (1991) developed the OHI for Elementary (OHI-E), the OHI for Middle (OHI-M), and the OHI for Secondary (OHI-S). Furthermore, Hoy et al.'s expansion and revision of the OHI was one of the first to include a secondary education component. These researchers not only expanded the original OHI design but updated it to reflect what they viewed as a change in times and issues (Hoy et al., 1991). Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2002) combined the OHI with the OCDQ to develop the Organizational Climate Index (OCI).

Gülsen and Gülenay (2014) argued, "In today's world, schools are expected to teach effectively. The principal plays a crucial role in the formation of the school climate, which, in turn, has a positive effect on the school's efficacy" (p. 99). Stated another way,

school climate impacts the ability of the school to run effectively, which can impact achievement and/or student success.

Commitment has been defined in behavioral terms as any behavior that is beneficial for the organization (Riketta & Landerer, 2002). These behaviors would be reflected in the character traits of committed individuals within an organization; attendance and longevity are two of these characteristics (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Committed individuals, behaviorally, are those people who get the job done correctly the first time; they take care of business and help the organization for a sustained period of time.

Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979) concluded that "attitudinal commitment thus represents a state in which an individual identifies with a particular organization and its goals and wishes to maintain membership in order to facilitate these goals" (p. 225). In public education terms, this concept means that teachers are valued members of the school who see value in the goals the school is working to attain.

Mowday et al. (1979) describes *organizational commitment* as the strength of a person's connection with and commitment to an organization. Mowday et al. developed the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ), a survey that examines the individuals' commitment to an organization. The OCQ then quantifies commitment members of the teaching staff have to the school organization. Mowday et al. identified three variables related to organizational commitment: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a desire to maintain membership in the organization.

Smith (2009) examined the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment in Alabama by surveying 522 elementary school teachers from 34 elementary schools in northeastern Alabama. Results indicated a relationship between school climate and teacher commitment.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers continue to leave the profession at an alarming rate. A recent study by Sutcher and Carver-Thomas (2016) found that eight percent of teachers, including both new professionals and veteran teachers, leave the profession in the United States each year. The U.S. Department of Education (2015) notes that 17 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. The schools with the greatest teacher retention issues are those with over 50 percent of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch (Westervelt, 2016). Some states, such as Massachusetts, have experienced a teacher surplus, whereas others, such as Arizona and Utah, struggle with a teacher shortage (Sutcher and Carver-Thomas 2016). Teacher shortage and retention challenges have been observed in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has documented a 61.4 percent decrease over three years in teachers attaining certification (Stuhldreher, 2015). Stuhldreher also noted that fewer college students choose teaching as a career. The Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education found a decrease of 31.2 percent of students from 2010 to 2015 who have chosen to major in education. Teachers are leaving the profession, particularly in the most poverty-stricken areas. In this national and statewide climate, particularly with the issue of teacher retention in low-income schools, it is important to examine the commitment teachers feel toward their organizations in Title I qualifying schools in Pennsylvania.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence, if any, of school climate on teacher commitment. This study expands upon prior research to include middle- and secondary-level educational institutions, a recommendation made by earlier researchers (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009).

Results from this research can be used to examine a school's climate and how it influences teacher commitment or, vice versa, how teacher commitment relates to school climate. This research identifies school climate characteristics and organizational commitment characteristics as determined by the OCI and the OCQ. Each subcategory was then examined to note common links. The subcategories include the following: principal leadership, teacher professionalism, achievement pres (student achievement), and vulnerability to the community (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). A complete copy of the OCI survey can be found in Appendix A. OCQ results were categorized for attitude, belief, and attachment (Mowday et al., 1979). A full version of the OCQ appears in Appendix B.

Theoretical Framework

An open, healthy climate is one that recognizes the contributions of various groups within an organization (Hoy & Feldman, 1987; Hoy, Hoffman, Sabo, & Bliss, 1996; Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Additionally, a collaborative environment reflects a healthy school climate (Abler, 2002; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2011).

Social exchange theory is defined as the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons (Homans, 1961). Blau (1964) noted that human interactions depend on exchange for mutual benefit.

The value individuals place on human interaction can be intrinsic or extrinsic. In the case of public education, teachers have the benefit of working with students (intrinsic) and also benefit financially (extrinsic). The school benefits by having employees who provide services for students. For this study, the relationship at hand is that between the organization and the teacher and how organizational climate influences that relationship. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa (1986) studied social exchange theory in terms of employee commitment: They found that commitment from employees may occur, but first the employee must feel a commitment from the organization. In the school-employee exchange, teacher commitment is the desirable outcome. Teachers may perceive the commitment a school has to them through a different lens. Some may view that commitment through community support, and some through leadership; others may view commitment through student achievement. Employees who are more committed ultimately report a lower desire to leave an organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986).

Significance of Study

The OCI subgroups as well as the OCQ show that the commitment a teacher feels toward an organization can help policy makers and decision makers reduce teacher attrition. These results can help serve as a framework to develop meaningful professional development and retain quality teachers at a time when public education can ill afford to lose quality teachers. Developing a better understanding of organizational climate and how these specific areas impact commitment may help to improve teachers' commitment and thus decrease the likelihood that the teacher will leave a school (or the field altogether).

Examining the difference and/or similarities between secondary-, middle-, and elementary-level educators can help guide school leaders as they explore how to maximize commitment among teaching staff, while also understanding how the climate may impact the commitment of those who work with different student populations.

Federal law mandates the presence of highly qualified teachers according to the No Child Left Behind Act (2001), which also outlines funding for school districts. Districts are penalized according to the number of teachers who are not highly qualified. Some districts may consider this to be the new normal, as highly qualified teachers routinely leave poorer districts. As a result, these districts are further penalized for not having highly qualified teachers. Thus a cycle of impoverished school districts continues.

A moral issue is also presented, as most would agree that students should receive the best possible educational services they can get. In the absence of educated citizens, our state and our nation suffer.

Research Design

This research was conducted with surveys as the primary data source. Both surveys, the OCI (see Appendix A) and the OCQ (see Appendix B), were administered electronically to teachers in central Pennsylvania. Appendix C shows the relationship between Organizational Climate Index variables and the research questions. The survey instruments were combined and given in succession, in one sitting, to ensure the integrity of both research measures. The Institutional Review Board of Indiana University of Pennsylvania approved both survey instruments. Experts from the Applied Research Lab at Indiana University of Pennsylvania also reviewed the research instruments.

Quantitative analysis was chosen for this study as it expanded upon previously published research (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009) that utilized survey instrumentation. Survey design also allowed for a larger sample than would have been possible with other research methods. Future researchers can compare the results of this research with previously completed research to determine the difference in educational climate and commitment between Pennsylvania and other states.

To test the reliability and validity of these instruments, a pilot group was convened. The survey was given to 53 teachers in a Title I qualifying school district in Pennsylvania. The pilot group's data were not used for analysis purposes with this study. To identify teachers from low-income schools, district information was accessed through the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2017). Here, researchers and other stakeholders can download a data file that outlines the percentage of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch, among other demographic information, including race, gender, age, and grade levels served. Once downloaded, a sort by free or reduced-price lunch is possible. Districts that have less than the 40 percent margin were eliminated, given the role that high-poverty (i.e., greater than 50 percent low socioeconomic status) (Westervelt, 2016) districts play in teacher retention. The remaining districts were invited to participate in the study; from there, teacher participants were asked to participate. The pilot group was known to the researcher but still met the criteria of having Title I funding and teachers with over one year of experience. More statistical information about the pilot group results can be found in Chapter 4.

The initial two surveys, along with follow-up communications, were e-mailed via the Qualtrics website. Copies of the correspondence teachers received are included in Appendix D. Although professional and nonprofessional staff members alike impact school climate, teachers alone were surveyed because they make up the largest professional population within a school and therefore would produce the greatest survey population numbers.

The Qualtrics platform was used for correspondence, survey administration, and gathering of results. Survey results were then transferred and analyzed using SPSS software. Summary scores were obtained for the surveys, and the two means were compared using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine which elements of the OCI relate to teacher commitment as determined by the OCQ. Results from the pilot group indicated that the survey instruments produced both reliable and valid indicators of school climate and teacher commitment.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Questions and hypotheses are outlined below:

1. What is the influence of school climate on teacher commitment in Title 1 qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1a. What is the influence of achievement pres on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1b. What is the influence of professional teacher behavior on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1c. What is the influence of collegial leadership on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1d. What is the influence of institutional vulnerability on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

2. Are there differences among teachers' demographic information and teachers' commitment to their schools?

H0: School climate has no influence on teacher commitment.

H0: Teachers' demographic information has no influence on teachers' commitment to their schools.

Assumptions

The research was conducted within the framework of the original study (Smith, 2009). However, a demographic question was added in order to determine in which level of public education (elementary, middle, or high school) the teacher was employed. Some noteworthy assumptions follow:

1. Only teachers with a year or more of experience took part in the study.
2. Research was limited to public schools. No information was obtained from private, charter, or cyber charter schools.
3. The socioeconomic status of the district determined if the district could be included in the study, as this information determines Title I funding.
4. No vocational–technical or career center schools were considered for the study, as teachers in vocational schools tend to have different backgrounds when compared to their traditional general education counterparts.
5. The research relied solely on the perception of those participants who returned surveys from public schools.
6. A single survey instrument determined the dependent variable of commitment.

Definitions of Terms

Achievement pres. "Describes a school that sets high but achievable academic standards and goals. Students persist, strive to achieve, and are respected by each other and teachers for their academic success. Parents, teachers, and the principal exert pressure for high standards and school improvement" (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002, p. 42).

Collegial leadership. "Directed toward both meeting the social needs of the faculty and achieving the goals of the school. The principal treats teachers as professional colleagues, is open, egalitarian, and friendly, but at the same time sets clear teacher expectations and standards of performance" (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42).

Free and reduced-price lunch. A subsidy federally funded through the National School Lunch Program. It is a household income–based program in which students may qualify for a free or reduced-price school lunch. The current guideline for a household family of four is $44,955.00 (Benefits.gov, 2016).

Institutional vulnerability. "The extent to which the school is susceptible to change based on a few vocal parents or citizen groups. High vulnerability suggests that both teachers and principals are unprotected and put on the defensive" (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42).

Organizational climate. Defined by the unique interactions between individuals within a school: teachers, administrators, and students (Jimenez, 2004). Organizational climate can be measured by the OCI, which is a

combination of the original OCDQ and the OHI (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). The climate is characterized by four operational variables: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability.

Organizational commitment. The relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Mowday et al. developed the OCQ. This survey examines the commitment of individuals within an organization. The OCQ then quantifies the commitment members of the teaching staff have with the school. Mowday et al. identified three variables in relation to organizational commitment: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a desire to maintain membership in the organization.

Professional teacher behavior. "Marked by respect for colleague competence, commitment to students, autonomous judgment, and mutual cooperation and support" (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42).

Socioeconomic status. The social and economic factors of a family. Socioeconomic status is defined by the total income per household in relation to poverty as outlined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965).

Title I. A portion of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in which supplemental financial support is provided to states and school districts

that have a high percentage of low-socioeconomic-status households (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966).

Title I qualifying school. A school in which 40 percent or more of the total student population qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966).

Title I qualifying school district. A district in which 40 percent or more of the total student population qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966).

Expected Findings

Previous research in this area notes a relationship between school climate and teacher commitment as it relates to different subcategories of climate (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009). These researchers found that school climate and teacher commitment do have a relationship. The highest statistically significant results were from teacher professionalism of climate to commitment, with teacher professional behavior (teacher professionalism) providing the highest statistical results in research conducted by Smith (2009) and the strongest statistical relationship when performed by Douglas (2010). Douglas also noted a relationship between collegial leadership and commitment. It is expected that an influence is again found in elementary teachers as it relates to professional teacher behavior and commitment with this research as well.

The uniqueness of the current study lies in its inclusion of secondary educators in addition to elementary teachers. A sense of academic pride drives many secondary teachers. It was expected that this current research would reflect that, on some level, academic performance will impact teacher commitment in secondary schools. The same

can be said for collegial leadership. A secondary principal tends to have a larger role in secondary buildings in relation to leading community events and being visible within the organization.

Interestingly, neither Smith (2009) nor Douglas (2010) noted institutional vulnerability as a determining factor in teacher commitment to an organization. Similarly, no statistical relationship between institutional vulnerability and teacher commitment was expected as had been the result in the previously completed studies.

Summary

Social exchange theory posts that all people enter into relationships, either professional or personal, in exchange for intrinsic feelings or extrinsic items (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). Whereas some individuals focus on the extrinsic benefits of teaching (salary, health care, work schedule, etc.), those who are intrinsically motivated focus more on the impact they can have on students or the relationships they form with administrators or other professionals. These motivations are not typically the focus in teaching and administrative practice or in research.

Few studies have examined the link between organizational climate and organizational commitment. Smith (2009) suggested a link between climate and commitment in Alabama elementary schools. Building on previous research, Douglas (2010) found a further link between school climate and teacher commitment in rural Alabama elementary schools. Further research was needed to expand these findings and to examine if similar results could be found elsewhere. Additional research should include those who teach in secondary schools. School or organizational climate and the relationship it has with organizational commitment can be used to promote teacher

longevity, professional development, and student achievement. It can also be used to ensure that those with intrinsic motivation are feeling fulfilled at work and continue teaching while performing the work public educators do daily.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of the literature review is to examine the empirical literature on school climate and teacher commitment along with research exploring the influence between school climate and teacher commitment. In addition, the chapter offers a conceptual understanding of social exchange theory, the theoretical basis for the study.

Teachers continue to leave the profession. The U.S. Department of Education (2015) noted that 17 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. Schools with the greatest teacher retention issues were those that qualified for over 50 percent free and reduced-price lunch. Although most districts enjoy high teacher retention rates, those with approximately 50 percent or higher free or reduced-priced lunch lag behind their counterparts.

Issues remain, however, as the Pennsylvania Department of Education has noted a 61.4 percent decrease in the past three years in the number of teachers attaining certification in the commonwealth (Stuhldreher, 2015). Fewer college students are choosing teaching as a career, according to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education, with a decrease of 31.2 percent from 2010 to 2015 (Stuhldreher, 2015). With the baby boom generation gearing up for retirement and fewer teachers entering the profession, what is causing teachers to leave the profession, particularly in the most poverty-stricken areas? Does school climate play a role in the commitment a teacher feels toward his or her organization?

Review of Literature Methods and Terms

A complete review of the literature used various forms of media, including published resources (e.g., books, magazines, articles), electronic databases, and bibliography searches of previously completed studies, including doctoral dissertations and master's theses. Key words and phrases used for analysis included the following: *school climate, teacher commitment, organizational climate, organizational commitment, professional commitment, school climate and teacher commitment in elementary schools, Organizational Climate Index, OCI, elementary school climate, social exchange theory, teacher retention, Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire,* and *Organizational Health Index.* These terms and the resources used to review the body of literature allowed for a deep analysis to review school climate and teacher commitment.

The Accountability Movement

Public education and those involved with it face scrutiny over school performance and how schools meet student needs. The accountability movement in public education can trace its roots back to the 1950s. Accountability, nationally, means that states are held accountable for how monies are spent, and they hold districts accountable for how schools perform. Principals, then, are accountable to the districts for the performance of the teachers who work in their buildings. Finally, teachers are held accountable for student performance on high-stakes academic testing.

While the accountability movement was gaining traction the fight over school segregation reached its pinnacle with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The Court ruled that no longer would the color of a student's skin determine the building in which the child would be educated. The ruling, however, did

not establish when desegregation would occur or the means that states and/or districts should employ for desegregation.

In 1964, more historic legislation was passed: the Civil Rights Act (1963), which included provisions to desegregate schools. According to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Schools, districts, or states in violation of the Civil Rights Act would risk losing federal monies. States now were accountable for ensuring that desegregation occurred.

In direct response to the Soviet Union launching Sputnik, the world's first unmanned satellite (NASA, 2007), the U.S. government passed the National Defense Education Act of 1958, in part to ensure that the American educational system would be on the same level as the education the Soviet Union was providing to its children. In addition to providing a large amount of funding to the space program, the National Defense Act also sought to redefine the science curriculum and provide for mathematics instruction. Changes to science and mathematics instruction continued into the early part of the 1960s.

While schools were going through the desegregation process, two other accountability movements were under way. The U.S. Department of Education commissioned a study titled *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966). Today this report is typically referred to as the *Coleman Report*.

The *Coleman Report* was commissioned by the Civil Rights Act. The purpose of the study was to see what inequities, if any, were present in the facilities, curricula,

teachers, and, ultimately, the educational attainment produced by institutions around the country. The *Coleman Report* noted that U.S. schools were, in fact, segregated, affecting African-American students the most. The study also reported that facilities between racial groups were woefully disproportionate and that the achievement of students between different racial and ethnic demographics was also drastically different, with White students outperforming minority students in all testing categories with the exception of one, a minor subcategory in demographic breakdown. Although the *Coleman Report* did not recommend policy or legislative action, its conclusion was clear: Public education catered to a select demographic, mainly White students, with minority students being pushed aside.

President Johnson's administration, through his famous "War on Poverty," produced the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The ESEA provided financial assistance to the poorest school districts across the United States. Federal money would be supplied to states; the states would then distribute the funds to local school districts. The intent of the law was to level the playing field so that low-socioeconomic-status students could get the resources they needed to perform beside their traditionally high-scoring peers from suburban America.

