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Perceptions of Urban School Principals on Urban Teacher Retention

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
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Walden University
2020

Abstract

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MA, Prairie View A & M University, 1998

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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August 16, 2020

Abstract

Researchers have indicated that principals can play a crucial role in motivating teachers to stay or leave. The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of principals who work in urban schools as related to overcoming the high attrition of teachers in their schools. Using transformational leadership theory as a framework to address research questions, data were collected from semistructured interviews with 12 principals. Using a 7-question interview protocol, this study sought perspectives on causality of urban teachers' attrition, including leadership practices that help with hiring, sustaining, and retaining teachers on urban school campuses. Interviews were examined using open-coding techniques with thematic analysis. The data was examined for patterns and themes. The three themes that emerged from the data analysis were (a) principals impact teacher retention, (b) school culture is important to teacher retention, and (c) personal connections increase the probability for teacher retention. Further recommendations include continuing research with a larger participant population to add greater context to the findings. The findings from this study may lead to positive social change because it could improve the quality of the educational experience provided to students in urban school communities.

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Dedication

This process was a lofty journey. Many memorable challenges were prowling. I started my doctoral quest May 2017. April 2018, our home was flooded from a tropical depression. Seven months later, Hurricane Harvey caused our home to flood a second time. I was constructing my dissertation alongside rebuilding my home. March 2020, a pandemic. May 2020, the country had multiple protests all states. Many sacrifices were made, but I had lots of support from family and friends. My faith in God carried me through this entire journey. By his grace, I did it.

I would like to thank my wonderful husband, Kevin, who amidst a tumultuous three years of crafting this dissertation and having two children kept me focused on finishing this dissertation. Your work ethic and how you provide for your sons and me, has inspired me on this journey. Thank you for being my rock during times I would sob about my job and being a student trying to balance it all. I could not have done this without you being on my side. I love you.

To my two lovely sons, Kenan and Kenton, thank you for allowing mom the time to work on her study. You supported my goal even when I sometimes did not attend school functions or missed out on eating at the dinner table to discuss your day. Thank you for being my support and for cheering me on when things got to be to much. Mom has plenty of hours to spend with you now. I love the two of you dearly.

Acknowledgements

Dr. Flanders, I could not have been assigned a more caring, thoughtful, insightful, and dedicated chair. I would text or call, and you would be quick to respond or talk. You put me at ease often during this process. I am truly appreciative of your guidance and support. I would not have changed anything about this journey with you as my chair. Everyone should be so lucky to have you as a chair. If not for your support, I may have stopped during those extreme moments in my life. You would tell me; you can do this. I thank God for providing me with a chair that understood me and how to lead me to ascertaining a doctoral degree. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for everything!

Dr. Billings, thank you so much for being an amazing committee member. You gave me excellent feedback. You challenged me to write concisely. Your expertise with the qualitative methodology was evident in your approach in helping me to write the dissertation. Thank you for supporting me. I sincerely appreciate you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The problem addressed in this study is why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. Teacher retention within urban settings may be one of the most prominent concerns for the school district (Warrick, 2018). On the local level, the Texas Academic Performance Report (2019) showed the teacher turnover rate between the 2012 and 2018 school years, increased by 2%. Also, when comparing the 2017 and 2018 Texas Academic Performance Reports, the local district has a turnover rate of 4 % points higher than the state. Green and Muñoz (2016) identified that nationwide there is an increased demand for teachers to fill vacancies when teachers leave the profession. According to the Texas Education Agency (2019), approximately 31% of the teachers who began teaching in public school systems of Texas during the 2013 - 2014 school year continued to serve in those schools by the 2018 - 2019 school year.

Lack of enough teachers in urban schools affects students' ability to learn and reduces teachers' effectiveness (Rumschlag, 2017). In addition, high attrition of teachers costs districts large amounts of money for training and hiring when monies could be used for other budgetary items (Warrick, 2018). However, if school systems can improve upon the factors that create a high turnover, they can reduce the demand for teachers who are in short supply.

While there are several published studies conducted on teacher retention from the perspectives of teachers about reasons for leaving or staying in urban schools, few professional studies have contributed to a better understanding through the perceptions of

local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district (Johnson, 2016; Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). Effective principals help with retaining quality teachers and influence success associated with educating students and academic achievement (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Green & Muñoz, 2016). Accordingly, the role of a principal is to provide an environment that promotes good working conditions, support growth, and motivation for job satisfaction.

This study contributes to existing knowledge by exploring the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the background of the problem, the problem statement, and purpose of the study, significance of the study for leadership, nature of the study, the research question, and the hypotheses. Chapter 1 concludes with a discussion of the conceptual framework upon which the study was based and provides operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations related to the research.

Background

This study addressed a gap in the research by examining the perceptions of local school principals regarding consistent high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings and adds to the research on teacher retention. While there is an abundance of research on teacher retention from the perspectives of teachers, there is a lack in research on teacher retention from the perspectives of urban school principals. The role of the principal is to create a supportive environment that promotes good working conditions and student achievement. According to Williams (2018), effective principals are better able to retain teachers when they create good working conditions through greater support, improve job

satisfaction with positive learning environments, and provide various opportunities for professional growth.

This study was conducted because student achievement is connected to teacher's stability and principals' influences on teachers staying or leaving schools; thus, it is important to investigate how principals can support working environments that teachers do not leave because of the leadership. The potential findings from this study might lead to positive social change by enhancing the professional literature regarding how to develop a cohesive system of education reform considering all principals' influence on teacher retention (Glazer, 2018; Lambersky, 2016).

Problem Statement

The problem addressed within the research study is a low retention rate for teacher candidates hired within an urban southern school district. Teacher retention within urban settings may be one of the most prominent concerns for a school district (Warrick, 2018). On the local level, the Texas Academic Performance Report (2019) showed the teacher turnover rate between the 2012 and 2018 school years, increased by 2.2%. Also, when comparing the 2017 and 2018 Texas Academic Performance Reports, the local district's turnover data to the state's, presented a 4.1% increase. Lack of enough teachers in urban schools affect student's ability to learn and reduces teachers' effectiveness. In addition, low retention of teachers, costs districts money because of the cost of training and hiring when monies could be used in other budgets. Teacher attrition and turnover is a continuous concern in the United States (Burkhauser, 2017). However,

if school systems can improve upon the factors that create high turnover, they can reduce the demand for teachers who are in short supply.

Through an extensive review of the literature on teacher retention, a gap was found in the research when understanding the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings (Cowan, Goldhaber, Hayes, & Theobald, 2016; Johnson, 2016; Liebowitz & Poter, 2019). The role of a principal is to provide an environment that promotes good working conditions, supports growth, and a motivates for job satisfaction. The proposed study will seek to fill the void in understanding the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings in a southern state.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of local school principals through interviews as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. An examination and understanding of the perceptions of urban school principals within the local district is necessary to address high teacher attrition rates within their buildings. Current principals' perceptions and experiences were investigated to determine factors that influence teacher attrition. Potential positive social change for this research may be an understanding of how teacher retention can improve in southern urban school district

The qualitative study explored the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings using

semistructured interviews with open-ended questions. Semistructured interview questions were prepared based on the transformational leadership theory. Transformational leadership theory includes four salient dimensions: idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016). These aspects of transformational leadership align with the research on teacher retention and supports a more in-depth understanding of leadership practices that help with hiring, sustaining, and retaining teachers on urban school campuses. I emailed and sent letters to 20 principals from a list provided by the district. The goal was to have a minimum of 10 principals in the sample. Rubin and Rubin (2012) conceived that credibility in qualitative research does not require large numbers of interviews, but enough to portray the diverse perspectives present in the sample. With the interviews, I sought to capture qualitative data from real-life events and perspectives of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings and how teacher attrition rates can be reduced within urban settings. According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), researchers understand social phenomena better through capturing the experiences of participants instead of making predictions about the participants' experiences.

To obtain relevant data in a controlled manner, data collection for the study consisted of transcribing interviews, taking field notes, and journaling (Butin, 2010). Coding analysis happened after the data was collected from the interviews. Last, I used NVivo software to capture reoccurring themes and patterns from the participants' interviews. Responses were tallied by the frequency of occurrences, then reported out.

Research Question

In alignment with the problem statement, the research question for this qualitative study is: What are the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

Conceptual Framework

By using the transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978) as a framework, I explored if a principal's leadership characteristics influence teacher retention (Allen, Grigsby & Peters, 2015). Berkovich and Eyal (2018) ascertained leaders play an essential role in shaping building-level factors affecting new teachers' attitudes toward the profession and their sense of efficacy as educators. As a transformational leader, a principal engages and inspires all stakeholders to higher levels of performance (Sun & Henderson, 2016). Before teachers leave schools, administrative leadership can influence decisions to stay or leave (Glazer, 2018). I used interviews to explore teacher retention through the perceptions of local principals on high teacher attrition rates within urban settings. Semistructured interviews were conducted to gather principals' perspectives of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. Transformational leadership includes four salient dimensions: idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016). These aspects of transformational leadership align with the research on teacher retention and supports a more in-depth understanding of leadership practices that help with hiring, sustaining, and retaining teachers on urban school campuses.

Nature of the Study

I employed a qualitative approach using interviews. A qualitative design was selected because it is the most appropriate to answer the research questions. The qualitative approach allowed me to describe the experiences and perceptions of the urban school principals and not impose set parameters as often found in surveys used in quantitative studies. Principals in a large urban southern school district were interviewed using semistructured interviews. The primary goal of these interviews was to obtain powerful insight into the lived experiences of the individual principals (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Interviews provided the rich data needed to identify the common themes in the perceptions of the school principals and their practices.

Definitions

Terms specific or prevalent throughout the study are defined as follows:

Teacher Attrition is defined as teachers moving schools and leaving teaching (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Transformational Leadership is defined as providing inspiration towards constant change through idealized influence, inspirational influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration (Mayes & Gethers, 2018).

Urban schools are defined as metropolis schools serving students from low-social economic communities (Lee, Akin, & Goodwin, 2019).

Assumptions

Assumptions are basic facts or asserted convictions assumed to be true but have not yet been substantiated (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I made several assumptions for this

study. First, all participants will answer the questions honestly. Thus, the data obtained from the interviews were an accurate reflection of their perceptions. Second, criteria for inclusion in the study for principals was appropriate for the topic. Therefore, it was assumed that all participants had the expected experience related to the study. Last, participants had sincere interest in the study and do not have a conflict of interest or possibility of personal gain through participating.

Scope and Delimitations

The design of the research study analyzed the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. The population contained principals currently working in urban schools. I interviewed each participant only once for this study. I selected principal participants with a variety of experience levels to represent a spectrum of perceptions. The participants were told the study was voluntary and provided their consent before being interviewed. A delimitation of qualitative research is the ability to discover information. It is important for the researcher to discovery central themes and analysis of core concerns in qualitative research (Ravitch & Carl 2016). A delimitation is that peer-reviewed research is presented in this study. Further delimitations include the guidelines of qualitative research methods.