Few federal educational initiatives were proposed during the 1970s – however, the 1980s were different, beginning with *A Nation at Risk* (1983). The report was a damning indictment of the American educational system; it noted how drastically American scores had fallen in comparison to other industrialized nations. *A Nation at Risk* described decline in all content areas: reading, mathematics, writing, and science. Unlike previous government educational reports, this one included recommendations,

such as extending the school year and school day, working toward foreign language proficiency, changes in curricular content, increased teacher pay, and supporting students who were gifted, exceptional, or disenfranchised.

In the early 1990s, educational accountability revolved around outcomes-based education (OBE). According to Spady, "Outcome-Based Education means clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences" (1994, p. 12). OBE is rooted in the theory that the style of teaching does not matter as much as the outcome that should be expected by the learner. OBE is seen as the start of the standards-based movement. During the 1990s, the U.S. Congress also enacted *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (1994). Accountability measures and set targets for everything from graduation rates to competencies in English, mathematics, and science can be found in this legislation. Also introduced was the idea that schools should be accountable for the social ills of their communities. Goals 2000 included provisions to ensure that schools offered learning environments that were disciplined and free of drugs and alcohol. It also established the first National Standards of Arts Education.

The 2000s saw the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB 2001), which implemented teacher quality ratings, educational standards for content areas, and regular testing of students, the results of which were made public. The law established benchmarks by which schools and districts were expected to improve. If a school did not improve after repeated measures of student achievement, the government could recommend staff realignments, curricular changes, or, in extreme cases, closure of school

buildings. Schools or states choosing not to participate in the testing or requirements set forth in NCLB would be stripped of federal educational funding.

In 2015, NCLB was replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act, which transferred most control over teacher and district accountability to the states. In addition, the federal government continued to keep in place provisions by which states had to intervene with districts that repeatedly had poor scores on standardized assessments. The law also recognized that states, not the federal government, would decide on school and district ratings and the criteria for establishing those ratings.

School Climate

The National School Climate Council (2007) defined school climate as "the quality and character of school life. It is based on patterns of school life experiences and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning and leadership practices, and organizational structures" (p. 5). To quantify the experience of climate within a building, Halpin and Croft (1963) developed the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire, which is not a self-reported questionnaire; instead, it relies on the perceptions of others to categorize a climate as *open* (open, autonomous, and controlled) or *closed* (familiar, paternal, and closed). The categories or dimensions of the OCDQ include disengagement, hindrance, esprit, intimacy, aloofness, production emphasis, thrust, and consideration. From the scoring of these categories, six types of climates emerged. See Table 1 for a description of these types of climates (Croft & Halpin, 1962).

Table 1

The Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire's Six Types of Climate

Climate	Description
Open	Energetic, lively, and goal-oriented climate
Autonomous	Members of the group provide direction; little control from leadership
Controlled	Social needs are suppressed; group is task oriented
Familiar	A highly social climate with little task or goal completion
Paternal	The leader decides the course of action and prevents others from fostering their own ideas
Closed	Members are doing things without direction, going through the motions at all levels

Researchers and reformers alike have examined the relationships between climate and leadership, achievement, and teacher retention. Several studies have been conducted with regard to school climate and the impact it has on different areas of public education. Those studies are outlined in the following sections.

School Climate and Leadership

School climate has been understood as the ability of the principal or school leader impacts the climate of a building. Dahlkamp (2013) used a mixed-method study that relied on thematic qualitative coding and surveying techniques to examine the relationship between principal self-efficacy (as measured by the Principal Sense of Efficacy Scale) and school climate (as measured by the OCI). For qualitative purposes, one open-ended question was added to the survey for teachers who had left their specific campus at the end of the year. No statistically significant relationship was found among the variables of efficacy, climate, and retention.

This finding differs from the research findings of Gülsen and Gülenay (2014), who examined the relationship between principal leadership and school climate. They surveyed high school teachers of an all-girls vocational high school. Although teachers

were not pleased with the academic functioning of the school, the principal was found to have a large *positive* impact on the school climate.

Similarly, Winter (1987) interviewed a random sample of 32 volunteers from six high schools in a midwestern city. Seven climate notations were observed. The two most common items were that (a) the principal is the prime driver of climate and (b) staff cohesiveness creates a stronger climate. The amount of time an employee works with an administrator (Wheelock, 2005) was found to have no statistically significant relationship. In fact, inverse relationships were found: The longer a teacher worked with an administrator, the less openly the teacher viewed the administrator, and the view of administrator support was also less. The area of school leadership and school climate has been well researched. It appears that the school leader or principal can impact the climate of a building.

School Climate and Student Achievement

The relationship between school climate and student achievement is another area of research interest. Marten (2012) examined this relationship. The researcher concluded, through a series of pre/post-tests from third through fifth grades, that a positive school climate is an essential factor in student achievement. One major conclusion was that schools need sustained effort in maintaining a positive school culture and climate for students and teachers. While school improvement does not happen overnight, a shared vision must be developed, with the principal or leader leading the way and with staff members buying in and sharing the responsibility to forge a better and more effective school climate.

Similar results were found in Florida (Doyal, 2009) upon examination of Florida standardized test scores and school climate. Doyal found a positive correlation between mean Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test scores in elementary, middle, and high schools and the mean score of school climate as measured by the School Effectiveness Questionnaire Teacher Version. A recommendation for further research was made for a correlation between socioeconomic status and school climate and achievement. Results from Michigan (Feiten, 2010) concluded that students perform equally well on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program in an open or a closed school climate as measured by the OCDQ (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). A correlation between achievement and climate was not found when examining academic performance and climate in Alaska (Ermold, 2011). The research on school climate and student performance or academic achievement has been mixed. Some results indicate a statistically significant correlation, whereas other results indicate a mixed correlation or null correlation when examining student achievement and school climate.

School Climate and Teacher Retention

Another area of educational research focuses on school climate and teacher retention. Lambeth (2008) researched high-poverty schools and how best to retain teachers with persistence and high self-efficacy. A statistically high correlation, $r = .31$, $p < .05$, was noted when examining the literacy climate of a building (the ability of a student to acquire basic and complex reading skills) and the retention of teachers. Similar results were also found in a qualitative case study (Boutelle, 2009) of eight new teachers who had been employed for either six or seven years at an urban Phoenix, Arizona, high school. Two themes relating to school climate included support systems and working

conditions. These factors, the literature has suggested, were two that kept teachers in the profession in an urban high school setting, which many teachers tend to leave. These two studies suggested the importance of climate to teacher retention. More research is needed to examine the full extent of the relationship between climate and teacher retention.

In Texas, Eberhard, Reinhardt-Mondragon, Stottlemyer, and Corpus Christi South Texas Research and Development Center (2000) examined a climate of professional development for novice teachers. Teachers with three or fewer years of experience were surveyed to examine their decision to leave or continue in education. Second-career educators over 35 years of age and those with emergency certifications were most likely to leave the profession; conversely, those who identified teaching as their career in high school had the highest rate of returning for the following school year and continuing with their careers (Eberhard et al., 2000). Survey respondents who indicated a desire to leave the profession indicated the following reasons, in order, with the highest concern listed first (Eberhard et al., 2000): (a) student behavior, (b) administrative recognition, (c) duties other than teaching, (d) salary, (e) administrative support, (f) teaching assignment, (g) paperwork, (h) special education requirements, and (i) class size. It should be noted that the preceding reasons include intrinsic and extrinsic factors.

More recent quantitative research (Kurtz, 2017) found similar results regarding teacher retention. Intrinsic motivational factors of teachers likely to return to teaching the following year included factors related to school climate and organizational characteristics (administrator relationship, teacher-to-teacher relationships, etc.) as well as the demographic information of the survey participant. In fact, 30 percent of teachers with five or fewer years of experience planned to leave their current schools. In contrast,

among teachers with 20 or more years of experience, 85.3 percent planned to return to their current schools (Kurtz, 2017). Other demographic factors, including gender, age, and education level, revealed no statistically significant results. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found that males and females have differing intrinsic motivation on teaching. However, the effects of this size are relatively small as calculated by Cohen's D. The motivation of students was found to be an indicator of teacher burnout, which can lead to educators leaving the profession.

Often, extrinsic motivational factors are viewed as the reason teachers continue to stay with their profession: Media often point to a favorable work schedule, a somewhat consistent salary, benefits, retirement, and paid holidays (Viadero, 2008) as reasons why most teachers continue with the profession. However, school climate and intrinsic characteristics that are inclusive of school climate can be a determining factor (Eberhard et al., 2000; Kurtz, 2017; Lambeth, 2008) in why professionals choose to stay with teaching, regardless of their age, race, gender, ethnicity, or educational level.

A Global Perspective on School Climate

School climate has been a topic of global research and debate. Studies in Taiwan (Cheng, 2009), Ireland (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016), and Spain (Egido Gálvez, Fernández Cruz, & Fernández Díaz, 2016) are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Teacher turnover in Taiwan is one of the biggest issues facing the country's educational system, with 65 percent of kindergarten teachers turning over yearly (Cheng, 2009). Cheng's survey research, one-way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression methods of analysis suggest that there is a relationship between school climate categories and teacher burnout or intention to leave. In fact, teachers in Taiwan most at

risk for leaving the profession were those with little experience (fewer than five years) and those who felt emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of influence in their schools (Cheng, 2009). Cheng suggested that educational institutions examine how to make teachers, particularly kindergarten teachers, feel a larger sense of personal accomplishment at work (Cheng, 2009). Perhaps recognition can come in the form of employee to employee, administrator to employee, and community to employee interactions, all of which relate to school climate.

Researchers in Ireland examined how climate impacts a teacher's efficacy in inclusive classrooms (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016). Teachers in Ireland were surveyed to examine their perceptions of managing difficult student behavior, an issue that has been linked to school climate in the United States (Douglas, 2010; Lambeth, 2008; Smith, 2009; Winter, 1987). In Ireland, it was noted that the teacher's view of school climate impacted his or her willingness to ask for assistance and seek help through administrator-to-teacher or teacher-to-teacher supports (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016). In fact, researchers noted that

> Teachers' perceptions of a supportive school climate related positively to their teaching efficacy for inclusion, in turn influencing their ratings of the severity of and their confidence in managing commonly experienced challenging behaviors in inclusive classrooms. It is important to understand teacher beliefs and perceptions in order to improve efficacy. (p. 604)

Spanish schools have been operating under the quality management style for several years (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016). Quality management refers to the constant need and desire for a school to seek improvement systems with the aim to improve

student and school performance (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016). Researchers studied the impact these management measures have had on the climate of schools. Primary and secondary schools were included, yielding mixed results. Teachers noted that the quality management method could contribute to a positive climate of a building, while others indicated a need for more community involvement in the process. Furthermore, schools that committed to quality management reform for a greater period of time noted a stronger relationship to improved or healthy school climate (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016). Similar results were found when examining the implementation of total quality management in three school districts in Pennsylvania. Lewis (1996) found that the districts implementing and staying with the total quality management system for the longest period of time experienced the most employee and team satisfaction when compared to districts that changed educational philosophies or interests. In short, both studies suggested that the climates of schools and districts are improved when the schools or districts identify and consistently implement a system for an extended period of time (Hosford & O'Sullivan, 2016; Lewis, 1996).

Employee Characteristics: Motivation, Engagement, and Commitment

Popular and scholarly writers have published on the characteristics of employees and leaders who achieve desired outcomes. Two such authors have framed employee commitment through two different lenses. Daniel Pink has authored two applicable books on motivation and the leadership dance of getting others engaged with and committed to a common goal (2009, 2012). Kevin Kruse, from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, has helped to lead Fortune 500 organizations, companies that appear in America's Fastest-Growing Private Companies, and companies that have been named among the top 100

workplaces. His belief is that an engaged employee is one who is more likely to work toward and achieve a desired outcome (Kruse, 2012).

Drive, by Daniel Pink (2009), described three categories of individual motivation: (a) Motivation 1.0 (basic needs), (b) Motivation 2.0 (rewards and punishments), and (c) Motivation 3.0 (intrinsic motivation). In Pink's judgment, public education and most traditional work environments operate in Motivation 2.0; that is, the employee is given a task and asked to complete it. If the employee completes the task, he or she is given a reward: payment. When the task is not completed, the employee is punished, either through disciplinary means or termination of employment. Pink argues that today's world needs more Motivation 3.0, in which employees are motivated to find innovative ways to complete monotonous, boring, or mundane tasks. Pink argues that a more motivated workforce will allow employees to find purpose and meaning in their work. Many employees indicate that intrinsic motivational factors impact their commitment to their work (Douglas, 2010; Jo, 2014; Pink, 2009; Smith, 2009).

Pink (2012) later expanded on his previous work and explained what leaders need to motivate and lead their staff members in order to address the challenges their business or organization faces, all of which comes down to one thing: sales. Pink notes that sales are everywhere today—that globalization has made some items obsolete and items that many use today, such as cell phones and other technology, a never-thought-of hot commodity. Like it or not, the ability of a leader to sell is a major factor in his or her success as a leader. Pink believed that the new sales style of today has eight factors:

1. *Entrepreneurship, elasticity, and ed-med.* Everyone who is employed, regardless of his or her specific craft or career, is being asked to do more. In

education, teachers can be overwhelmed with new mandates, new obligations, and perceived lack of support (Dunlap & Alva, 1999).

2. *From caveat emptor to caveat vendor.* Salesmen are typically seen as car salesmen, ready to prey on the meek. However, today the buyer has more power, with online ratings and information at one's fingertips. Today, the Department of Education provides consumers an avenue to compare schools through the school performance profile (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2017). Schools are no longer above the sales game.
3. *Attunement.* Attunement is the ability of the seller to place himself or herself in the buyer's shoes and to understand what the buyer wants. In public education, teachers may place themselves in the community's shoes by understanding the diverse needs of the community and seeing themselves as playing a role in shaping the economic and social future of their region.
4. *Buoyancy.* Buoyancy is the ability of a person to bounce back after repeated rejections. Public educators feel this through repeated accountability measures and scoring through achievement tests.
5. *Clarity.* Clarity is an understanding of what an individual is getting should the person decide to purchase a product. In education, numerous studies have found that sustained initiatives for a longer period of time garner great commitment from employees and a better understanding of the global mission, while also improving school climate (Egido Gálvez et al., 2016; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Lewis, 1996).

6. *Pitch.* Pitch is the ability of a seller to communicate the vision and mission of an organization or corporation. Pitch has become important in public education as various educational entities seek students to increase enrollment and thus funding for their institutions, private or public.
7. *Improvise.* Improvise is the ability of the seller to change and adapt as the buyer's needs and desires change and adapt. For example, students and parents are looking for more hands-on learning through STEAM activities and through online learning platforms. Educational institutions can no longer rely on the monopoly they once had.
8. *Service.* Ensuring that an attitude of service comes through to the seller is key to success. Several educational studies have noted the importance of seeing teaching as a duty, service, or calling (Abler, 2002; Bosso, 2014; Collie et al., 2011; Green, 2011; Jo, 2014; Winter, 1987). These teacher-specific studies are reviewed in greater detail later in this chapter.

A relationship between employee motivation and commitment has been established in the health care field (Altindis, 2011). Findings indicate that commitment plays a role in employee motivation. Altindis (2011) further explained that committed employees have led to better long-term results for companies in relation to retention, company success, and productivity. A study of athletes (Zahariadis, Tsorbatzoudis, & Alexandris, 2006) established a strong link between intrinsic motivation and commitment. In addition, a study of parochial school teachers (PERHLA, 1986) had two major conclusions: (a) motivation impacts commitment and (b) teacher commitment is related to teacher performance.

Kruse (2012) defined engagement as the emotion employees have toward an organization's goals. He noted that engagement at work is at an all-time low, with only 45 percent of the workforce identifying themselves as "satisfied" at work. He further reports that building an engaged workforce helps good leaders rise to become great leaders. Kruse noted that even with a failing strategy, through good work with engaged employees, success can still occur.

To achieve a more engaged employee workforce, Kruse (2012) outlined the following process:

- Survey staff on how engaged they are within the organization. A survey should not be done once; it should be done several times. It will help management understand how employees are feeling for a period of time, not just at one moment.
- Promote two-way communication: Allow employees to share ideas freely with their leaders to develop systems that work. Not only will their ideas improve the organization and the systems structure; it will also let them know that they play an important role within the organization.
- Develop a leadership team within an organization, and have the team solicit ideas on how best to improve specific areas and specific systems within the organization. Meet with people regularly about their goals. Once management gets employee feedback or items to act on, they need to act on them.
- Management can send notes of appreciation to staff members to acknowledge the important contributions employees make to an organization. This could be

done in several different ways: a note of thanks, employee recognition in front of the peer group, or a simple lunch.

- The organization needs to set a big goal and continue work toward attaining it. The goal should be something that has a 50 percent chance of happening. Staff should be updated on how they are progressing in relation to the goal.

Kruse concluded that by following these steps, organizations can begin to build a more engaged workforce, while increasing productivity and retention.