Limitations

There are numerous limitations to the study. I elected to limit the study to administrators from urban schools because most urban schools experience high teacher turnover. I also limited the study to one southern urban school district. Further, the

research sample size was a limitation of the study. A disadvantage of qualitative approaches is that findings cannot extend to wider populations as can be the case with some quantitative analyses (Ravitch & Carl 2016). The study includes qualitative data gathered for qualitative analysis of school principals who work in urban schools. The findings may reveal biases from principals who have had extensive teacher turnovers and high attrition. For the purpose of this study, the focus was limited to urban schools instead of suburban or rural schools. Further limitations include focusing on schools the south, instead of including the entirety of the United States.

Significance

The study addressed a gap in practice described in the research literature by exploring perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within an urban southern school district. The potential findings might lead to positive social change by preparing urban school principals for improved school organization, culture, and working environments that support better recruitment, training, and retention of teachers. Likewise, this study may help to inform local educational policy in efforts to address key factors that drive teachers from the local school district. Educational leaders and policymakers may use the results of this study to facilitate professional conversations regarding how to develop a cohesive system of education reform taking into account principals' perceptions and experiences on teacher retention (Glazer, 2018; Lambersky, 2016).

Summary

The qualitative study using interviews was designed to contribute to existing knowledge through the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings influencing teacher's job satisfaction allowing exploration from the perception of principals. This topic is significant because there is a need for more research in the field of education the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. Chapter 1 provided an overview of the background of the problem, the problem statement, and purpose of the study, significance of the study for leadership, nature of the study, the research question, and the hypotheses. Chapter 1 concluded with a discussion of the conceptual framework upon which the study was based and provides operational definitions, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations related to the research. In Chapter 2, I present a review of the literature on transformational leadership and teacher retention.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The problem addressed in this qualitative study was low retention rate for teacher candidates hired within an urban southern school district. The purpose of the qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of local urban school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. Glazer (2018) research revealed that principals might be in the best position to influence working conditions conducive to retaining effective teachers. The potential findings might lead to positive social change by preparing urban school principals for improved school organization, culture, and working environments that support better recruitment, training, and retention of teachers. Likewise, this study may help to inform local educational policy in efforts to address key factors that drive teachers from the local school district. Educational leaders and policymakers may use the results of this study to facilitate professional conversations regarding how to develop a cohesive system of education reform taking into account principals' perceptions and experiences on teacher retention (see Glazer, 2018; Lambersky, 2016).

The study addressed a gap in practice that is described in the research literature by exploring perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban school district. The potential findings might lead to positive social change by preparing urban school principals for improved school organization, culture, and working environments that support better recruitment, training, and retention of teachers. Collaboration, open communication, and strong working environments for teachers increases teacher satisfaction and could minimize the risk of

low teacher attrition (Grissom, Viano, & Selin, 2016). As evident in research, principals' leadership practices can affect how teachers feel about personal decisions to leave or stay (Burkhauser, 2017).

Literature Search Strategy

To find current, purposeful research for this study, I searched the literature using the following databases: SAGE Journals, Educational Source, ProQuest Central, Science Direct, Walden University Library, and Google Scholar. Using Boolean phrases and combination of different key words such as *teacher attrition, retention, administrative support, effective school leadership, transformational leadership, school culture, urban schools, teacher motivation,* and *working conditions*. The searches were limited to majority published works within the last 5 years, and mostly peer-reviewed education journals. I read articles relevant to the research topic which provided the best background knowledge for the research problem statement, purpose, and research question. I also read each study to determine methodology and study quality for valid correlations to my study. Chain searching using Google Scholar was performed to determine if other researchers had cited particular works. Seminal studies were included in the literature if they added importance to the field and to the topic. When appropriate, governmental reports, archival data, and state accountability reports were also in this literature review. From within the literature related to causality of teachers' attrition, some themes emerged, including leadership influences on teacher's attrition and retention, school climate effects such as job satisfaction, and working conditions. This chapter provides an extensive discussion of these themes as relates to the study.

Conceptual Framework/Theoretical Foundation

The conceptual framework for the qualitative study is based upon the transformational leadership theory. Andersen, Bjørnholt, Bro, & Holm-Petersen (2017) noted that a transformational leader inspires, builds team, and creates high expectations for all stakeholders. Critical to the success of every principal, student, and school across the United States, is quality leadership and positive school climate (Romero and Krichesky, 2017). As a transformational leader, the principal is responsible for creating a climate that is supportive and directive. A principal who is a transformational leader engages teachers, students, and all stakeholders to a higher degree of motivation (Prabowo, Mustika, & Sjabadhyni, 2018). Transformational leaders support and create school environments that buffer job stress yet fosters high levels of commitment to a successful school.

Transformational leadership theory is a multidimensional construct divided into factors such as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Martinez, 2019). Thus, sincere relationships between teachers and administrators could be important to lower teacher attrition in urban schools. Player, Youngs, Perrone, & Grogan (2017) established that principals may be in the best position to influence working conditions conducive to retaining effective teachers. While there is an abundance of research on teacher retention from teachers' being surveyed and studied, teacher retention from the perspective of principals is worth further exploration (Johnson, 2016; Hammonds, 2017; Grissom, & Bartanen, 2018). Consequently, the real-life experiences from principals currently in the education field can inform educational

leaders about leadership characteristics relating to a reduction in teacher attrition (Wiyono, 2017).