Engagement and commitment have been researched in business and human resources scholarship. Louison (2007) surveyed 232 full-time employees to understand their engagement and the relationship it had to their commitment. He noted that "as employee engagement increased, employees' satisfaction and commitment also increased" (p. 67). More recent management research has established that organizational commitment is also linked to engagement (Burns, 2016). In fact, Burns found "a strong positive linear relationship between organizational commitment and levels of employee engagement, meaning increases in organizational commitment scores were associated with increases in engagement scores" (p. 80). Burns established a link between employee commitment and employee engagement.

Given the apparent relationship between motivation and engagement with employee commitment (Altindis, 2011; Burns, 2016; Louison, 2007; PERHLA, 1986), continued research is needed on employee commitment, particularly in the educational field, to ensure a larger portion of the population begins to choose education as a viable career and remains in the profession, particularly in low-income areas, which are most impacted by teacher turnover and shortage.

Studies have also shown that commitment toward an organization does not always yield results that employers or customers seek (Alexeeff, 2001; Czekajewski 2003; Dogar, 2014). Czekajewski (2003) examined the relationship between commitment and customer perception of service quality. The researcher found a negative correlation that indicated that affective commitment does not impact service quality in any way. The relationship between customer satisfaction was linked more to emotion and brand attachment than it was to employee commitment. Dougar (2014) found that commitment has a direct link to the amount of experience employees have with their organizations. Dougar also found that the age of the employee directly impacted commitment. So, while educational level and gender had no impact on commitment, the age of the employee and the amount of time the employee was with the organization did impact his or her commitment. In simpler terms, the longer employees are with the organization, the more their commitment increases. Commitment and employee emotions are not static; in fact, they change frequently (Alexeeff, 2001). It is difficult to determine that one specific emotion or characteristic is the root cause or variable that directly impacts all employees the same way.

Teacher Commitment

Several studies have been completed in the area of teacher commitment. These studies have included social–emotional learning (Collie et al., 2011), teacher efficacy (Abler, 2002), special education (Green, 2011), and teacher emotions (Jo, 2014; Winter, 1987). These studies are reviewed in more detail below.

Teacher Collaboration and Teacher Commitment

Quantitative research conducted in British Columbia examined social–emotional learning and various aspects of climate, including collaboration, student relations, school resources, decision-making, and instructional innovation (Collie et al., 2011). These climate areas were then studied for a relationship to commitment. Only student relations and collaboration with staff had a statistically significant relationship to teacher commitment (Collie et al., 2011). Abler (2002) found collaboration to be a positive factor in teacher commitment in a study of 30 Illinois high schools. Teachers responded to a questionnaire that calculated organizational commitment, teacher efficacy, and teaching experience. Factors of academic performance were also examined; these included graduation rates, composite ACT scores, and state test scores. While relationships were found among these variables, the relationships were weak or moderate at best. The most conclusive relationship was found with components of organizational commitment; teachers identified collaboration and a positive sense of belonging as having an impact on their commitment toward the school organization.

A qualitative analysis of veteran teachers in Louisiana by Washington (2017) established factors for increased teacher commitment. Those factors include treatment by superiors, the atmosphere of the building in which they work with their peers, and the connectedness they feel towards their students.

Special Education Teachers and Commitment

One area of teacher commitment with a limited research base involves commitment from special education teachers. Green (2011) adapted a questionnaire previously developed by Billingsley and Cross (1992), adding two questions to the

original survey to ascertain future teaching plans of the respondents. The purpose of Billingsley and Cross's research was to examine the issues related to commitment of special education teachers and to identify ways to retain those teachers. Billingsley and Cross noted that teachers seek to leave special education for the following reasons, in order of correlation (highest first): administrative support, workload issues, salary issues, paperwork issues, class size issues, lack of parent involvement, negative school climate, inadequate resources, lack of respect or prestige, student discipline issues, lack of opportunities to participate in decision making, lack of time to interact with colleagues, lack of community support, negative teacher–teacher relationships, and negative teacher–student relationships. It is important to note that collaboration, or lack thereof, is identified as a reason for why teachers leave the profession or have a desire to leave the profession.

Teacher Emotions and Commitment

Three studies examined the relationship of teacher emotions and commitment. The first study (Jo, 2014) examined teacher relationships and teacher commitment. The variables Jo examined included engagement with students, colleagues, principals, and local educational authorities. Cognitive emotional theory was applied as a theoretical framework to discover direct and indirect relationships of teacher commitment. The OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979) was used to develop a new survey tool. Jo's (2014) study took place in six metropolitan cities with 240 elementary teachers and 208 middle school teachers. Teacher-student relationships were indirectly linked to teacher commitment. A direct association between colleague relationships and teacher commitment was noted.

A second study (Watts, 1997) surveyed 504 teachers from 29 schools in West Virginia to examine the relationship between organizational health as measured by the OHI-E (Hoy et al., 1991) and commitment as measured by the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979). Achievement data were compiled from state testing scores. Statistically, a significant relationship was found between sixth grade students and school health. Another statistically significant relationship was found at sixth grade between academic emphasis and achievement. At the third-grade level, between collegial leadership and achievement, a statistically significant relationship was found. In total, a significant relationship was found between the combined measures of health, commitment, and achievement at the sixth-grade student level but not at the third-grade student level.

More recently Sun (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of teacher commitment. The results of this study established a framework of influence on teacher commitment: student learning, school leadership, and a sense of shared values were all found to have an impact on teacher commitment. In fact, it was established that the path of school leadership, the planning the school leader has for his or her institution, leads to student learning, which results in a shared vision and thus committed teachers.

On the basis of the preceding studies (Jo, 2014; Watts, 1997; Sun, 2015), it is reasonable to conclude that both teacher and student emotions impact teacher commitment. Teacher collaboration (Abler, 2002; Collie et al., 2011; Green, 2011; Jo, 2014; Watts, 1997) was identified as a chief factor when examining why teachers identify as committed to their positions.

Community Involvement in Schools

Community involvement in public schools can be defined in several ways. Some would characterize parent involvement as participation with the local Parent Teacher Association, conducting the bake sale, and helping out on picture day. Preston (2013) concluded that a disconnect exists between how the community understands involvement and how educational professionals do. Regardless of how one defines involvement, Levin (1970) explained that the lack of community involvement in schools can lead to educational leaders making decisions and implementing policy not necessarily reflective of what the community wants. Shaposka (1997) researched this topic further and found the following:

> Four school district communities indicated that high community involvement school districts have a lower percentage of (1) minority populations, (2) single parent households, (3) poor families receiving monetary Assistance to Families with Dependent Children, and (4) minority students. These high community involvement school districts also have (5) a higher average daily school attendance and (6) a higher percentage of students seeking a post high school education. (p. 129)

These findings indicate the need for strong community involvement in schools that find themselves with high-poverty populations.

Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991) noted a correlation between community involvement in schools and an increase in student achievement. While teachers did not like the pressure or feeling of overreaching parents, these parents were effective in increasing student achievement. These results were similar to the institutional

vulnerability found for New Jersey educators, where again community pressure resulted in increased student achievement (Hoy et al., 1998). The ability of a few parents or community members to impact or implement change defines institutional vulnerability as it relates to the OCI (Hoy et al., 2002). A key conclusion is that when teachers feel pressure from outside forces (community), they turn to their colleagues for support, which improves the climate of the building (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). When teachers feel support from their community, their commitment increases (Berrafato, 2017; Washington 2017).

Teacher Commitment: A Global Review

Teacher commitment has been researched in different contexts in various countries. The following studies are reviewed below in more detail: In Japan, the commitment of teachers to accept a major change initiative (Suda, 2010); in Brazil, the commitment of intervention providers to implement early literacy interventions (da Silva, 2010); and finally, teacher commitment to academic achievement in Nigerian schools that teach adolescents (Okafor, 2010).

During the early 2000s, a small rural school in Japan undertook a major curricular change as it implemented English learning as a major portion of each child's academic day. Early in the process, another initiative was implemented as additional educational technologies were introduced to the classroom. As a result of these two initiatives, several experienced teachers left the school and, while both initiatives were introduced, neither appeared to be successful and teacher commitment was low (Suda, 2010). The building principal was reassigned to another building, and a more experienced principal was brought in. The new principal brought in parent volunteers, a revitalized curriculum,

and additional personnel. Teacher commitment to the new initiatives improved once teacher training was instituted, and voluntary and involuntary collaboration became the norm (Suda, 2010). Suda concluded that shared responsibility, commitment to desired outcomes, and the leadership of building administrators are top qualities in generating employee commitment toward reforms.

In Brazil, the federal government requires schools to provide supplemental instruction or intervention for students who are struggling with literacy development. Schools are free to develop models to meet their students' needs; some choose to implement pull-out instruction, whereas some implement a supplementary model (da Silva, 2010). In both models, pull-out and supplementary, teachers and leaders demonstrated little commitment to interventions, as the centralized design of the intervention style was drafted and implemented with little teacher participation. In addition, teachers lacked training in proper intervention techniques on how to reach their most needy readers, which led to student and teacher frustration, resulting in decreased commitment toward literacy implementation (da Silva, 2010).

In Nigeria, a quantitative research study was conducted to determine which independent variable had the greatest impact on student achievement: student motivation, family, school, or community support (Okafor, 2010). School support was determined to be the strongest indicator, statistically, of student achievement. Thus strong school supports lead to high school achievement (Okafor, 2010). Student achievement has been found to be an indicator of teacher commitment (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009). Developing an environment in which teachers experience commitment to school supports will, in turn, lead to increased student achievement, which will then influence teacher

commitment (Okafor, 2010). Previous research found educational performance to be a determining factor in the climate of a school (Hoy et al., 1991).

School Climate and Teacher Commitment

Few studies have examined the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. Smith's (2009) research in Alabama examined school climate and teacher commitment in 34 elementary schools. A total of 522 teachers were surveyed with two previously developed instruments, the OCI and the OCQ. Acting as independent variables were four subcategories of organizational climate: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability. These independent variables were compared to the dependent variable of organizational commitment. It was found that school climate and teacher commitment do have a relationship. The highest statistical results were from teacher professionalism. It should be noted that socioeconomic status was used as a control variable.

School climate and teacher commitment were again studied in Alabama approximately one year later (Douglas, 2010). Sixty-seven elementary schools participated. A total of 1,353 teachers were surveyed using the OCI and the OCQ shortened form. Again, the independent variables were the four subcategories of organizational climate: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability. These independent variables were compared to the dependent variable of organizational commitment. It was found that school climate and teacher commitment do have a relationship. The highest statistical results were from professional teacher behavior and teacher professionalism. Collegial leadership was also found to be a predictor of commitment.

Both studies (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009) noted a relationship of climate to commitment, with teacher professional behavior (teacher professionalism) providing the highest statistical relationship, $r = .79$, $p < .01$, in Smith's (2009) research and the highest statistical relationship, $r = .46$, $p < .01$, from Douglas (2010). A limitation of these studies was that only elementary teachers participated. More research is needed to establish climate and commitment relationships with secondary school teachers. In fact, Smith (2009) recommended further research:

> The current study was the result of a sample of only elementary school teachers. The study should be expanded to include middle and high school teachers. Also included in the study should be the demographics of the teacher with educational experience intervals. (p. 58)

Douglas (2010) expressed similar sentiments, noting that elementary teachers may look for different qualities in their colleagues than their secondary counterparts do. Thus some areas of climate may not matter to elementary teachers but may matter greatly to secondary teachers.

Population selection in both of these studies can be viewed as a drawback. Both studies (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009) used convenience samples, which have been known to cause Type I and Type II errors, which can cause results to be overstated or understated (Fife, 2013).

Thus this research addressed the recommendation for further study by including secondary teachers and adding demographic questions that would ascertain the impact of teacher instructional level on climate and commitment.

Summary

Through extensive research on school climate (Hoy & Feldman, 1987; Hoy et al., 1996, 2002; Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993), Hoy noted the importance of a healthy climate, which tends to be an open school climate. In the construct of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Homans, 1961), a mutual benefit was noted between employees feeling an employer is committed and a desire by those employees to remain within the organization or express organizational commitment. Committed employees stay in an organization that displays collaboration (Abler, 2002; Collie et al., 2011). Teacher emotions impact student emotions (Jo, 2014; Watts, 1997), which can also determine the commitment a teacher has toward the school organization. Research suggests that the school climate–teacher commitment relationship is an area worth exploring in order to prevent quality educators from exiting the educational profession, especially during a time of educational accountability.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study examined the influence between school climate and teacher commitment in 15 school districts in Pennsylvania. Previous research that examined the relationship of school climate and teacher commitment in elementary schools in Alabama (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009) was expanded to include secondary educators. A pilot study group was convened to test the reliability of the instruments used for the study. It was prudent to pilot these instruments, as it was the first known time the research instruments were used for middle and high school educators. Survey participants were asked to respond to two instruments, the OCI and the OCQ. Demographic questions were also added prior to the surveys, which determined the grade level taught, participants' gender, and years of experience. Cronbach's alpha analyses were performed through pilot group testing to ensure the reliability of the instrumentation.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers are leaving the teaching profession at a high rate. For example, studies have found that eight percent of teachers leave the profession in the United States each year (Learning Policy Institute, 2013) and that 17 percent of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Most districts enjoy high teacher retention rates, but a higher rate of free or reduced-price lunch is correlated with higher turnover (Westervelt, 2016).

Pennsylvania has been experiencing teacher shortages and retention issues. In the past three years, 61.4 percent fewer teachers have attained certification in Pennsylvania,

and fewer college students are choosing teaching as a career (Stuhldreher, 2015). Teachers are leaving the profession, particularly in the most poverty-stricken areas. To begin to address the causes behind poor teacher retention in Pennsylvania, this study determined the commitment a teacher feels toward his or her organization in Title I qualifying schools in Pennsylvania.

Research Questions

The research questions and hypotheses for this study follow:

1. What is the influence of school climate on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1a. What is the influence of achievement pres on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1b. What is the influence of professional teacher behavior on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1c. What is the influence of collegial leadership on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1d. What is the influence of institutional vulnerability on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

2. Are there differences among teachers' demographic information and teachers' commitment to their schools?

H0: School climate has no influence on teacher commitment.

H0: Teachers' demographic information has no influence on teachers' commitment to their schools.

Population and Sample Population

The total number of classroom teachers employed in Pennsylvania has steadily declined over the years. According to the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (2017), 129,618 classroom teachers were employed during the 2010 school year; that number had decreased by 2011 to 127,713, and it decreased further in 2012 to 123,668 teachers being employed statewide. Most recently, in the 2016 school year, 119,790 classroom teachers were employed. Teachers in Title I school districts across the commonwealth of Pennsylvania were surveyed to determine the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment toward the school organization. Teachers were chosen from Title I schools in Pennsylvania that had poverty rates at 40 percent or greater as determined by the number of students qualifying for free or reduced-priced lunch. Information can be obtained by accessing the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2017), from which a data file can be downloaded that outlines the total percentage of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch, among other demographic information, including race, gender, age, and grade levels served. Once downloaded, a sort by free or reduced-price lunch is possible. Districts that have less than the 40 percent margin were eliminated. These districts were eliminated from participation and consideration because they do not have as big of an issue with teacher retention as high-poverty (greater than 50 percent low socioeconomic status) schools do (Westervelt, 2016). These districts were also eliminated as it keeps within the parameters established in the previous completed research by Smith and Douglas (2009, 2010). Future researchers would be able to compare results and discuss

similarities and differences between Alabama and Pennsylvania. Those districts remaining were invited by random selection to participate in the study.

Researchers Smith (2009) and Douglas (2010) recommended that their research be expanded to include secondary educators. Smith (2009) presented the idea that middle and high school teachers be included as well as their experience intervals. Douglas (2010) took the recommendation a step further in his research when he noted the potential differences that may exist between elementary and secondary educators. Areas of climate may not matter to elementary teachers but may matter greatly to secondary teachers. Thus, this research accepted the recommendation for further study by including secondary teachers and adding demographic questions that would ascertain the impact of teacher instructional level on climate and commitment.

Instrument

The two instruments used for this study were the same instruments used recently to compare school climate and teacher commitment in Alabama (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009). The surveys were combined and given in succession during a single setting. This study did not replicate previous research; instead, it expanded the research. However, it is prudent to use the same tools for possible comparison of data and future research. Furthermore, the statistical analyses completed through correlations and ANOVA analyses are historically accepted peer-reviewed practices that have been extensively tested (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). Additional variables were added through demographic questions, specifically grade level taught and teacher experience. The research instruments are explained in detail below. Permission was obtained through Dr. Hoy to use the OCI. The OCQ is publicly available and can be used without consent from

the researchers. The Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board approved both research instruments.

Organizational Climate Index (OCI)

Hoy et al. (2002) developed the OCI to quantify the climate of schools. This instrument combines two previously developed instruments, the OCDQ (Croft & Halpin, 1962) and the OHI (Hoy et al., 1991). The OCDQ is a 42-statement questionnaire used to determine the perceptions of faculty members as they relate to principal leadership, teacher-to-teacher behavior, and principal-to-teacher behavior (Hoy et al., 1991). The OHI is best summarized as a tool to determine the cohesiveness of professionals with a school's purpose. OHI cohesiveness is broken down into the subcategories of institutional integrity, collegial leadership, resource influence, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis (Hoy et al., 1991). These subcategories are examined after the 37-statement Likert-type survey is reviewed. The OCI is used to measure the following four categories of organizational climate (Hoy et al., 2002): (a) principal leadership, (b) teacher professionalism, (c) achievement pres for students to perform academically, and (d) vulnerability to the community.

From the previously recognized work of the OCDQ (Croft & Halpin, 1962), a new survey was constructed to measure the organizational climate of elementary schools, called the Organizational Climate Description for Elementary Schools (OCDQ-RE), and of secondary schools, called the Organizational Climate Description for Secondary Schools (OCDQ-RS; Hoy et al., 1991). The OCDQ-RE has subtests that, when tested, produce relatively high reliability ratings (see Table 2). The OCDQ-RS also produces high reliability ratings, as reported in Table 3.

Table 2

OCDQ-RE Subtests and Reliability Ratings

Subtest	Alpha
Supportive Principal Behavior	.94
Directive Principal Behavior	.88
Restrictive Principal Behavior	.81
Collegial Teacher Behavior	.87
Intimate Teacher Behavior	.83
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	.78

Table 3

OCDQ-RS Subtests and Reliability Ratings

Subtest	Alpha **α**
Supportive Principal Behavior	.91
Directive Principal Behavior	.87
Engaged Teacher Behavior	.85
Intimate Teacher Behavior	.71
Frustrated Teacher Behavior	.85

Another version of the OCDQ is the OHI (Hoy et al., 1991). Like the OCDQ, the OHI has an elementary version (OHI-E) and a secondary version (OHI). The OHI tests the climate of buildings through a survey that is divided into the following subtests: Institutional Integrity, Initiating Structure, Consideration, Principal Influence, Resource Support, Morale, and Academic Emphasis. Like its counterpart (OCDQ-RE/RS), the OHI produces high reliability ratings, as noted in Table 4 (Hoy et al., 1991).

Table 4

OHI Subtests and Reliability Ratings

Subtest	Alpha **α**
Institutional Integrity	.91
Initiating Structure	.89
Consideration	.90
Principal Influence	.87
Resource Support	.95
Morale	.92
Academic Emphasis	.93

The OHI-E also tests the climate of buildings through a survey that is divided into the following subtests: Institutional Integrity, Collegial Leadership, Resource Influence, Teacher Affiliation, and Academic Emphasis. Like the OHI, the OHI-E produces high reliability ratings, which are reflected in Table 5.

Advantages of both tools should be noted. The OCDQ provides a way for schools to measure the climate openness of the building, accomplished through the survey of teacher perceptions of relationships of principals to teachers and of teachers to other teachers. A drawback is that students are not factored into these results. The OHI does factor students into results. The OHI examines how the school impacts the community and how the school impacts students. One drawback is that it does not rely on teacher and principal interactions. Depending on the results of the survey, schools can be seen as healthy schools. It is desirable to have a healthy, open school.

Table 5

OHI-E Subtests and Reliability Ratings

Subtest	Alpha **α**
Institutional Integrity	.90
Collegial Leadership	.95
Resource Influence	.89
Teacher Affiliation	.94
Academic Emphasis	.87

To attain the desirable results of these two surveys, the OCDQ and OHI were combined to create a new survey called the OCI (Hoy et al., 2002). Subtests from the OCDQ (Supportive Principal Behavior, Directive Principal Behavior, and Restrictive Principal Behavior) were combined with subtest items from the OHI (Collegial Leadership) to form the new subtest of the OCI called Collegial Leadership (Hoy et al., 2002). OCDQ subtests of teacher behaviors were combined with OHI subtests at the teacher level, creating the OCI subtest of Teacher Professionalism. Hoy et al. used other dimensions of the OHI in which Institutional Level became Institutional Vulnerability and Administrative Level became Academic Press. In completed form, Hoy et al. crafted the OCI, which has four subtests: Collegial Leadership, Teacher Professionalism, Achievement Pres, and Institutional Vulnerability.

To develop the OCI, Hoy et al. (2002) placed 95 previously identified statements about school climate into categories of seven items each. The survey was piloted with a group of secondary school principals. After a factor analysis, with some statements

moved to different categories and others eliminated entirely, 27 items remained in the final survey, with three additional statements identified as filler statements.

The OCI is a 30-statement 4-point Likert-type survey with responses ranging from 1 (*rarely occurs*) to 4 (*very often occurs*). The alpha coefficients of reliability for each dimension were as follows: collegial principal behavior (.94), professional teacher behavior (.88), achievement pres (.92), and institutional vulnerability (.87). These coefficients were established by comparing a previously developed faculty trust survey to the newly formed OCI. A statistically significant relationship was hypothesized between school climate and faculty trust. This hypothesis was later shown to be statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level. Thus Hoy et al. (2002) concluded that the OCI is a "short, reliable, and valid measure of climate of a school" (p. 47). Table 6 matches the numbered survey statements listed in Appendix A to the research questions of this study.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ)

Mowday et al. (1979) created the OCQ. They sampled 2,563 persons, including public employees, classified university employees, hospital employees, bank employees, telephone company employees, scientists and engineers, auto company managers, psychiatric technicians, and retail management trainees. Results were examined for validity and reliability using the following: means and standard deviations, internal consistency reliability, test–retest reliability, and convergent validity.

Table 6

Organizational Climate Index Statements Related to Climate Categories and Research Questions

Research question	Statement numbers
1	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13,15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
1a	7, 11, 15, 16, 19
1b	8, 18, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29
1c	1, 3, 5, 10, 13, 20, 27
1d	2, 6, 9, 12, 26

Mowday et al. (1979) found the mean, standard deviation, and result distribution to be acceptable, meaning that the test appears to show an even distribution of reliable results. In nine separate samples, the mean score ranged from 4.0 to 6.1. It was noted that the mean score is typically above the midpoint on a Likert scale.

When internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach's alpha, consistently high results were produced for all nine of the tested subgroups. The results ranged from .82 to .93. When an item analysis was completed, results indicated a positive correlation with the total test score on the OCQ. Average correlations ranged from .36 to .72, with a median correlation of .64. Negatively worded statements correlated less with the total score when compared to the positively worded statements. Consequently, Mowday et al. (1979) concluded that the test was reliable.

Table 7 shows that when the OCQ was pilot tested for test–retest reliability (Mowday et al., 1979), favorable reliability (coefficients ranging from r = .53–.75) was shown when comparing original testing to longitudinal tests conducted with two subgroups.

Table 7

OCQ Test–Retest Reliability When Comparing Original Survey to Follow-Up Survey Results

	Retest *r*		
Group	2 month	3 month	4 month
Psychiatric technicians	.53	.63	.75
Retail management trainees	.72	.62	N/A

Mowday et al. (1979) reported it difficult to establish convergent validity in the early stage of piloting due to the lack of standards of comparison. Consequently, another set of standards was used to determine convergent validity. To test for convergent validity, the OCQ was applied based upon individuals' desire to remain with a company or organization. Respondents were asked to complete the Sources of Organizational Attachment Questionnaire, a 12-item scale designed to measure the perceived influence of various aspects of the job, work environment, and organization on the individual's desire to remain with or leave the organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Convergent validities across six diverse samples ranged from .63 to .74, with a median of .70. Thus convergent validity for the OCQ was found (Mowday et al., 1979).

The pioneers of the OCQ concluded that their survey produced similar validity and reliability results as other widely accepted behavioral instruments. Mowday et al. (1979) noted,

> Reasonably strong evidence was presented for the internal consistency and test–retest reliability of the OCQ. Compared with other measures, the items of the OCQ were found to be reasonably homogeneous and the results suggest that the overall measure of organizational commitment was relatively stable over short

> periods of time. Evidence was also presented of acceptable levels of convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity, particularly when compared against other similar attitude measures. (p. 243)

Researchers cautioned that although a shorter, nine-item form of the OCQ is available, the entire OCQ should be given unless time limitations prevent it. The full 15-question survey shown in Appendix B was used. With teacher commitment as the dependent variable, the OCQ applied to all the research questions and hypotheses of this study:

1. What is the influence of school climate on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1a. What is the influence of achievement pres on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1b. What is the influence of professional teacher behavior on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1c. What is the influence of collegial leadership on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

1d. What is the influence of institutional vulnerability on teacher commitment in Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania?

2. Do teacher demographics influence teachers' commitment to their schools?

H0: School climate has no influence on teacher commitment.

H0: Teachers' demographic information has no influence on teachers' commitment to their schools.

Data Analysis Procedures

Teachers were chosen from Title I schools in Pennsylvania that had poverty rates at 40 percent or greater as determined by the number of students qualifying for free or reduced-priced lunch. Information can be obtained by accessing the Pennsylvania Department of Education Web site (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2017), from which a data file can be downloaded that outlines the total percentage of students who receive free and reduced-price lunch, among other demographic information including: race, gender, age, and grade levels served. Once downloaded, a sort by free or reduced-price lunch is possible. Districts that have less than the 40 percent margin were eliminated. These districts were eliminated from participation and consideration because they do not have as big of an issue with teacher retention as high-poverty (greater than 50 percent low socioeconomic status) schools do (Westervelt, 2016). Those districts remaining were invited by random selection to participate in the study.

Letters were sent to districts seeking their participation in the study. Letters continued to be sent to districts until a large enough sample population was found. These letters can be found in Appendix D. For this study, a sample population of 1,000 teachers was obtained.

To avoid any possible risk, the researcher maintained confidentiality of all survey responses and protected the confidentiality of the districts that agreed to participate as locations for this study. The list of districts participating and their site approval letters were kept via electronic copy and hard copy in separate locations. Electronic copies were kept under password protection; hard copies were kept in a locked cabinet.

Participants had the ability of voluntarily entering their e-mail at the end of the survey, which entered them into a drawing for a $50.00 Amazon gift card. Once the survey window closed, the researcher randomly selected, through an online randomizer, the winning e-mail address and made contact with that individual. The gift card was sent via U.S. mail.

The initial two instruments, given in a single setting, along with follow-up communications, were e-mailed to nonrespondents via the Qualtrics Web site. Copies of the correspondence teachers received are included in Appendix D. Although professional and nonprofessional staff members alike impact school climate, teachers alone were surveyed, because they make up the largest professional population within a school and therefore would produce the greatest survey population numbers.

The Qualtrics platform was used for correspondence, survey administration, and gathering of results. Survey results were then transferred and analyzed using the SPSS software platform. Once transferred to the SPSS platform, the electronic information gathered through Qualtrics was destroyed. All respondent information was kept confidential. No identifying codes were placed on individual or district surveys. Survey participants needed to click agree at the bottom portion of the page in order to consent and move on to the survey.

To analyze the data set for Research Question 1 of the study, a Pearson product-moment correlation was used. The Pearson correlation helped to establish strength of influence between school climate and teacher commitment (Creswell 2014; Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). The Pearson correlation is used when determining the relationship between two variables. The Pearson correlation gave a score, and the association between

the two variables was noted by *r*. To understand the findings of Research Question 2, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. An ANOVA is used to find statically significant differences between the averages of independent variables (Creswell 2014; Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). This research used demographic information that included grade level taught (elementary, middle school and high school) and experience (1–10 years, 11–20 years, and 21+ years). An independent *t*-test was used to examine the difference in means between males and females.

Survey responses were confidential. The only identified participants were due to their voluntarily signing up for an Amazon gift card, which they did not have to do at the conclusion of the survey. Branch survey methods within Qualtrics ensured that the e-mail addresses and responses were separate from one another. The survey summative data are shared in chapter 4 of the study. However, no individual participant, building, or district is identified. The results will not be shared with anyone. All documentation for the research will be kept in a locked cabinet for a period of three years. Upon completion of the three years, the researcher will burn it. Reformatting the hard drive the files were saved on will also destroy electronic copies.

The Pilot Group

Before the study commenced, a pilot group was convened to determine the reliability of the instrumentation. The pilot group consisted of teachers who were known to the researcher. They had completed the survey, anonymously via the Qualtrics Web service. Once the results of the survey were obtained, they were exported to SPSS for further analysis.

The demographic breakdown of the pilot group was similar to the makeup of the teacher population in this school district. For example, as noted in Table 8, most teachers came from the elementary grades (52.8 percent), while the middle and high school populations were split at 22.6 percent and 24.5 percent, respectively.

Table 8

The Pilot Study Population by Teaching Assignment

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Elementary K–6	28	52.8	52.8	52.8
Middle/junior high 7–9	12	22.6	22.6	75.5
High 10–12	13	24.5	24.5	100.0
Total	53	100.0	100.0	

The gender breakdown, again, was similar to what the current demographics are in the district, with the population of teachers being predominately female (77.4 percent; Table 9). Since this study differed from previous research due to the addition of mid-level and high school level educators, it was important to test the reliability of the instrumentation. Cronbach's alphas were correlated for the areas of school climate as outlined by the OCI (Hoy et al. 2002). The pilot study produced high alpha numbers with collegial leadership, .86; institutional vulnerability, .75; professional teacher behavior, .88; and achievement pres, .79. The pilot study results were compared against the original results obtained during the validity testing of the OCI, which concluded a reliable instrument in Table 10.

Table 9

Gender Demographics of Pilot Study

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Male	12	22.6	22.6	22.6
Female	41	77.4	77.4	100.0
Total	53	100.0	100.0	

Table 10

Organizational Climate Index Alpha Comparison Across Studies

Variable	Hoy	Smith	Douglas	Pilot
Collegial leadership	.94	.87	.88	.86
Institutional vulnerability	.87	.65	.69	.75
Professional teacher behavior	.88	.82	.88	.88
Achievement pres	.92	.70	.75	.79

General statistical practice would indicate that reliability ratings of .75 or higher are indicative of reliable instrumentation (Creswell, 2014; Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). It should be noted that the two climate measures with the acceptable alpha ratings of .79 (achievement pres) and .75 (institutional vulnerability) had the least number of response statements within the survey, which may have led to a lower alpha rating (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). As all of the alphas calculated through Cronbach's alpha analysis were produced at a minimum of .75, it was determined that internal consistency was present within the measures; the instrument appeared to be reliable and thus a valid way of measuring the climate of a school, regardless of grade level.

The OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979) was also piloted to test reliability. Crobach's alpha was again used to measure the internal reliability of the numbers. In total, 53 individuals responded to the survey. The alpha calculated to .89. This reliability rating

was higher than in previous research, which indicated a median reliability rating of .70 (Mowday et al., 1979). Smith (2009) found an alpha rating of .82, while Douglas (2010) returned an alpha rating of .92. Owing to the consistently high alpha rating, the OCQ appeared to be a reliable measure and a valid way of measuring employee (teacher) commitment.

Summary

Smith (2009) found a relationship between school climate and teacher commitment using the OCI and OCQ survey instruments with 522 elementary teachers in 34 elementary schools in Alabama. School climate and teacher commitment were again studied in Alabama approximately one year later (Douglas, 2010). Sixty-seven elementary schools participated. A total of 1,353 teachers were surveyed using the OCI and the OCQ, shortened form. Independent variables were the four subcategories of organizational climate: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability. These independent variables were compared to the dependent variable of organizational commitment. It was found that school climate and teacher commitment do have a relationship. The highest statistical results were from professional teacher behavior and teacher professionalism. Both Douglas (2010) and Smith (2009) noted a relationship of climate to commitment, with teacher professional behavior (teacher professionalism) being the highest statistical relationship, $r = .79$, $p < .01$, in Smith's (2009) research and the highest statistical relationship, $r = .46$, $p < .01$, in Douglas (2010). A limitation of these studies was that only elementary teachers participated. More research is needed to establish climate and commitment relationships with secondary school teachers.

Thus, this research accepted the recommendation for further study by including secondary teachers and adding demographic questions that ascertained the impact of teacher instructional level on climate and commitment. In addition, a random sample population was used. The OCI and OCQ were used as they had been previously in the Smith (2009) and Douglas (2010) studies.

The pilot group convened was a group of people known to the researcher. The pilot group results concluded that the instruments were valid and thus reliable and suitable to use with all teachers, regardless of demographic background, including grade level taught.

Figure 1 depicts the previous research of Smith (2009), Douglas (2010), and O'Donnell. Figure 2 depicts the current research with additional demographic items.

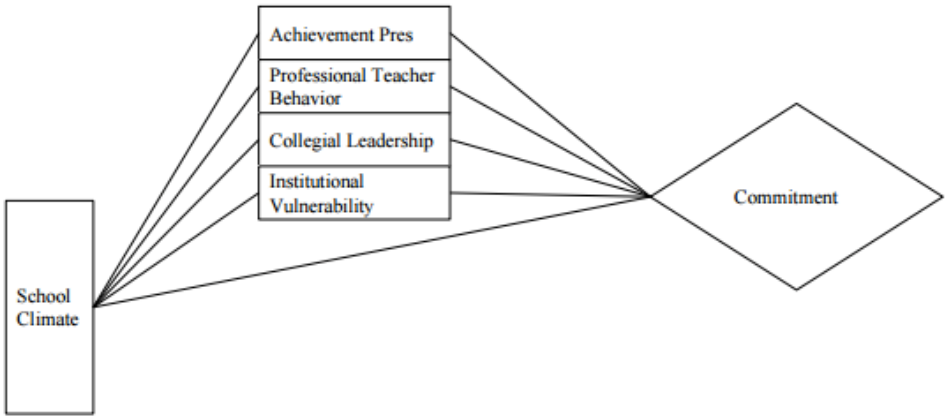

Figure 1. Relating the breakdown of climate categories to commitment.