Transformational leaders have vision and generate enthusiasm which strengthens stakeholder's commitment to the organizational goals (Mayes and Gethers, 2018). However, the vision may not be shared and sometimes leads to negative consequences such as teachers leaving schools. Therefore, this study is significant because there is a need for more research in the field of education for improving leadership to sustain good working conditions that ultimately improve student learning, and lower teacher attrition (Hammonds, 2017). The Transformational Leadership Theory provides a significant lens through which to examine the perceptions of urban school principals for why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban Southern school district. Understanding these causes of high teacher attrition, educational leaders and policy makers might use the results of this proposed study to facilitate professional conversations regarding how to develop a cohesive system of education reform that takes into account principals' influence on teacher retention (Lambersky, 2016)

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable

The literature used was relevant to the research topic which provided the best background knowledge for the research problem statement, purpose, and research question. Therefore, I read each study to determine methodology and study quality for valid correlations to why high rates of teacher attrition happen in urban schools. Most of the studies were published within the last five years. The key themes that emerged from the literature review are discussed in this chapter.

Retaining Teachers

Teacher retention within urban settings may be one of the most prominent concerns for the school district (Warrick, 2018). On the local level, the Texas Academic Performance Report (2019) showed the teacher turnover rate between the 2012 and 2018 school years, increased by 2.2 percent. Also, when comparing the 2017 and 2018 Texas Academic Performance Reports, the local district has a turnover rate of 4.1 percentage points higher than the state. Berry and Shields (2017), Geiger and Pivovarova (2018) addressed the current issues of teacher turnover and how teacher attrition identified as key challenges in meeting the demand for effective teachers in U. S. public schools. The researchers' related teacher attrition issues to be perilous to students' academic achievement and future retention of teachers in urban schools. The proposed study will lead to more attention to empowering teachers to stay in schools with leaders who exhibit working conditions for students reaching higher academic standards.

For decades, educational leaders have expressed concern about teacher shortages because of a lack of teacher retention in the United States. Losing quality teachers attributes to underachievement in urban schools (Young, 2018).

Teacher Shortages

The current issues of high teacher attrition have been identified as key challenges in meeting the demand for effective teachers in urban public schools (Adnot, Dee, Katz, & Wyckoff, 2017). Thus, consistent finding in this literature is that teacher retention is lower in schools that serve high proportions of minority students, low-achieving students, or students with low family income. Multiple researchers connect teacher attrition issues

to be poor academic achievement in urban schools (Atteberry, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2017; Geiger and Pivovarova, 2018).

The study will lead to more attention to empowering teachers to stay in urban schools with leaders exhibiting working conditions for students reaching higher academic standards. According to Berkovich and Eyal (2018), more attention is devoted to investing in strengthening the teaching profession both to combat teachers' high attrition and to build their capacity to help all students meet the higher academic standards need for 21st century.

Substantial high teacher attrition poses a challenge to staffing public schools with effective teachers (Erichsen & Reynolds, 2019). Teacher experience is one of the main indicators of teacher quality (Ryan, Von der Embse, Pendergast, Saeki, Segool, & Schwing, 2017). Consequently, early career teachers who leave the profession are lost prior to the development of teaching expertise. Therefore, districts spend lots of money training teachers who do not remain, and they do not benefit from the realized potential of experienced teachers (Berry and Shields, 2017).

Another staffing urban schools challenge is hiring lateral entry teachers from Alternative teaching programs. Zhang and Zeller (2016) research revealed that lateral entry teachers coming from alternative programs are more likely to work in schools with high populations of poor students. Whereas full certified teachers are more likely to work in affluent schools. None the less, leaving students with the greatest need staffed by those with the weakest training (Grissom, Bartanen, & Mitani, 2019). Personnel decisions matter when it comes to student achievement.

Potential Reform

The primary concern of this research is addressing effective ways to address teacher attrition (Cowan, Goldhaber, Hayes, & Theobald, 2016). Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas (2019) concluded that policymakers need to invest in strengthening the teaching profession both to combat teachers' high attrition and to build their capacity to help all students meet the higher academic standards needed for the 21st century.

Gulosino, Francechiuni, & Hardman (2016) affirmed, until the states improve teacher preparation and working conditions, public school systems will continue to experience shortages of caring competent, and qualified teachers. Sustaining programs that support and strengthen the teaching profession is a political problem. Therefore, there is a need for educational reform for teacher attrition and retention. Schools staffed by highly effective teachers have effective student achievement.

Teacher retention reform is a global concern. Hallinger, Hosseingholizadeh, Hashemi, & Kousari (2018) sought to fill a gap in literature in Iran. The researchers study found policy implications to the capacity of principals leading campuses and the connections to how teachers perceive their working conditions and weather they leave or stay. They concluded that leadership impacts schoolworking conditions, school improvement, and teacher attrition. In South Africa, Naidoo (2019) research found connections between effective principals help with retaining quality teachers and success associated with educating students and academic achievement. This study influences

educational reform by revealing the importance of effective principals' practice to school improvement and student academic achievement.

Principal Effectiveness

Collie, Granziera, and Martin (2018) study built on the proposed topic of teacher retention and attrition, promoting a positive workplace experience that increases teacher commitment. The research supported the concept that principals have a noteworthy influence on teachers' workplace experiences and student achievement. The principal can impact the campus success through promoting a positive workplace environment for all stakeholders. Understanding the dynamics between principals' leadership capacity and workplace environments to retain teachers may provide rich data to be used in professional practices.