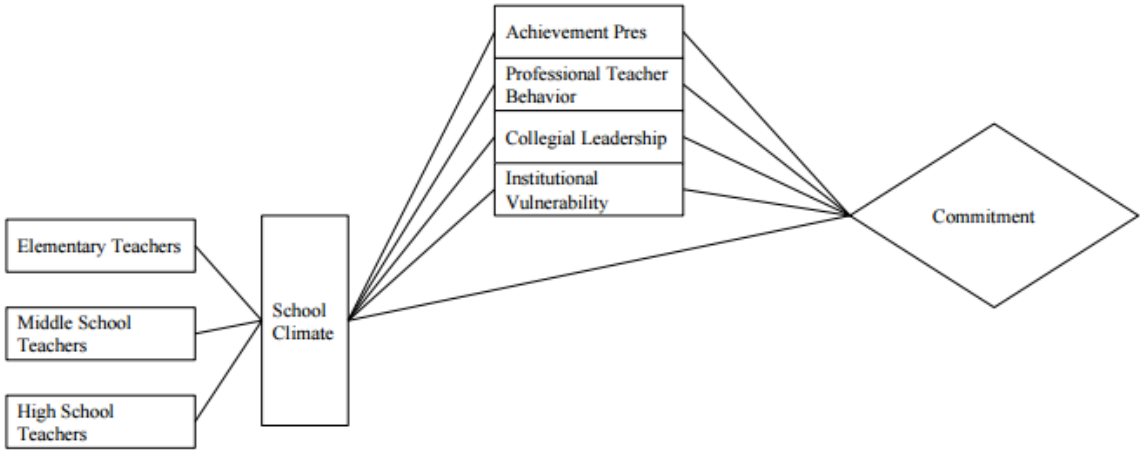

Figure 2. Relating teacher demographics and the breakdown of climate categories to commitment.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

Before the research questions are analyzed, a review of the research population is presented. Next, the instrument is reviewed, and the reliability for the OCI and the OCQ is calculated through Cronbach's alpha. A case analysis determined the presence of outliers and the potential impact, if any, these outliers had on survey responses. Next, an examination of collinearity or multicollinearity established the need to exclude independent variables that influence one another. The research findings are analyzed through correlational statistics to determine how the independent variables of school climate as measured by the OCI—achievement pres, professional teacher behavior, collegial leadership, and institutional vulnerability—influence commitment. The variables of these categories are examined through correlational coefficients to see if statistically significant results are present when measured to commitment. Finally, stepwise regression statistics helped to determine which variables have the most direct influence on commitment. The subcategories of climate were summed and the model correlated to teacher commitment as measured by the OCQ. Regression statistics were again used to determine how the model, as a whole, influences commitment.

To examine the demographic question of gender, an independent *t*-test was run to examine the influence of gender on commitment. ANOVAs determined if statistically significant results were found when examining the grade level taught and years of experience in relation to commitment.

Study Demographic and Descriptive Statistics

The surveys were taken by a population of 1,282 teachers from five Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania; 151 surveys were returned over a two-week period for an 11.77 percent response rate. This response rate is lower than that typically obtained, which tends to be between 24 percent and 34 percent (Cook, Heath, & Thomson, 2000; Shannon & Bradshaw, 2002). Good (1997) noted that personal notifications, personalized letters, and follow-up communications help to increase the survey responses. However, these strategies to increase response rates were not possible due to the nature of this study as it was important to keep the anonymity of the participants. It is noted, however, that follow up communications were used. Results were obtained through the Qualtrics system and then exported to SPSS for further analysis.

Gender demographic information is presented in Table 11. Of those surveyed, 105 (69.5 percent) were female, while 46 (30.5 percent) were male. A total of 151 participants answered this question.

Table 11

Gender of Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Male	46	30.5	30.5	30.5
Female	105	69.5	69.5	100.0
Total	151	100.0	100.0	

Teacher levels of public education experience were also obtained. As noted in Table 12, the largest group represented in this data set (62 responses; 41.1percent) came from those with 11-20 years of experience. Next came those with 1-to10 years of

experience (57 responses; 37.7 percent), followed by 21–30 years of experience (24 responses; 15.9 percent), and finally the least represented population, those with 30 or more years of experience (8 responses; 5.3 percent).

Table 12

Years of Experience of Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
1–10 years	57	37.7	37.7	37.7
11–20 years	62	41.1	41.1	78.8
21–30 years	24	15.9	15.9	94.7
30 or more years	8	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	151	100.0	100.0	

The grade levels taught by the educators were included in this study. Eighty-nine elementary educators (58.9 percent), 38 high school educators (25.2 percent), and 24 middle school and junior high educators (15.9 percent) responded to the survey. It should be noted that elementary educators make up the largest portion of any district's teaching staff as most consider elementary education to include kindergarten through sixth grade. Table 13 displays these percentages.

Table 13

Grade Level of Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Elementary K–6	89	58.9	58.9	58.9
Middle/junior high 7–9	24	15.9	15.9	74.8
High 10–12	38	25.2	25.2	100.0
Total	151	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and total number of responses for each of the study's variables were calculated from the study population (*N* = 151). The highest mean was for commitment (*M* = 4.89, *SD* = 1.26), followed by professional teacher behavior (*M* = 3.07, *SD* = .646), collegial leadership (*M* = 2.93, *SD* = .753), institutional vulnerability (*M* = 2.28, *SD* = .593), and finally achievement pres (*M* = 2.26, *SD* = .646). Table 14 displays these descriptive statistics.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	*SD*	*N*
Collegial leadership	2.9385	0.7535	151
Professional teacher behavior	3.0785	0.64601	151
Achievement pres	2.2649	0.51618	151
Institutional vulnerability	2.2834	0.59301	151
Commitment	4.8971	1.2644	151

Study Instrumentation Correlational Coefficients

The reliability of the instrumentation was tested using Cronbach's alpha for the independent variables of school climate within the OCI. It is noted that collegial leadership consistently produces the highest alpha rating of all climate variables. Table

15 displays the alpha ratings for the OCI climate variables with the previous studies, including the pilot.

Table 15

Organizational Climate Index Alpha Ratings

Variable	Hoy	Smith	Douglas	Pilot	Study
Collegial leadership	.94	.87	.88	.86	.92
Institutional vulnerability	.87	.65	.69	.75	.71
Professional teacher behavior	.88	.82	.88	.88	.91
Achievement pres	.92	.70	.75	.79	.80

Table 16 demonstrates that the OCQ has consistently produced favorable reliability ratings. Cronbach's alpha was again used to test the reliability of the OCQ.

Table 16

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire Alpha Ratings

Variable	Mowday	Smith	Douglas	Pilot	Study
Commitment	.70	.82	.92	.89	.92

Tables 15 and 16 have noted the reliability ratings of the instruments across studies. It is reasonable to conclude that the instruments used for this study were reliable and valid in measuring their respective variables.

Table 17 shows the Pearson correlations between study variables. Prior to running the standard multiple regression analysis, it must be determined which variables should

be included in analysis. None of the variables correlate to each other above the .7 threshold. Statistical practices would exclude any variables that correlated to one another at or above the .7 level. Noted in Table 17, none of the variables in this study, dependent or independent, meet this standard. As such, all will be included in the analysis.

Table 17

Pearson Correlations Between Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
Commitment	1.000				
Collegial leadership	.588**	1.000			
Professional teacher behavior	.435**	.590**	1.000		
Achievement pres	.648**	.589**	.546**	1.000	
Institutional vulnerability	−.235**	−.179*	−.301**	−.203*	1.000

Note. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Collinearity Testing

When performing regression analysis, collinearity or multicollinearity can become an issue if two independent variables influence one another (Creswell 2014; Hanushek & Jackson, 1977). General statistical practices would indicate that a condition index of 30 or higher would demonstrate collinearity between two variables. Achievement pres and institutional vulnerability have the highest condition indexes, with 15 and 20, respectively. Tolerance would demonstrate what percentage of the variables could be explained by other variables. A rating of .10 or less would indicate an issue with collinearity. As the lowest rating noted is within the collegial leadership variable (.550),

all tolerance ratings are well above the .10 threshold. A variance inflation factor (VIF) was also calculated for each of the independent variables. It is noted that all variables are well below the VIF threshold of five , which could show an issue with collinearity. Table 18 shows the results of collinearity calculations.

Table 18

Collinearity Test Results

Variable	Condition index	Tolerance	VIF
Collegial leadership	7.122	0.550	1.817
Professional teacher behavior	14.186	0.562	1.778
Achievement pres	15.068	0.592	1.691
Institutional vulnerability	20.401	0.907	1.103

Note. VIF = variance inflation factor.

Regression statistical analysis can also be sensitive to the presence of outliers. Two tests were run to examine the presence of outliers. First, a case-by-case analysis of research responses was conducted, examining the Mahalanobis distance, which relies on a critical value; in this case, the critical value would need to be less than or equal to 18.47. A sort of the Mahalanobis distance in the SPSS software indicated that no cases were above this critical value. Also, when a case analysis was performed through SPSS, no cases were identified for further examination through case wise diagnostics. As noted below, the maximum Cook's distance is .86, which, again, is below the general accepted practice of .94, which may indicate the presence of an outlier. Mahalanobis distance, Cook's distance, and other residual statistics as they relate to the dependent variable of commitment can be found in Table 19.

Table 19

Residuals Statistics of Dependent Variable

	Min.	Max.	Mean	*SD*	*N*
Predicted value	2.5891	6.9561	4.8971	.88850	151
Std. predicted value	−2.598	2.317	.000	1.000	151
Standard error of predicted value	.081	.339	.160	.045	151
Adjusted predicted value	2.6108	7.0438	4.8981	.89158	151
Residual	−2.61309	2.37337	.00000	.89965	151
Std. residual	−2.866	2.603	.000	.987	151
Stud. residual	−2.936	2.643	−.001	1.004	151
Deleted residual	−2.74299	2.44662	−.00099	.93218	151
Stud. deleted residual	−3.016	2.699	−.001	1.011	151
Mahal. distance	.182	17.791	3.974	2.944	151
Cook’s distance	.000	.086	.007	.012	151
Centered leverage value	.001	.132	.026	.020	151

Collinearity and the presence of outliers are not an issue with the study. The instruments are valid, reliable, and void of collinearity.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1a: The Influence of Achievement Pres on Commitment

The first independent variable is the influence that achievement pres has on commitment. Achievement pres describes a school that sets high but achievable academic standards and goals. Students persist, strive to achieve, and are respected by each other

and teachers for their academic success. Parents, teachers, and the principal exert pressure for high standards and school improvement. (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42)

For purposes of analysis, a Pearson correlation was used to determine first if the composite achievement pres was significantly related to the aspect of teacher commitment. Then each specific question relative to achievement pres was correlated to commitment in an attempt to determine the significance of each aspect of achievement to commitment.

Survey participants responded to eight different variables that were used to create a composite achievement pres score. The variables address the academic standards set by the school, students, and parents. The variable means from the highest rated to the lowest rated are as follows: The school sets high standards for academic performance (M = 2.96, SD = .972), students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them (M = 2.81, SD = .806), academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school (M = 2.79, SD = .940), students respect others who get good grades (M = 2.53, SD = .900), students try hard to improve on previous work (M = 1.97, SD = .668), parents press for school improvement (M = 1.72, SD = .715), parents exert pressure to maintain high standards (M = 1.70, SD = .600), and students seek extra work so they can get good grades (M = 1.65, SD = .675). A mean was calculated on these specific instrument variables and achievement pres as a whole (Table 20).

Table 20

Achievement Pres Descriptive Statistics

	N	*M*	*SD*	Min.	Max.
Achievement pres	151	2.26	0.51618	1	3.50
The school sets high standards for academic performance.	151	2.96	0.972	1	4
Students respect others who get good grades.	151	2.53	0.900	1	4
Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	151	1.65	0.675	1	4
Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.	151	1.70	0.600	1	4
Students try hard to improve on previous work.	151	1.97	0.668	1	4
Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	151	2.79	0.940	1	4
Parents press for school improvement.	151	1.72	0.715	1	4
Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	151	2.81	0.806	1	4

A Pearson correlation was used to determine that a statistically significant correlation can be found between achievement pres and commitment, r (151) = .648**, p < .01. Table 21 displays the Pearson correlation of achievement pres and commitment.

Table 21

Pearson Correlations of Achievement Pres and Commitment

	1	2
Commitment	1.00	.648**
Achievement pres	.648**	1.00

Note. N = 151. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 22 shows that Variable 7 from the OCI, “The school sets high standards for academic performance,” has the strongest positive correlation to commitment, r (151) = .613**, $p < .01$. All other variables indicate a statistically significant result when compared to commitment. Those correlational coefficients, from strongest to moderate positive correlation, are as follows: academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school, r (151) = .458**, $p < .01$; students try hard to improve on previous work, r (151) = .439**, $p < .01$; parents exert pressure to maintain high standards, r (151) = .420**, $p < .01$; students respect others who get good grades, r (151) = .389**, $p < .01$; students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them, r(151) = .357**, $p < .01$; students seek extra work so they can get good grades, r(151) = .348**, $p < .01$; and parents press for school improvement, r(151) = .325**, $p < .01$.

Table 22

Achievement Pres Climate Variable Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Commitment	1.000								
The school sets high standards for academic performance.	.613**	1.000							
Students respect others who get good grades.	.389**	.443**	1.000						
Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	.348**	.293**	.363**	1.000					
Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.	.420**	.402**	.350**	.310**	1.000				
Students try hard to improve on previous work.	.439**	.460**	.473**	.270**	.441**	1.000			
Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	.458**	.472**	.318**	.201*	.219*	.297**	1.000		
Parents press for school improvement.	.325**	.319**	.236*	.178*	.418**	.287**	.359**	1.000	
Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	.357**	.467**	.444**	.365**	.361**	.459**	.299**	.124	1.000

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Stepwise multiple regression models were used to determine which variables of achievement pres had the greatest influence on commitment. All achievement pres variables were entered, and four models were returned to determine which variables had the largest influence on commitment and could present predictors of commitment.

Model 1 includes one variable from the OCI, “The school sets high standards for

academic performance," which accounts for 37 percent of the change in commitment. This variable was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment (β = .797) when tested alone.

Model 2 introduces the variable "Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school" to Model 1. By adding this variable, the R^2 value accounted for 41 percent of the variance within commitment. Variable 1 (β = .664) is still a positive predictor of commitment, although reduced from the previous model. Variable 2 (β = .291) was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment within this model.

Model 3 introduces the variable "Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards" to Model 2. The R^2 total of these variables increased to 45 percent of the variance within commitment. Variable 1 (β = .565) and variable 2 (β = .281) reduce slightly from the previous model; however, they still maintain positive predictability. Variable 3 (β = .420) was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment.

The final model, Model 4, introduces the variable of "Students seek extra work so they can get good grades." The R^2 increases again to 46 percent of the variance in commitment. Variable 1 (β = .535), variable 2 (β = .268), and variable 3 (β = .355) all decrease slightly from the previous model, while they still maintain a positive predictor of commitment. Variable 4 (β = .253) was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment within this model.

Table 23 notes the relationship of the four models with the R^2 value as well as the change in R^2 (ΔR^2 is represented at the bottom of the table). The significance level was set at $p < .05$. Table 24 provides the model summary and change statistics.

Table 23

Stepwise Multiple Regression Models for Achievement Pres

	Commitment, Model 1			Commitment, Model 2			Commitment, Model 3			Commitment, Model 4		
	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.
The school sets high standards for academic performance.	.797	9.474	.000***	.664	7.145	.000***	.565	5.846	.000***	.535	5.539	.000***
Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.				.291	3.031	.003***	.281	3.00	.003***	.268	2.887	.004***
Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.							.420	2.965	.004*	.355	2.475	.014*
Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.										.253	2.073	.040*
R^2	.376			.412			.446			.461		
ΔR^2				.036			.033			.016		

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). ***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Table 24

Achievement Pres and Commitment Model Summary

					Change statistics				
Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*SEE*	ΔR^2	*F*	*df*1	*df*2	Δ sig. *F*
1	.613[a]	.376	.372	1.00224	.376	89.75	1	149	.000
2	.642[b]	.412	.404	.97578	.036	51.94	1	148	.003
3	.668[c]	.446	.434	.95106	.033	39.38	1	147	.004
4	.679[d]	.461	.447	.94056	.016	31.27	1	146	.040

Note. [a]Predictors: The school sets high standards for academic performance. [b]Predictors: The school sets high standards for academic performance, Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school. [c]Predictors: The school sets high standards for academic performance, Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school, Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards. [d]Predictors: The school sets high standards for academic performance, Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school, Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards, Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.

Achievement pres has a statistically significant influence on teacher commitment. It is noted that the school is the primary driver of commitment. First, the establishment of high standards is the most influential variable on commitment. Then, when students succeed in meeting these high standards and the school recognizes their achievement, commitment also increases. While parental pressure correlates with commitment, it is the least influential of all the climate variables.

Research Question 1b: The Influence of Professional Teacher Behavior on Commitment

The second independent variable is the influence professional teacher behavior has on commitment. Professional teacher behavior "is marked by respect for colleague competence, commitment to students, autonomous judgment, and mutual cooperation and support" (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42). For purposes of analysis, a Pearson correlation was used to determine first if the composite professional teacher behavior was significantly

related to the aspect of teacher commitment. Then each specific variable relative to professional teacher behavior was correlated with commitment in an attempt to determine the significance of each aspect of achievement to commitment.

Survey participants responded to seven different variables (Table 25) used to create a composite professional teacher behavior score. The variables address specially the interactions and supportive nature of teacher-to-teacher relationships within the school. The variable means from the highest rated to the lowest rated are as follows: teachers "go the extra mile" with their students (*M* = 3.30, *SD* = .755), teachers help and support each other (*M* = 3.23, *SD* = .818), teachers in this school exercise professional judgment (*M* = 3.22, *SD* = .729), teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm (*M* = 2.77, *SD* = .741), the interactions between faculty members are cooperative (*M* = 3.08, *SD* = .770), teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues (*M* = 3.00, *SD* = .856), and teachers provide strong social support for colleagues (*M* = 2.95, *SD* = .897).

Table 25

Professional Teacher Behavior Descriptive Statistics

	N	*M*	*SD*	Min.	Max.
Professional teacher behavior	151	3.0785	0.64601	1.14	4.00
Teachers help and support each other.	151	3.23	0.818	1	4
Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	151	2.77	0.741	1	4
Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	151	3.00	0.856	1	4
The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.	151	3.08	0.770	1	4
Teachers in this school exercise good judgment.	151	3.22	0.729	1	4
Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students.	151	3.30	0.755	1	4

Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	151	2.95	0.897	1	4
Valid *N* (list wise)	151				

A mean was calculated on these specific instrument variables and then was analyzed in comparison to the dependent variable of commitment by calculating a Pearson correlation. It was determined that a statistically significant positive correlation can be found between professional teacher behavior and commitment, $r(151) = .435^{**}$, $p < .01$. Table 26 shows this relationship.

Table 26

Pearson Correlations of Professional Teacher Behavior and Commitment

	1	2
Commitment	1.00	.435**
Professional teacher behavior	.435**	1.00

Note. $N = 151$. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, a Pearson correlation was used (Table 27) to determine which variables of the professional teacher behavior category of climate had the strongest correlation to commitment. Variable 7 from the OCI, "The interactions between faculty members are cooperative," had the strongest positive correlation to commitment, $r(151) = .416^{**}$, $p < .01$. All other variables indicate a statistically significant result when compared to commitment, with the exception of variable 28, "Teachers 'go the extra mile' with their students," which did not correlate with commitment at a significant level, $r(151) = .126^{**}$, $p > .05$. The remaining correlational coefficients, from strongest to moderately positive, were as follows: The interactions between faculty members are cooperative,

$r(151) = .416^{**}$, $p < .01$; teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues, $r(151) = .407^{**}$, $p < .01$; teachers help and support each other, $r(151) = .372^{**}$, $p < .01$; teachers in this school exercise good judgment, $r(151) = .322^{**}$, $p < .01$; and teachers provide strong social support for colleagues, $r(151) = .311^{**}$, $p < .01$.

Table 27

Professional Teacher Behavior Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commitment	1.000							
Teachers help and support each other.	.372**	1.000						
Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	.519**	.535**	1.000					
Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	.407**	.723**	.620**	1.000				
The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.	.416**	.691**	.522**	.687**	1.000			
Teachers in this school exercise good judgment.	.322**	.543**	.560**	.566**	.586**	1.000		
Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students.	.126	.581**	.478**	.568**	.474**	.596**	1.000	
Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	.311**	.723**	.486**	.720**	.671**	.586**	.631**	1.000

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Stepwise multiple regression models were used to determine which variables of professional teacher behavior had the greatest influence on commitment. All professional teacher behavior variables were entered, and two models were returned to determine which variables had the largest influence on commitment and could be predictors of commitment.

Model 1 includes one variable, "Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm," which accounted for 27 percent of the change in commitment. This variable was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment (β = .886).

Model 2 introduces the variable "The interactions between faculty members are

cooperative" to Model 1. By adding this variable, an increase in the R^2 level is found to include 29 percent of the variance within commitment. Variable 1 (β = .708) is reduced slightly, compared to Model 1 while still maintaining a positive predictability to commitment. Variable 2 (β = .328) was found to be a positive predictor of commitment within this model.

Table 28 notes the relationship of the two models by the R^2 value as well as the change in the R^2 at the bottom of the table. The significance level was set at $p < .05$. Table 29 provides the model summary and change statistics.

Table 28

Stepwise Multiple Regression Models for Professional Teacher Behavior

	Commitment, Model 1			Commitment, Model 2		
	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.
Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	.886	7.417	.000***	.708	5.142	.000***
The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.				.328	2.473	.015**
R^2	.270			.299		
ΔR^2				.029		

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). ***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Table 29

Professional Teacher Behavior Model Summary

					Change statistics				
Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*SEE*	ΔR^2	*F*	*df*1	*df*2	Δ sig. *F*
1	.519[a]	.270	.265	1.08423	.270	55.005	1	149	.000
2	.546[b]	.299	.289	1.06608	.029	6.117	1	148	.015

Note. N = 151. [a]Predictors: Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm. [b]Predictors: Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm, the interactions between faculty members are cooperative.

Professional teacher behavior does have a positive influence on commitment. When teachers see their peers accomplishing their jobs with enthusiasm, it is the most influential professional teacher behavior variable to commitment. Cooperative interactions between faculty members are the next influential professional teacher behavior school climate variable. Both of these variables are also positive predictors of school climate.

Research Question 1c: The Influence of Collegial Leadership on Commitment

Survey participants responded to seven different variables that were used to create a composite collegial leadership score. The variables address specifically the interactions and supportive nature of teacher-to-administrator relationships within the school. The variable means from the highest rated to the lowest rated are as follows: The principal is friendly and approachable (M = 3.38, SD = .823), the principal lets faculty know what is expected of them (M = 3.25, SD = .739), the principal maintains definite standards of performance (M = 2.96, SD = .965), the principal is willing to make changes (M = 2.86, SD = .924), the principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal (M = 2.83, SD = 1.057), the principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist (M = 2.81, SD = .962), and the principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation (M = 2.48, SD = .923). Table 30 displays the descriptive statistics for professional teacher behavior.

Table 30

Descriptive Statistics

	N	*M*	*SD*	Min.	Max.
Collegial leadership	151	2.9385	0.75350	1.00	4.00
The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.	151	2.81	0.962	1	4
The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	151	2.83	1.057	1	4
The principal is friendly and approachable.	151	3.38	0.823	1	4
The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.	151	3.25	0.739	1	4
The principal maintains definite standards of performance.	151	2.96	0.965	1	4
The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation.	151	2.48	0.923	1	4
The principal is willing to make changes.	151	2.86	0.924	1	4
Valid *N* (list wise)	151				

A mean was calculated for the specific instrument variables relating to collegial leadership and then was analyzed in comparison to the dependent variable of commitment by calculating a Pearson correlation. It was determined that a statistically significant positive correlation is found between collegial leadership and commitment, $r(151) = .588^{**}$, $p < .01$. Table 31 shows this relationship.

Table 31

Pearson Correlations of Collegial Leadership and Commitment

	1	2
Commitment	1.00	.588**
Collegial leadership	.588**	1.00

Note. $N = 151$. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 32 displays a Pearson correlation s used to determine which variables of the collegial leadership category of climate had the strongest correlation to commitment. Variable 3 of the OCI, "The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal," had the strongest positive correlation to commitment, $r(151) = .550^{**}$, $p < .01$. The remaining correlational coefficients, from strongest to moderate positive correlations, were as follows: the principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist, $r(151) = .529^{**}$, $p < .01$; the principal maintains definite standards of performance, $r(151) = .507^{**}$, $p < .01$; the principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation, $r(151) = .490^{**}$, $p < .01$; the principal lets faculty know what is expected of them, $r(151) = .440^{**}$, $p < .01$; the principal is willing to make changes, $r(151) = .433^{**}$, $p < .01$; and the principal is friendly and approachable, $r(151) = .420^{**}$, $p < .01$.

Table 32

Collegial Leadership Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Commitment	1.000							
The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.	.529**	1.000						
The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	.550**	.749**	1.000					
The principal is friendly and approachable.	.420**	.704**	.658**	1.000				
The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.	.440**	.599**	.473**	.505**	1.000			
The principal maintains definite standards of performance.	.507**	.595**	.516**	.472**	.677**	1.000		
The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation.	.490**	.703**	.667**	.557**	.597**	.635**	1.000	
The principal is willing to make changes.	.433**	.713**	.617**	.561**	.616**	.666**	.799**	1.000

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Stepwise multiple regression models were used to determine which variables of collegial leadership had the greatest influence on commitment. Collegial leadership variables were entered to determine which variables had the most influence on commitment and could be predictors of commitment. Two models were returned.

Model 1 included one variable, “The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal,” which accounted for 30 percent of the change in commitment. This variable was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment (β = .658)

Model 2 introduced the variable “The principal maintains definite standards of

performance" to Model 1. By adding this variable, a change in R^2 increased to 37 percent of the variance within commitment. Variable 1 (β = .470) decreased slightly when compared to Model 1 but still maintained positive predictability. Variable 2 (β = .398) was also found to have a positive predictability rating in relation to commitment.

Table 33 notes the relationship of the two models by the R^2 value as well as the change in the R^2, represented at the bottom of the table. The significance level was set at $p < .05$. Table 34 provides the model summary and change statistics.

Table 33

Stepwise Multiple Regression Models for Collegial Leadership

	Commitment, Model 1			Commitment, Model 2		
	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.
The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	.658	8.034	.000***	.470	5.158	.000***
The principal maintains definite standards of performance.				.398	3.992	.000***
R^2	.302			.370		
ΔR^2				.068		

Note. $N = 151$. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). ***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed)

Table 34

Collegial Leadership Model Summary

					Change statistics				
Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*SEE*	ΔR^2	*F*	*df*1	*df*2	Δ sig. *F*
1	.550[a]	.302	.298	1.05975	.302	64.538	1	149	.000
2	.608[b]	.370	.362	1.01033	.068	15.936	1	148	.000

Note. [a]Predictors: The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal. [b]Predictors: The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal, the principal maintains definite standards of performance.

Collegial leadership has a positive significant influence on commitment. The collegial leadership variable with the most influence on commitment occurs when the faculty member sees the principal treating everyone as his or her equal. When the principal maintains standards of performance and holds members accountable to the organization mission, commitment is also influenced, but not nearly at the level of the first variable. Both of these climate variables are predictors of commitment.

Research Question 1d: Influence of Institutional Vulnerability on Commitment

Survey participants responded to five different variables that were used to create a

composite institutional vulnerability score. Institutional vulnerability is "the extent to which the school is susceptible to change based on a few vocal parents or citizen groups. High vulnerability suggests that both teachers and principals are unprotected and put on the defensive" (Hoy et al., 2002, p. 42). The variables address specifically the interactions and influence various stakeholder groups have on the school. These groups include parents, citizens groups, the board, and the community at large. Variables also include information about how the principals and teachers react to pressure. The variable means from the highest rated to the lowest rated are as follows: A few vocal parents can change school policy (M = 2.01, SD = .816), select citizens groups are influential with the board (M = 2.23, SD = .888), the principal responds to pressure from parents (M = 2.56, SD = .907), teachers feel pressure from the community (M = 2.34, SD = .848), and the school is vulnerable to outside pressures (M = 2.28, SD = .882). Table 35 displays the descriptive statistics for institutional vulnerability.

A mean was calculated on these specific instrument variables and then was analyzed in comparison to the dependent variable of commitment by calculating a Pearson correlation. It was determined that a statistically significant negative correlation can be found between institutional vulnerability and commitment, $r(151) = -.235^{**}$, $p < .01$. Table 36 shows this relationship.

Table 35

Institutional Vulnerability Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Institutional vulnerability	151	1.00	4.00	2.2834	0.59301
A few vocal parents can change school policy.	151	1	4	2.01	0.816

Select citizens groups are influential with the board.	151	1	4	2.23	0.888
The principal responds to pressure from parents.	151	1	4	2.56	0.907
Teachers feel pressure from the community.	151	1	4	2.34	0.848
The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	151	1	4	2.28	0.882

Table 36

Pearson Correlations of Institutional Vulnerability and Commitment

	1	2
Commitment	1.00	−.235**
Institutional vulnerability	−.235**	1.00

Note. N = 151. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Next, a Pearson correlation was used (Table 37) to determine which variables of the institutional vulnerability subcategory of climate had the strongest correlation to commitment. Variable 26 of the OCI, "The school is vulnerable to outside pressures," had the strongest negative correlation to commitment, $r(151) = -.365^{**}$, $p < .01$. One other variable had a statistically significant negative relationship to commitment, select citizens groups are influential with the board, $r(151) = -.2.08^{*}$, $p < .05$. The remaining variables were also negatively correlated to commitment but found to be insignificant: Teachers feel pressure from the community, $r(151) = -.1.30$, $p > 05$; a few vocal parents can change school policy, $r(151) = -.062$, $p > .05$; and the principal responds to pressure from parents, $r(151) = -.033$, $p > .05$.

Table 37

Institutional Vulnerability Correlations

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Commitment	1.000					
A few vocal parents can change school policy.	−.062	1.000				
Select citizens groups are influential with the board.	−.208*	.529**	1.000			
The principal responds to pressure from parents.	−.033	.305**	.332**	1.000		
Teachers feel pressure from the community.	−.130	.234**	.226**	.101**	1.000	
The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	−.365**	.374**	.505**	.301**	.423**	1.000

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A stepwise multiple regression model was used to determine which variables of institutional vulnerability had the greatest influence on commitment. Institutional vulnerability variables were entered to determine which variables had the most influence on commitment and which variables could be predictors of commitment. One model was returned.

Model 1 included one variable, "The school is vulnerable to outside pressures," which accounted for 13 percent of the change in commitment. This variable was also found to be a negative predictor of commitment (β = -.523).

Table 38 notes the statistical return of Model 1 by the R^2 value as well as the statistical significance. The significance level was set at $p < .05$. Table 39 provides the model summary and change statistics.

Table 38

Stepwise Multiple Regression Model for Institutional Vulnerability

	Commitment, Model 1		
	β	*t*	Sig.
The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	−0.523	−4.783	0.000***
R^2	0.133		

Note. $N = 151$. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). ***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Table 39

Model Summary

					Change statistics				
Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*SEE*	ΔR^2	*F*	*df*1	*df*2	Δ sig. *F*
1	.365[a]	.133	.127	1.18124	.133	22.873	1	149	.000

Note. [a]Predictors: (Constant), The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.

Institutional vulnerability showed a statistically significant negative correlation to commitment. In simpler terms, this means that as the organization becomes more vulnerable to outside pressures, commitment from teachers decreases. However, the more educational leaders insulate and protect teachers from these special interest groups, the more commitment increases. Ensuring that special interest groups do not influence school decision-making will increase teacher commitment toward their organizations. Failure to do so will negatively impact the commitment a teacher feels to the organization. The institutional vulnerability variable of the school being influenced by outside pressures is a negative predictor of commitment.

Research Question 1: Influence of School Climate Variables on Commitment

Appendix C notes the OCI climate index questions that determine the achievement pres, professional teacher behavior, collegial leadership, and institutional

vulnerability. A mean was calculated on these specific climate subcategories and then was analyzed in comparison to the dependent variable of commitment by calculating a Pearson correlation (Table 40). It was determined that a statistically significant positive influence can be found between all climate categories. Achievement pres, $r(151) = .648^{**}$, $p < .01$, had the strongest correlation on commitment, followed by collegial leadership, $r(151) = .58^{**}$, $p < .01$; finally the weakest influence was found with professional teacher behavior, $r(151) = .435^{**}$, $p < .01$. A negative statistically significant relationship was found between institutional vulnerability and commitment, $r(151) = .235^{**}$, $p < .01$.

Table 41 displays data that conclude achievement pres not only has the strongest correlation to commitment but also has the most influence on commitment, $r(151) = -.648^{**}$, $\beta = 458$, followed by collegial leadership, $r(151) = -.588^{**}$, $\beta = 321$.

Table 40

Pearson Correlations of Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
Commitment	1.00				
Collegial leadership	.588**	1.00			
Professional teacher behavior	.435**	.590**	1.00		
Achievement pres	.648**	.589**	.546**	1.00	
Institutional vulnerability	−.235**	−.179*	−.301**	−.203**	1.00

Note. $N = 151$. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 41

Pearson Correlations and Beta Coefficients Dependent Variable

Variable	*r*	β
Collegial leadership	.588**	.321**
Professional teacher behavior	.435**	−.033
Achievement pres	.648**	.458**
Institutional vulnerability	−.235**	−.95

Note. N = 151. Dependent variable is commitment. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The four independent variables, when examined together, account for 48 percent of the variance in the dependent variable of commitment, $r^2(151) = 480^{**}$, $p < .01$. The model summary of the independent variables of school climate as measured by the OCI and the dependent variable of commitment as measured by the OCQ are displayed in Table 42.

Table 42

Independent/Dependent Model 1 Summary

Model	*R*	R^2	ΔR^2	*SEE*
1	.703[a]	.494	.480**	.91189

Note. [a]Predictors: institutional vulnerability, collegial leadership, achievement pres, professional teacher behavior. *Significant at the 0.05 level. **Significant at the 0.01 level.