Among current trends in the study of teachers' retention is job satisfaction in urban schools. Green and Munoz (2016) research indicated an overall job satisfaction correlates significantly to preparedness, school leadership, independence, and time. Hence, research focused on leadership perspectives on how leadership programs prepare principals for retaining, hiring, and sustaining teachers can positively impact teacher satisfaction and improving working conditions, retention, productivity, and student learning in high need urban school districts Holme, Jabbar, Germain, & Dinning (2017) study also found that teacher turnover poses a challenge to staffing urban public schools with effective teachers. This study informs the proposed study through understanding leadership practices as relates to retaining and hiring teachers that stay in urban schools.

Ingersoll, May, & Collins (2019) examined the challenges of teacher retention in urban schools and discovered teacher turnover poses a challenge to staffing public schools with effective teachers. The topic of teacher attrition and retention informs the proposed study through understanding leadership practices as relates to retaining and hiring teachers that stay in urban schools (Walker & Kutsyuruba, 2019). Yet, consistent in the research is higher attrition in schools with high proportions of minority students, low achieving students or students with low family income. Many researchers have suggested that when principals are engaged in the needs of teachers, proactively lead with high expectations, and support collegial environments among staff, have shown increased staff retention at higher rates (Roberson-Kraft, and Zhang, 2016).

Important to reducing teachers' attrition, is a teachers' ability to sustain commitment and avoid experiencing burnout because of their satisfaction with the working environment. Baptiste (2019) more research is needed in the field of education for improving leadership training and preparation of leaders to sustain good climates that ultimately improve student learning, and lower teacher attrition.

Johnson (2016) qualitative study on effectiveness of educational leadership programs examined existing principals' perceptions of university educational leadership preparations and professional learning. According to Sun and Henderson (2016) the leadership preparations lacked in human resources and most research on leadership preparations programs showed inconsistency in leadership programs across the nation. The studies provide evidence for more research in improving leaders' training that sustain

good working conditions and improved academic opportunities (Prilleltensky, Neff, & Bessell, 2016)

Anderson, Bjornholt, Bro, & Holm-Petersen (2017), explored patterns of continuity and change in turnaround leadership research by comprehensively reviewing the related literature in the education context. The research provides a succinct review of turnaround research shed light on schools needing to be staffed with leaders who are willing and able to make essential changes for successful reform that helps build solid knowledge for the proposed research. Moreover, Liu (2018) analysis of the antecedents of turnaround leadership and their paths and effects on improving school effectiveness is important because it provided knowledge for effective leadership training and preparations.

Warrick (2018) emphasized the plausibility of leaders in the future will need to be capable of not just managing an organization well, but capable of building healthy, high performing organizations as well. It is a leader's example, knowledge, skills, values, practices, and commitment to excellence, or lack of capabilities in all of these factors, most influence the performance, motivation, and morale of their followers the results suggest that school leadership and particular school personnel practices may be a driving force in effective schooling

Holmes, Parker, & Gibson (2019) concluded in a critical review of literature that these factors affect teacher mobility: lack of administrative support, poor working conditions, low student achievement, and demographic and socioeconomic differences between teachers and the students they teach. With the results from research on school

mobility, schools are better able to build a staff for strong teachers' retention of good teachers, through recruitment and hiring, and through providing supports for teacher improvement.

Poor Working Conditions

Johnson (2016) qualitative study on the effectiveness of educational leadership programs examined existing principals' perceptions of university educational leadership preparations and professional learning. According to Johnson (2016), the leadership preparations lacked in human resources, and most research on leadership preparations programs showed inconsistency in leadership programs across the nation. The studies provide evidence for more research in improving leaders' training that sustains good working conditions and improved academic opportunities for students

Effective principals help with retaining quality teachers and have an influence on success associated with educating students and academic achievement. Baptiste (2019) confirmed that leadership effects school culture and ultimately impact teachers' ability to positively teach for learning and student achievement. Central to teacher attrition is the continuous decline in student performance and low educational outcomes in public schools the poor leadership displayed by many principals (Hanushek, Rivkin, & Shiman, 2016). Principals successfully leading and managing schools increase the potential for high student performance on state standards and accountability (Naidoo, 2019).

Berry and Shields (2017) affirmed, "Until the states improve teacher preparation and working conditions, public school systems will continue to experience shortages of caring competent, and qualified teachers "p. p. 7-8. Sustaining programs that support and

strengthen the teaching profession is a political problem. This article supports the need for educational reform for teacher attrition and retention. Schools staffed by highly effective teachers have effective student achievement.

Culturally conscious principals create and put into practice clear visions for their organization, strengthening a campus culture that is motivating their staff toward higher standards, and have established creditability (Bush, 2018). Grissom, Viano, & Selin (2016) described effective leadership as leadership that focuses on appealing to a faculty's higher level of personal commitment.

Teaching is a complex job often accompanied by high workload and extreme demands, therefore, understanding workplace experiences is beneficial to policy makers and school districts (Collie, Granziera, & Martin, 2018). Using input from principals in urban schools to understand teacher attrition and retention as relates to positive workplace culture increasing teacher commitment adds valuable information for schools to grow leaders and attract and keep teachers (Day, Gu, & Samons, 2016).

Liebowitz and Poter (2019) reviewed the relationships between principal behaviors and student, teacher, and school outcomes. They found significant evidence supporting investing in school leadership capacities. School principals play a vital role in ensuring a positive culture for teaching and learning in schools. The article provides evidence for more research on leadership effects on retaining and lessening attrition and improved learning conditions.

Collie, Shapka, Perry, & Martin (2016) study investigates the motives for teacher attrition of newly qualified teachers who never started a teaching career and those

dropping out after a short period. They concluded that many teachers experience disappointment regarding expectations of what teaching could be like. Important to my proposed study, they also concluded in the findings that teachers who are offered administrative support, are less likely to resign.

Summary and Conclusions

Research has clearly shown that understanding the dynamics of a principal's impact on creating effective school culture is crucial because it reveals possible causes to teachers leaving the profession quicker than universities can develop future teachers (Baptiste, 2019). Central to teacher attrition is the continuous decline in student performance and low educational outcomes in urban public schools, the poor leadership displayed by many principals. The primary reason this study supports the proposed research study is that principals are successfully leading and managing schools increase the potential for high student performance on state standards and accountability.

Research has continued to support that school principals' practices make a difference on improving students' academic success and impacts teacher attrition when lacking to provide a good workplace environment (Geiger and Pivovarova, 2018). Lack of enough teachers in urban schools affects students' ability to learn and reduces teachers' effectiveness (Rumschlag, 2017). Besides, high attrition of teachers cost districts large amounts of money for training and hiring when monies could be used in other budgets (Warrick, 2018). However, if school systems can improve upon the factors that create a high turnover, they can reduce the demand for teachers who are in short supply.

While there are several professional studies conducted on teacher retention from the perspectives of teachers about the reasons for them leaving or staying in urban schools, few professional studies have contributed to a better understanding through the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district (Johnson, 2016; Liebowitz & Porter, 2019). Effective principals help with retaining quality teachers and influence success associated with educating students and academic achievement. (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Green & Muñoz, 2016).

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore administrator perceptions of causality of locally high teacher attrition in an urban school in the south. In Chapter 3, I describe and provide the rationale for the qualitative research and basic qualitative study design. I describe the methodology, including participants and participant selection, as well as explain the plan for data collection and analysis. The section concludes with a discussion of the ethical issues involved in this study.

Research Design and Rationale

Qualitative research is not limited to any one discipline, theoretical perspective, or approach (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). There are broad approaches to qualitative research. These include action research, case study, ethnography, and phenomenology (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The purpose of qualitative research is "to discover and describe in narrative reporting what particular people do in their everyday lives and what their actions mean to them" (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 7).

Qualitative research can cross multiple disciplines, fields, and subject matters. The practices of this research design include a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. Participants in this qualitative study were performing their everyday functions and behaviors. Qualitative research provides the means to study things in their natural settings and to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Qualitative research is about observing, understanding, and engaging with people as having vast expertise and specifically in relation to their own experiences (Ravitch &

Carl, 2016). Furthermore, within qualitative research, people's perspectives and lived experiences are deeply connected to contexts that shaped their lives; how people experience aspects of their lives and the world is subjective and can change over time (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Qualitative research is influenced by people's subjective interpretations of their experiences, events, and other inquiry domains (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

According to Rubin and Rubin (2012), researchers understand social phenomena better through capturing the experiences of participants instead of making predictions about the participants' experiences. A basic qualitative design was chosen because it was the most appropriate to determine the experiences of the participants in a real-life context (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The qualitative study captured personal understandings and experiences relating to locally high teacher attrition rates causality of increasing teacher retention of affected urban school principals through semistructured interviews with open-ended questions. Research questions explored principals' perceptions based on transformational leadership theory's four salient dimensions of idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016).

Research Question

In alignment with the problem statement, the research question for this qualitative study is: What are the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

Role of the Researcher

My role as the researcher was to be an objective interviewer. I sought to understand and record the perspectives of the local school principals in the district. Following the basic qualitative study protocol for this research, I was the sole means of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. I conducted the interviews as well as transcribed and coded the data. In addition, for a more reliable study, all participants received a copy of the interview transcript to read and correct any discrepancies. In addition, participants were reminded of the confidential nature of the interview and were invited to contact me with questions.

As it relates to the principals involved with the study, they were given verbal and written communication of the purpose of the study, ensured anonymity, and I also informed participants of how I intended to use the results. Because I worked in the same district as the participating principals, it was important to be open and forthright about the process to ensure that participants felt safe in sharing their perspectives and experiences. Also, my role as a interviewer was clearly made known. I had not interacted with any of the principals prior to the study.

I addressed my potential biases by engaging in self-reflection through maintaining a reflexivity journal to record my thoughts. It was critical to avoid biased information when reporting insights of participants (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). More importantly, reliability and credibility of the study is greater.

Methodology

In this section, I discuss the design of this qualitative study. I explored the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. I conducted a qualitative study that used individual semistructured interviews seeking answers to perceptions of local school principals related to how teacher attrition rates could be reduced within urban settings. This study was exploratory because it sought to establish grounds for future research into the selected topic (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In this section, I discuss participant selection, data collection, and analysis methods.

Participant Selection

A purposeful sample of principals from a large urban southern school district. They were be asked to participate in face-to-face semi-structured interviews. Semistructured interviews are used when the researcher has a "specific topic to learn about and prepares a limited number of questions in advance and plans to ask follow-up questions" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 31). Research questions will be based on Transformational Leadership four salient dimensions; idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016). These aspects of Transformational Leadership align with the research on teacher retention and supports a more in-depth understanding and insights into principals' experiences that support with hiring, sustaining, and retaining teachers on urban school campuses. The foremost goal of the interviewing is to obtain rich data needed to identify the common themes in the perceptions of the school principals.