Finally, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to determine which variables from the previous questions (1a through1d) had the largest predictive value when examined against commitment. Independent climate variable variables were

entered to determine which variables had the largest influence on commitment and which variables could be predictors of commitment. Five models were returned.

Model 1 included one variable from the OCI, "The school sets high standards for academic performance," which accounted for 37.6 percent of the change in commitment. This variable was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment (β = .613).

Model 2 introduced the variable "The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist" to Model 1. When examined together, an increase in R^2 value to 47.5 percent of the variance within commitment is noted. Variable 1 (β = .479) decreases slightly compared to Model 1, while still being a positive predictor of commitment. Variable 2 (β = .342) was found to be a positive predictor of commitment.

Model 3 introduced the variable "Students seek extra work so they can get good grades," which was added to Model 2. These variables increased the R^2 value to 50.3 percent of the variance within commitment. Variable 1 (β = .429) and Variable 2 (β = .338) reduced slightly from previous models while still maintaining positive predictability to commitment. Variable 3 (β = .177) was also found to be a positive predictor of commitment.

Model 4 introduced the variable "The school is vulnerable to outside pressures" to Model 3. This variable increased the R^2 value to 51.9 percent of the variance in commitment. Variable 1 (β = .391) and variable 2 (β = .318) decreased slightly from the previous model, while still remaining positive predictors of commitment. Variable 3 (β = .177) remained the same and was a positive predictor of commitment. Variable 4 (β = -.135) was found to be a negative predictor of commitment within this model.

The final model, Model 5, introduced the variable "Parents press for school

improvement." This variable increased the R^2 value to 53.6 percent of the variance in commitment. Variable 1 (β = .346), variable 2 (β = .309) and variable 3 (β = .164), decreased slightly in their correlation but still remained predictors of commitment within this model. Variable 4 (β = -.159) became a larger negative predictor of commitment, while variable 5 (β = .139) was found to be a positive predictor of commitment.

Table 43 notes the relationship of the five models by the R^2 value as well as the change in R^2, represented at the bottom of the table. The significance level was set at $p <$ .05.

Table 43

Stepwise Multiple Regression Models for All School Climate Variables

	Commitment, Model 1			Commitment, Model 2			Commitment, Model 3			Commitment, Model 4			Commitment, Model 5		
	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.	β	*t*	Sig.
The school sets high standards for academic performance.	.613	9.474	.000***	.479	7.406	.000***	.429	6.55	.000***	.391	5.843	.000***	.346	5.028	.000***
The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.				.342	5.281	.000***	.338	5.343	.003**	.318	5.056	.000***	.309	4.962	.000***
Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.							.177	2.907	.004**	.177	2.950	.004**	.164	2.765	.006**
The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.										−.135	−2.202	.029*	−.159	−2.586	.011*

Parents press for school improvement.					.139	2.291	.023*
R^2	.376	.475	.503	.519		.536	
ΔR^2		.099	.028	.016		.017	

Note. N = 151. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). ***Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

The most important variable to target when seeking to improve commitment would be for the school to set high standards for academic performance. In doing so, the commitment of teachers will improve by 37.6 percent. Once the school sets these standards, it is important for the principal to consider all sides of issues and initiatives, be transparent with staff members, and explain all sides of the issue. In doing so, the principal will increase teacher commitment by nearly 10 percent and, when combined with high academic expectations, will increase the commitment a teacher feels toward his or her school by 47.5 percent. Two other stakeholder groups are paramount in increasing teacher commitment. When students seek extra work and parents press for school improvements, the total commitment of teachers increases by over half (53.6 percent).

A delicate balance is noted, though, as the school must include parents and allow feedback in pressing for school improvement. On the other hand, parent pressure cannot exert unnecessary influence on teachers, which can be perceived negatively and influences commitment in a negative way.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 sought to determine if teacher demographic background (gender, experience, and grade level taught) influences commitment in any way. In order to analyze this research question, the commitment measures from the OCQ were tallied and analyzed using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and, in the case of gender, an independent *t*-test. The goal was to demonstrate which differences, if any, exist for the commitment levels of educators by gender, grade level taught, and experience.

First, gender was examined. The gender of the study population was predominantly female ($N = 105$; male $N = 46$). The average commitment score differed

between males (*M* = 4.57, *SD* = 1.31) and females (*M* = 5.036, *SD* = 1.22) by a .5-point margin. Table 44 displays this information.

Table 44

Group Statistics by Gender for Commitment

Gender	*N*	*M*	*SD*	*SEM*
Male	46	4.5783	1.31844	0.19439
Female	105	5.0368	1.22030	0.11909

An independent-sample *t*-test was conducted to determine if the difference in means between male and female participants was statistically significant. The Levene statistic value is greater than .05, which means that the population samples can be treated as equal. There was a statistically significant, $p = .437$, sig < .05, 2 tailed, difference between the mean scores of males (*M* = 4.57, *SD* = 1.31) and females (*M* = 5.036, *SD* = 1.22), $t(149) = -2074$. The magnitude of the differences was relatively small as calculated by Cohen's *d* (.03). Table 45 displays the independent-sample *t*-test for commitment.

Table 45

Independent Samples Test Dependent Variable Commitment

	Levene's test for equality of variances		*t*-Test for equality of means					
	F	Sig.	*t*	*df*	Sig.	Mean diff.	*SE* diff.	95% CI of the diff. (lower, upper)
Equal variances assumed	.609	.437	−2.074	149	.040	−.458	.221	−.895, −.021
Equal variances not assumed			−2.011	80.226	.048	−.458	.227	−.912, −.005

Next, a one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted to test the statistical difference between grade levels (elementary K–6, middle/junior high 7–9, and high 10–12) taught. Elementary educators made up the bulk of the teacher population (n = 89), follows by high school educators (n = 38) and finally middle and junior high educators (n = 24). It is noted that the mean score of each group is within .2 points of one another. The commitment scores of professional educators were as follows: elementary (M = 4.97, SD = .296), middle/junior high (M = 4.71, SD = .449), and high (M = 4.84, SD = .067). Table 46 displays the mean and standard deviation for each grade level.

Table 46

Commitment Across Grade Levels

					95% CI for mean			
	N	*M*	*SD*	*SE*	Lower bound	Upper bound	Min.	Max.
Elementary K–6	89	4.9708	1.29657	.13744	4.6977	5.2439	1.87	6.93
Middle/junior high 7–9	24	4.7139	1.44963	.29591	4.1018	5.3260	2.00	6.53
High 10–12	38	4.8404	1.06718	.17312	4.4896	5.1911	2.33	6.93
Total	151	4.8971	1.26444	.10290	4.6938	5.1004	1.87	6.93

Since a difference between the means was noted, it was prudent to test the difference between these means to see if a statistically significant difference could be found. There was no statistically significant finding between teacher grade level taught and the commitment teachers have toward their organizations, $f(59,91) = 1.10$, $p = .328$). Table 47 displays the ANOVA testing results for grade level taught with commitment as the dependent variable.

Table 47

Grade-Level ANOVA

	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	Sig.
Between groups	45.858	59	.777	1.107	.328
Within groups	63.917	91	.702		
Total	109.775	150			

The final demographic area examined was in relation to the years of experience an educator has and his or her commitment. The teacher population of the study found those teachers with 11–20 years ($n = 62$) to make up the largest portion of the population, followed closely by teachers with 1–10 years of experience ($n = 57$); next were teachers with 21–30 years of experience ($n = 24$), and finally, the smallest group comprised those teachers with 30 or more years of experience ($n = 8$). The mean of commitment between years of experience was within .1 of a point. Educators with 1–10 years of experience ($M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.31$), 11–20 years of experience ($M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.16$), 21–30 years of

experience (*M* = 4.98, *SD* = 1.37), and 30 or more years of experience (*M* = 4.95, *SD* = 1.51) were analyzed. Table 48 displays the mean commitment across grade levels.

Table 48

Commitment Across Experience Levels

					95% confidence interval for mean			
	N	*M*	*SD*	*SE*	Lower bound	Upper bound	Min.	Max.
1–10 years	57	4.9532	11.31	0.174	4.60	5.30	1.87	6.93
11–20 years	62	4.8043	11.16	0.147	4.50	5.09	2.20	6.93
21–30 years	24	4.9833	11.37	0.280	4.40	5.56	2.00	6.60
30 or more years	8	4.9583	11.51	0.535	3.69	6.22	2.80	6.60
Total	151	4.8971	11.26	0.1029	4.69	5.10	1.87	6.93

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of educators with 1–10 years of experience (*M* = 4.95, *SD* = 1.31), 11–20 years of experience (*M* = 4.80, *SD* = 1.16), 21–30 years of experience (*M* = 4.98, *SD* = 1.37), and 30 or more years of experience (*M* = 4.95, *SD* = 1.51). When years of service was controlled as the independent variable, a statistically insignificant result proved that there is no difference in commitment across grade levels, *f*(59,91) = .746, *p* = .886; Table 49).

Table 49

Years of Experience ANOVA

	Sum of squares	*df*	Mean square	*F*	Sig.
Between groups	36.203	59	0.614	0.746	0.886
Within groups	74.883	91	0.823		
Total	111.086	150			

The only statistically significant difference between any of the demographic variables came between scores of males (M = 4.57, SD = 1.31) and females (M = 5.036, SD = 1.22), $t(148) = -2074$. The magnitude of the differences was relatively small as calculated by Cohen's d (.03).

Two other demographic categories yielded no statistical significance in relation to the dependent variable of commitment. There was no statistically significant variance found between elementary (M = 4.97, SD = .296), middle/junior high (M = 4.71, SD = .449), and high school (M = 4.84, SD = .067) educators' commitment, $f(59,91) = 1.10$, p = .328. Years of experience in terms of the categories 1–10 years (M = 4.95, SD = 1.31), 11–20 years (M = 4.80, SD = 1.16), 21–30 years (M = 4.98, SD = 1.37), and 30 or more years (M = 4.95, SD = 1.51) had no statistically significant difference, $f(59,91) = .746$, p = .886.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Examining the influence of school climate on teacher commitment in Title I schools was the goal of this research. Data were obtained through two survey instruments, the OCI and the OCQ. The subtests within the OCI acted as independent variables: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability. These independent variables were compared to the dependent variable of organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ. This study differed from previous research on school climate and teacher commitment as demographic questions were asked about grade level taught, years of experience, and gender.

The statistical analysis of this study was also retooled. Stepwise regression analysis was performed to determine which climate variables influenced commitment the most and which climate variables were predictors of commitment.

It is important for educators and society at large to understand the importance of a committed educational workforce. Pennsylvania has lost and continues to lose qualified educators each year. The Pennsylvania Department of Education has noted a 61.4 percent decrease in the past three years in the number of teachers attaining certification in the commonwealth (Stuhldreher, 2015). Our society can ill afford to lose quality teachers and turn to a dwindling candidate pool for competant replacements.

Social exchange theory served as the theoretical framework for this study. Homans (1961) defined *social exchange theory* as the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons. Building

on prior research, Blau (1964) noted that human behavior depends on mutually beneficial exchange, which is relevant to the relationship employees have to their organizations. Eisenberger et al. (1986) applied social exchange theory in terms of commitment toward the organization in which the employee works. Employees, in the case of this study, teachers, who have a stronger commitment ultimately self-report lower desire to leave an organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The exchange found to have occurred is that teachers are committed to organizations with favorable climate characteristics. The teacher committed to the school provides both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits to the organization; in turn, the school provides the teacher intrinsic and extrinsic benefits. Exploring how to strengthen this exchange is the focus of this chapter.

Summary of the Research Question Findings

The guiding questions behind this research were to examine which areas of school climate influence teacher commitment. Two survey instruments were given to teachers: the OCI developed by Hoy et al. (2002) and the OCQ developed by Mowday et al. (1979). Teachers from five Title I qualifying school districts in Pennsylvania responded to the survey instruments through electronic surveys that were distributed via the Qualtrics Web service. This research expanded upon previous research completed in Alabama (Douglas, 2010; Smith, 2009). Prior research studies concluded via quantitative analysis that professional teacher behavior has a statistically significant relationship to teacher commitment.

Research Question 1

This study found that school climate has a statistically significant influence on teacher commitment. This research rejected the first null hypothesis that school climate

has no influence on teacher commitment. This hypothesis was rejected because all climate subcategories had a statistically significant relationship to school climate. Achievement pres had the strongest influence on commitment, followed by collegial leadership, and finally, the weakest influence, professional teacher behavior. A negative statistically significant relationship was found between institutional vulnerability and commitment. In fact, the four independent variables, when examined together, account for 48 percent of the variance in teacher commitment.

One major finding established by this study related to school expectations. When a school establishes high expectations, teacher commitment in the school improves by 37.6 percent. Marten (2012) established that an improving and positive school climate is an essential factor in student achievement. Marten concluded that schools need sustained effort to maintain a positive school culture and climate for students and teachers. Sun (2015) established that student learning and a sense of shared values influence student commitment. This research study confirms that the establishment of a shared vision must be developed with principal or school leader facilitation and with staff members buying in and sharing the responsibility to forge a more effective school climate. This research verifies Marten's research findings and adds that establishing a climate of high expectations within this shared vision will aid in teacher commitment. This finding is further verified by Winter (1987), who concluded that (a) the principal is the prime driver of climate and (b) staff cohesiveness creates a stronger climate. If a shared vision of high expectations is established, a more committed teacher will result. When the school acknowledges the achievements of its students, commitment is increased. When the school and students work together to create a sense of shared responsibility, commitment

is improved by 41 percent. Suda (2010) found that shared responsibility and commitment to desired outcomes produce commitment to reform measures. It can be inferred that increased school expectations can lead to the acceptance of change initiatives. This study found that shared commitment extends to teachers. When teachers see their peers accomplishing tasks with enthusiasm, commitment is improved.

While student prespective was not the main focus of this research, it was noted that students seeking extra academic support or work accounted for three percent of the variance in commitment. Students themseleves influence school climate and, as a result, the level of teacher commitment. Eberhard et al. (2000) noted student behavior as the number one concern of Texas teachers looking to leave the profession. Jo's (2014) research indicated an indirect relationship between student and teacher relationships. Washington (2017) found that a teacher's connectedness to students influences commitment. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found that low student motivation impacts a teacher's self-concept. This research would confirm these findings. Connections to student behaviors can be made by the current research; however, this is not a major finding of the current research. Fostering an inclusive environment in which not only adults but also students feel confident and in control of their education will increase educator commitment.

The building-level principal's ability to treat everyone as his or her equal is another finding of this study. However, maintaining performance standards for all is another key finding and responsibility of the principal. When the principal accomplishes these goals, teacher commitment improves. Gülsen and Gülenay (2014) found that the principal does have a major impact on school climate. The current study's finding differs

from Dahlkamp's (2013) mixed-method study, which found no relationship between principal efficacy and climate. However, Jo's (2014) study found that relationships between students and teachers, teachers and teachers, and teachers and principals do link to commitment.

Teachers collaborate with their collegues and view them as a source of support. Collaboration and support increase the commitment they feel to their organizations. This research finding has been proven in several previous studies. It is noted that teacher collaboration (Abler, 2002; Collie et al., 2011; Green, 2011; Jo, 2014; Watts, 1997) was identified as a chief factor when examining why teachers identify themselves as committed to their positions within a school organization.

Institutional vulnerability, or the way in which individual public schools respond to community pressures, had a negative correlation to commitment. In fact, this research revealed that degree of school vulnerability to outside pressures and interests influences teacher commitment. Similarly, Preston (2013) concluded that a disconnect exists between what the community defines as involvement and what educational professionals see as involvement. Levin (1970) explained that lack of community involvement in schools can lead to educational leaders making decisions and implementing policy not necessarily reflective of what the community wants. Hoy et al. (1991) noted a correlation between community pressure and involvement in schools and an increase in student achievement. These results were similar to the institutional vulnerability found in New Jersey, where again community pressure resulted in increased student achievement (Hoy et al., 1998). These findings are consistent with previous research findings, which

establish when teachers feel support from their community, inclusive of parents, leadership, and students, their commitment increases (Berrafato, 2017).

After stepwise regression of isolated independent variables, it was found that five statements influence commitment by 53.6 percent . However, when the subcategories are analyzed, they influence commitment to a lesser extent, at 48 percent. Thus the variable statements are better predictors and more influential on commitment. Previous researchers cited above did not support this finding, as they had never analyzed the individual statements to determine the predictability of the variables.

Research Question 2

The second research question found that female educators experience a higher level of commitment to their jobs when compared to their male counterparts. This finding is different from that of Kurtz (2017) and Cheng (2009), who found that the longer the employee has worked within an organization, the more likely he or she is to remain with that organization. However, these results are similar to those of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who found a relatively small statistically significant difference between males and females.

Two additional demographic questions were asked. These included years of experience and grade level taught. Through ANOVA, neither of these areas was found to be statistically significant in relation to the dependent variable of commitment. When the group average for years of experience was analyzed, it was noted that teachers with 21–30 years of experience had the highest average commitment, followed by 30 or more years, 1–10 years, and finally, the lowest average commitment from those with 11–20 years of experience. Teacher commitment by grade level taught showed that elementary

educators had the highest average commitment, followed by high school educators, and finally, middle school and junior high educators.