All recruitment was done in an ethical manner. To begin my study, I completed the district's process for gaining approval to conduct a research study on their campuses and obtained a letter of cooperation from the district Office of Accountability and Research. The data collection process happened over the phone and I used the Otter application for audio recording.

Once Institutional Review Board (#04-17-20-0739100) approval was obtained from Walden University, I contacted the human resources department at the school district to obtain a list of principals leading schools in which children from low-income families make up at least 40 percent or higher enrollment. According to Title I, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2015), schools with 40 percent or greater are considered to serve high numbers of under advantaged children.

Rubin and Rubin (2012) conceived that credibility in qualitative research does not require a large number of interviews, but enough to portray the diverse perspectives present in the sample. I emailed minimum of 20 principals from the list provided by the district. My goal was to have a minimum of 10 principals in the sample size. Potential participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and the procedures. Ravitch and Carl (2016) stated that "the selection of the participant group requires a clear understanding of the goals of the research questions about the context and populations at the center of the inquiry" (p. 128). I fully outlined the steps that would be taken to maintain their privacy and secure the collected data. Upon confirmation from potential participants, I provided the participant with a copy of the informed consent form for their records.

Instrumentation

For data collection, I used semi structured interviews (see Appendices A & B), also known as qualitative interviews (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). By conducting a semi-structured interviewing format, I was able to ask the follow up questions related to the research questions that were not included in the protocol. Thus, the data collected is rich in meaning to addressing the local problem and research questions. The data collection instruments (see Appendices A & B) are sufficient to answer the research questions because the questions are broad enough to provide rich information yet narrow enough to focus on the constructs under investigation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The interview followed a conversational style, building on the social aspect of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee. Because the interview was conversational in nature, it allowed for authentic two-way interactions between the researcher and participant (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). I had a clear agenda and questions prepared that were aligned with the research questions, but I allowed for the context and setting of each interview to help guide the follow-up questions. I used open-ended questions in order to engage the interviewees in a topic discussion as I aimed to understand and make meaning from their experiences and perceptions. To increase validity, I had other school leadership personnel not a part of my study to review my interview questions to provide me input for improvement or revision.

Data Analysis Plan

Collected data must be analyzed in order to develop meaning. Ravitch and Carl (2016) recommended using an analytic process including (a) compiling, (b)

disassembling, (c) reassembling and arraying, (d) interpreting, and (e) concluding. This is a non-linear process, according to Saldana, which may require me to move back and forth through the steps until the conclusions are complete.

A formal analysis was done by transcribing the interviews precisely in a word processing document. Next, I compiled the participants' responses with lots of notes I took during the interviews and conduct a preliminary exploratory analysis to obtain an overall sense of the collected data. Then, break the compiled data down into smaller pieces in a disassembling procedure. I did this by highlighting repeated words, phrases or ideas and items that stimulate my interest, otherwise known as open coding (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). The coded items were sorted into higher level codes, or category codes. Then, using a spreadsheet, I sorted these codes into broader categories or themes. I repeated this process until I am certain that I have sufficiently discovered the emergent themes (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). My initial organizational plan was based on Transformational Leadership four salient dimensions; idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualism (Sun & Henderson, 2016). These aspects of Transformational Leadership align with the research on teacher retention and supports a more in-depth understanding and insights into principals' experiences that support with hiring, sustaining, and retaining teachers on urban school campuses.

After the data have been coded and sorted, they must be reassembled, as noted by Rubin and Rubin (2016). This will involve organizing the fragments of data into groupings that may not have been in my original notes. I will create a matrix to illustrate the data graphically, which may help me see patterns that I did not see before.

Next, in the process is to interpret the data. This involves creating a new narrative with relevant graphs or tables that will serve to illustrate or support my findings. This narrative will help me explain the data in rich description. This part of the process will require me to move between inductive and deductive reasoning and between concrete data and abstract concepts (Rubin & Rubin, 2016). It is during this stage that I answered the research questions. A comprehensive interpretation should contain the following elements: completeness, fairness, accuracy, value-added, and credibility (Saldana, 2016). After I completed the work described above, I emailed the transcripts back to the participants along with my analysis to have them member check the findings of the study. I asked the participants to verify whether these assumptions are accurate and reasonable based on their interview (Saldana, 2016). The participants had 5 days to respond.

Lastly, I had to draw conclusions. The data I collected, and the interpretation determined the conclusions I drew in this phase of the study. Conclusions are statements that elevate my interpretation to a conceptual level. In this phase, I will communicate the larger significance of the study. There were several ways in which I concluded my study, including calling for new research; challenging conventional stereotypes; presenting new concepts, theories or discoveries about social behavior; and generalizing to other situations (Saldana, 2016).

Trustworthiness

In a qualitative study, the researcher takes precise actions to strengthen the credibility of a study. Credibility calls into the question the researcher's ability to accurately depict the perspective of the participant. Although a researcher needs to allow

for discovery and unexpected findings, using an orderly set of research procedures helps

minimize careless work. In addition, by avoiding any obvious bias and deliberate

distortion of findings, I built trustworthiness. I developed trustworthiness through

attentive study design and application (Saldana, 2016).