Although there was no statistically significant result for two of the three demographic questions, this result has been supported by several other studies that also did not find teacher demographics to be related to their commitment level, including age, race, ethnicity, or educational level (Eberhard et al., 2000; Kurtz, 2017; Lambeth, 2008).

The second null hypothesis was rejected. A statistically significant difference was established between the commitment levels of males and females.

Implications of the Results

The most significant predictor of teacher commitment is a school's high standards for academic performance. The primary function of any educational institution is to transfer knowledge to empower learners to take new knowledge and advance society. Teachers, by the nature of their position, are positioned to advance this cause. It would stand to reason that teachers would prefer to involve themselves with an organization that holds high standards. Ensuring lofty academics are at the forefront of the mission of each school will lead to a more committed teaching workforce. Downplaying academic expectations will have a detrimental effect on teacher commitment.

Recognizing students' academic achievement is another significant predictor of commitment. While this may be viewed as an extrinsic motivator for students, teachers get the intrinsic reward of seeing their students' efforts acknowledged and, by direct link, their efforts as well. Being acknowledged for performance has both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors that benefit students and increase the commitment teachers have to their organizations.

Teachers enjoy interactions with their peers. Particularly, they enjoy cooperatively working with peers to complete tasks with enthusiasm. Creating an environment in which the mission of the organization is embraced, motivational, obtainable, and, when achieved, recognized will positively influence teacher commitment. Continuing to communicate the mission of the organization is the responsibility of the building-level administrator.

The principal has a crucial role to play in improving the commitment of the educators in the school. This research noted the influence building-level administrators have on the climate of their buildings. In particular, the principal needs to be someone who treats others as his or her equal. The traditional top-down approach that has been taken in public education needs to be changed. The principal needs to be approachable and treat everyone as a leader within the building. However, another implication is that the principal needs to maintain standards of performance. This is a difficult balance. On the one hand, the principal needs to be seen as approachable and/or as treating others equitably; on the other hand, the principal needs to ensure clear standards of performance and that all members of the school are held to these standards.

There is a fine line for educators, school leaders, and policy makers. One side of the institutional vulnerability portion of this study finds that parents pressing for increased improvements can lead to student achievement. However, this study noted that overstepping by parents can lead to less committed teachers, which, in turn, can lead to teacher turnover and an increase in novice or uncertified educators (and the inverse effect of a drop in student achievement).

An implication from this research is its difference from previous research on school climate and teacher commitment in Albama. Both previous studies concluded that teacher-to-teacher behavior is the chief factor in teacher commitment. This study did note the importance of collegial relationships but also noted that the academic achievement of the school is more important to teachers in Pennsylvania. In fact, the ability of a school to set high standards is the number one variable to consider when a committed teaching workforce is the desired result.

Recommendations for Practice

The recommendations section is divided in two segments: the researcher's recommendations for practice and his recommendations for future research. Great reflection has gone into the recommendations presented below, after reviewing further the survey results presented by educators across Pennsylvania.

It is important for leaders not only to understand the influence of school climate and commitment but also to implement strategies within their buildings or districts that celebrate the relationships teachers form with one another, their students, their administration, and the families of the students they serve. It is difficult to chart a course for all elementary, middle, and high school buildings, as each faces different challenges and different circumstances. However, there is no denying that building leaders set the tone for their schools. Leaders should address present challenges as well as future plans. When planning for that future it would be advisable for the leader to maintain a consistent vision of strong academic performance for their students. The principal needs to be someone that treats everyone as his or her equal. It is important for the principal to be reflective and consider all sides of an argument.

We know that school climate variables impact teacher commitment. It is also known that a statistically significant number of teachers, regardless of demographic background, experience commitment. Teachers are committed to their profession, but their reasons vary, as one might expect when examining a human science. Some reasons are extrinsic, (e.g., work schedule, salary, retirement, and benefits). However, other reasons for commitment are more intrinsic, including the relationships teachers have with one another. Team-building activities among faculty can lead to mutual understanding and common purpose. This can also help faculty members to develop personal relationships that not only stand the test of time but also lead to committed employees.

With the constant state of change in public education, committed educators are still found. It is important for educational leaders and policy makers to protect teachers from outside pressures within their communities. This is easier said than done. There is a fine line to manage when accounting for public pressure to improve quality educational offerings within a community and also to protect the school from potentially negative forces that seek to implement a self-serving agenda.

Finally, teacher preparation programs can be refined to ensure that college students are ready for the various aspects of school climate of which they may not be aware. During student teaching, mentor teachers are encouraged to share with prospective educators the stresses and successes of working within public education. Perhaps this should be done sooner so that the prospective teacher has an opportunity to reflect more on the challenges he or she may face and whether he or she feels comfortable working in the education profession. Several post-secondary institutions have instituted full year student teaching placements through programs and partnerships like professional

development school. These programs can only help prepare potential educators for the future that awaits them in public schools, including those that struggle to retain quality educators.

Education continues to evolve, and so do the climates of school buildings. Peer mentoring, observing, and induction programs should be examined to foster supportive relationships between faculty members. It is possible that these measures will pay off in the end, as they may keep educators in the profession and committed to their organizations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Extensive research has been done in relation to school climate and its relationship to teacher commitment. However, more research should be done to examine how the climate of a building influences the commitment of other groups within a school: Administration, paraprofessional, and support staff should be considered. Students can be surveyed to determine their perceptions of school climate and compare these to teacher perceptions of school climate. Vocational technical teachers typically have a different path to education than traditional educators. Many of these individuals have worked in industry prior to joining the teaching ranks. Research can be done to examine what areas of school climate influence vocational educators' commitment.

It was found through stepwise multiple regression analysis that one variable alone, "The school sets high standards for academic performance," accounted for 37 percent of the variance within commitment. Once four additional variable statements are added to this statement—the principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist, students seek extra work so they can get good grades, the school is

vulnerable to outside pressures, and parents press for school improvement—the variance in commitment is influenced by 53.6 percent. Together, all climate subcategories make up 48 percent of the variance in commitment. Research can be done to determine what is happening within the models to account for the changes.

A comparative study between school climate and teacher commitment in areas of low poverty versus those that teach in high-poverty areas would aid researchers, educators, and policy makers in understanding the diverse challenges different groups of educators face. Perhaps the institutional vulnerability numbers would increase in an area where there is a low percentage of poverty. Further research can explore the impact of institutional vulnerability on educators, administrators, and support staff members.

Qualitative research could be done to explore reasons teachers have chosen to leave the profession. It would be difficult to find a large enough sample size of teachers to complete such research through quantitative measures. However, themes may emerge from qualitative research that could be addressed to reduce the number of educators who leave the profession.

It is also recommended that research be done on how school climate impacts the various forms of commitment. This study provided only a single commitment measure in which it was determined that there either was or was not commitment. However, additional research can determine which form of commitment is most influenced by school climate.

Limitations

Results of this study are limited to those districts that receive Title I funding. Caution should be given to applying these results to private schools, charter schools, online cyber schools, and/or vocational technical schools. Only teachers serving for a year or longer were surveyed; the new teacher experiencing public education was not considered. The pilot group that was convened for this survey included a group that was known to the researcher. A small sample size was obtained during the research study. Finally, this study relied exclusively on teachers' perceptions and did not account for support staff personnel, students, or parents.

This study expanded upon previous research that was conducted in Alabama. Caution should be given when comparing these results to those found in Alabama. Pennsylvania is a collective bargaining state, while Alabama is a right-to-work state. There are different laws and compensation between these states that govern teacher pay and retirements. These extrinsic factors could factor into a teacher's commitment. This is one study in one state that is measuring commitment through a single instrument. Commitment can be influenced by a number of variables, not just school climate.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of school climate on teacher commitment in Title I schools. Data were obtained through two survey instruments, the OCI and the OCQ. The subtests within the OCI acted as independent variables: collegial leadership, professional teacher behavior, achievement pres, and institutional vulnerability. These independent variables were compared to the dependent variable of organizational commitment as measured by the OCQ. This study differed from previous research on

school climate and teacher commitment as demographic questions were asked about grade level taught, years of experience, and gender. This research also occurred in a different state, Pennsylvania, than the other two studies, Alabama.

It was found that school climate variables do correlate to and influence organizational commitment. Achievement pres had the strongest influence on commitment, followed by collegial leadership, and finally, the weakest influence of professional teacher behavior. A negative statistically significant relationship was found between institutional vulnerability and commitment. The four independent variables accounted for 48 percent of the variance in commitment.

This research expanded upon previously completed research on school climate and teacher commitment. When schools set high expectations for their learners, recognize when students meet and exceed these expectations, examine all options when presented with an issue, encourage students to go above and beyond expectations, and protect the school from interests that seek to influence the school negatively, while also encouraging parents to be active in pressing for school improvements, commitment among the teaching staff within the school building will increase by over half.

An educated populace is critical to keep our society functioning. To accomplish this monumental task, qualified, dedicated, and committed educators are needed. At a time when few people choose education as a viable career, it is imperative that educational leaders, policy makers, students, and teachers themselves do everything they can to ensure that the dedicated personnel we do have remain with the students who need them, particularly in areas stricken with the most difficulty in retaining quality educators. If, as a society, we fail to meet these demands, a generation of underserved students will

result, which will leave our society further behind. Good passionate educators are in demand; now more than ever.

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Appendix A

Organizational Climate Index Survey

Directions: The following are statements about your school, Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes your school from **rarely occurs** to **very frequently occurs**.	Rarely Occurs	Sometimes Occurs	Often Occurs	Very Frequently Occurs
1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.	①	②	③	④
2. A few vocal parents can change school policy.	①	②	③	④
3. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	①	②	③	④
4. The learning environment is orderly and serious.	①	②	③	④
5. The principal is friendly and approachable.	①	②	③	④
6. Select citizens groups are influential with the board.	①	②	③	④
7. The school sets high standards for academic performance.	①	②	③	④
8. Teachers help and support each other.	①	②	③	④
9. The principal responds to pressure from parents.	①	②	③	④
10. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.	①	②	③	④
11. Students respect others who get good grades.	①	②	③	④
12. Teachers feel pressure from the community.	①	②	③	④
13. The principal maintains definite standards of performance.	①	②	③	④
14. Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically.	①	②	③	④
15. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	①	②	③	④
16. Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.	①	②	③	④
17. Students try hard to improve on previous work.	①	②	③	④
18. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	①	②	③	④
19. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	①	②	③	④
20. The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation.	①	②	③	④
21. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	①	②	③	④
22. Parents press for school improvement.	①	②	③	④
23. The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.	①	②	③	④
24. Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	①	②	③	④
25. Teachers in this school exercise professional judgment.	①	②	③	④
26. The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	①	②	③	④
27. The principal is willing to make changes.	①	②	③	④
28. Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students.	①	②	③	④
29. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	①	②	③	④
30. Teachers are committed to their students.	①	②	③	④

Appendix B

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire

THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
(MOWDAY, STEERS, AND PORTER, 1979)

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization. (R)
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar. (R)
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization. (R)
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely. (R)
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees. (R)
13. I really care about the fate of this organization.
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

Note: Responses to each item was measured on a y-point scale with scale point anchors labeled: (1) strongly disagree: (2) moderately disagree: (3) slightly disagree: (4) neither disagree nor agree: (5) slightly agree: (6) moderately agree: (7) strongly agree. An "R" denotes a negatively phrased and reverse scored item.

Appendix C

Organizational Climate Index Statements Related to Climate Categories and Research Questions

Climate category	Survey no.	Survey statement	Research question
Collegial Leadership (CL)	1	The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist.	1c
	3	The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal.	
	5	The principal is friendly and approachable.	
	10	The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them.	
	13	The principal maintains definite standards of performance.	
	20	The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation.	
	27	The principal is willing to make changes.	
Professional Teacher Behavior (PTB)	8	Teachers help and support each other.	1b
	18	Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.	
	21	Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	
	23	The interactions between faculty members are cooperative.	
	25	Teachers in this school exercise professional judgment.	
	28	Teachers “go the extra mile” with their students.	
	29	Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	
Achievement Pres (AP)	7	The school sets high standards for academic performance.	1a
	11	Students respect others who get good grades.	
	15	Students seek extra work so they can get good grades.	
	16	Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards.	
	17	Students try hard to improve on previous work.	
	19	Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school.	
	22	Parents press for school improvement.	

	24	Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them.	
Institutional Vulnerability (IV)	2	A few vocal parents can change school policy.	1d
	6	Select citizens groups are influential with the board.	
	9	The principal responds to pressure from parents.	
	12	Teachers feel pressure from the community.	
	26	The school is vulnerable to outside pressures.	

Appendix D

Correspondence

Invitation to Participate: Superintendent

Dear (Dr., Mr., or Ms.) Superintendent of Schools,

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Department at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, I am conducting research for my dissertation regarding organizational climate's influence on organizational commitment. In addition to being a doctoral student, I am currently employed as an Elementary Principal in the Mifflin County School District.

This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. David, Professor and Chair of Employment and Labor Relations at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Piper can be reached at [contact information removed].

I would like to administer two survey instruments: the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). With your written permission, the surveys would be sent electronically to your teaching staff. Only those members of your staff who have a year or more of experience will participate.

The survey typically lasts 10 minutes. Teacher, school, and district anonymity are guaranteed; none of this information will be used in the study. Teachers will not be asked to sign off on their surveys unless they would like to qualify for a gift card. No identifying codes will be placed on survey responses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kevin J. O'Donnell Jr.
Doctoral Candidate

Invitation to Participate: Teacher

IUP E-Mail

Date

Dear Teacher,

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Department at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. I am conducting research regarding organizational climate's influence on organizational commitment. The purpose of this study is to determine which climate factors, if any, influence teacher commitment.

This study has two survey instruments; one is the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). These surveys will be given in succession and will take just a minimal amount of time to complete. The Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board and your district's superintendent gave approval for this research, which is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. David Piper, Professor and Chair of Employment and Labor Relations at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Piper can be reached at dpiper@iup.edu or 724-357-4471. In order to participate in this study you must: (1) have taught for at least one year and (2) teach in a school district that receives Title I funding. Any questions about this study can be directed to me, through the contact information below.

I realize that your time is valuable, but I assure you that the information you provide will help inform educational leaders as to the importance of school climate and its relationship to job commitment.

This whole process will take less than 10 minutes to complete. If you consent and agree to your participation please note that it is voluntary and you may end the survey at any time, which will not result in penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no known risks or discomforts anticipated as a result of participation. Your complete anonymity is guaranteed. You will not be asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code will be place on the surveys. Also, your school will not be identified in the study.

At the end of the survey you will have the option of entering a drawing for a $50.00 Amazon gift card. Your e-mail will be required if you wish to participate in this drawing. However, your e-mail information will be kept separate from your survey responses to ensure response anonymity. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study and there are no direct benefits.

While I may professionally know you there is no way to know who did or did not take this survey as such, this cannot affect my professional relationship with you. As per Institutional Review Board protocol, all data and consent documents will be maintained for three years in a locked cabinet in the researchers office.

By clicking the survey link below or by copying and pasting into the applicable web browser, and completing the survey you are consenting to your participating in the study.

Once submitted, your data cannot be withdrawn from the study as there would be no way of knowing which data belongs to which individual.

Respectfully,
Kevin J. O'Donnell, Jr.
rwst@iup.edu
Doctoral Candidate

Invitation to Participate to Teacher (reminder e-mail)

IUP E-Mail

Date

Dear Teacher,

If you haven't participated yet, please consider participating in a research study being conducted to examine the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment in Pennsylvania. There is still time to submit your survey. The purpose of this study is to determine which climate factors, if any, influence teacher commitment.

This study has two survey instruments; one is the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). These surveys will be given in succession and will take just a minimal amount of time to complete. The Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board and your district's superintendent gave approval for this research, which is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. David, Professor and Chair of Employment and Labor Relations at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Piper can be reached at dpiper@iup.edu or 724-357-4471. In order to participate in this study you must: (1) have taught for at least one year and (2) teach in a school district that receives Title I funding. Any questions about this study can be directed to me, through the contact information below.

I realize that your time is valuable, but I assure you that the information you provide will help inform educational leaders as to the importance of school climate and its relationship to job commitment.

This whole process will take less than 10 minutes to complete. If you consent and agree to your participation please note that it is voluntary and you may end the survey at any time, which will not result in penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. There are no known risks or discomforts anticipated as a result of participation. Your complete anonymity is guaranteed. You will not be asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code will be place on the surveys. Also, your school will not be identified in the study.

At the end of the survey you will have the option of entering a drawing for a $50.00 Amazon gift card. Your e-mail will be required if you wish to participate in this drawing. However, your e-mail information will be kept separate from your survey responses to ensure response anonymity. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study and there are no direct benefits.

While I may professionally know you there is no way to know who did or did not take this survey as such, this cannot affect my professional relationship with you. As per Institutional Review Board protocol, all data and consent documents will be maintained

for three years in a locked cabinet in the researchers office.

By clicking the survey link below or by copying and pasting into the applicable web browser, and completing the survey you are consenting to your participating in the study. Once submitted, your data can not be withdrawn from the study as there would be no way of knowing which data belongs to which individual.

Respectfully,

Kevin J. O'Donnell, Jr.

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Doctoral Candidate