To address transferability and credibility, I sought to accurately depict

participants' experiences and perceptions. In addition, the participants were allowed to

read and critique the interview transcripts and data analysis results to correct any errors

found from the interviews and findings. In doing this, I was able to specifically examine

any congruence or incongruence with the study findings and concepts or ideas in the

research literature. In addition, I used member checking, as well, to increase

trustworthiness. A colleague who had no direct connection to the study and had

conducted doctoral research was asked to read and scrutinize the results and discussion

notes to offer alternative points of view not previously considered.

I followed all research protocols established by the Walden IRB (#04-17-20-

0739100) to ensure a high level of dependability. The goal of dependability is to ensure

using reasonable methods for the collection of data (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I recorded

my notes during and immediately following each interview. In addition, all interviews

were audio recorded and transcribed precisely then rechecked for exactness. I provided

rich appropriate background for the data and my rationale for all procedural decisions

(Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Dependability of the data can also be defined as the consistency

of the findings. If the same study were to be conducted using the same participants and

methods, similar results would be obtained, then it would be considered to be dependable

(Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Rubin and Rubin (2012) recommended thoroughly describing the process conducted in the study to act as a pattern that another researcher might follow to obtain similar results. Confirmability is closely tied to dependability and refers to the accuracy and neutrality of the data.

Confirmability depends on the data being based on the experiences of the participants, not on those of the researcher (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The researcher must be clear about biases that may be present and work to minimize the influences of those biases on the data throughout the collection process. As an assistant principal myself, I am aware that I have my own opinions about what motivates me and affects my professional practice. I also am employed in the same district where the study was conducted, which could have affected my perceptions and beliefs about the topic. As I read through the interview transcripts, I engaged in a reflective bracketing process to help document any bias as it arises (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). As part of this bracketing process, I used a reflective journal to help me prepare in advance for the interviews, bringing to light any ideas or issues that might affect my opinion or subjectivity. Another aspect of reflective journaling is the reflection itself. This stage was important for me to be cautious about the interviews, any bias that may have occurred, and on the organizational process as a whole. It is normal for researchers to have bias, as noted by Rubin and Rubin (2012), however practices such as bracketing can help me document and discover how my own experiences and biases could potentially influence the research outcomes. The researcher must be clear about biases that may be present and work to minimize the influences of those biases on the data throughout the collection process.

Ethical Procedures

I took into consideration the Code of Ethics from the American Educational Research Association to ensure ethical standards of research are met. Which, includes maintaining integrity, taking responsibility for my own work, showing respect for people's rights, demonstrating social responsibility, and maintaining professional competence (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Therefore, a systematic approach to collecting, analyzing, and presenting data will be utilized to ensure that this study is ethically sound and addresses potential biases. Qualitative research is subjective in nature, thus bias and unethical behavior can easily take place if safeguards are not in place at the onset of the data collection process (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

I did not conduct this study, nor did I contact potential participants until the proposal was approved by the Walden University (IRB #04-17-20-0739100). I then obtain informed consent from the participants via email once the study had been approved. I explained the purpose of the study, the procedures and the potential risks and benefits to each participant. Also, I discussed the confidentiality process and the steps I would take to ensure their identity was protected. Each participant was given the opportunity to ask questions before signing their agreement.

Participation in this study was voluntary. From the start of the study, it was essential that as the researcher, I disclosed the purpose to the participants, ensure that they understood their roles, and to make sure that they were willingly providing consent (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). This study did not involve any vulnerable populations, but I made clear from the onset of each interview that all responses would remain confidential,

and that they could choose to opt-out of the study at any time. This information was provided both verbally and in written form to each participant. Every effort was made to maintain the confidentiality of the participants.

Also, to protect the collected data, the digital files of the interviews and interview transcripts will be kept in a password protected file. Any written documents will be kept in a locked file cabinet, then shredded and destroyed after 5 years. In the reporting of the final outcomes, only aliases will be used, and no school sites will be named. In addition, no identifying information such as age, or location of the participants will be used in the narrative. An alphanumeric system was used to distinguish the various participants. I will share data with the participants or relevant district officials upon request, but participants will remain anonymous.

To address ethical issues related to data collection and analysis, I ensured that all participants are aware of what data are going to be collected, how data are going to be used, who will have access to data, and how the results will be reported. Because qualitative research is dependent upon the development of a trusting relationship between the researcher and the participants, data will be discrete and participants not identifiable.

Summary

This section contains a description and rationale for the study design: participant selection; instrumentation; procedures for recruitment, participation, and data collection; data analysis plan; developing trustworthiness, and ethical procedures. This qualitative study used semi structured interviews for data collection. The interviews are transcribed, coded, and arranged into themes. A rich, descriptive narrative was written to fully present

the participants' perceptions. The results of this study provide insights into urban school principals' perspectives through their lived experiences. Chapter 4 will present the results of this study based on the research explore administrator perceptions of causality of locally high teacher attrition in an urban school district in the south questions as grounded in transformational leadership.

Chapter 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of local

school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a

large urban southern school district. An examination and understanding of the

perceptions of urban school principals within the local district was necessary to address

high teacher attrition rates within their buildings. I used the basic qualitative approach to

answer the research question: What are the perceptions of local school principals as to

why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

In this chapter, I describe the setting in which data collection took place, the

demographics, and participant characteristics that are related to the study. I explain my

data collection techniques, give an overview of data analysis, present the results of the

study, and offer evidence of trustworthiness. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Setting

The setting for this study took place in an urban southern school district.

Principals from this district were asked to participate in 45-minute semistructured phone

interviews. The district currently has eight high schools, five ninth grade schools, 13

middle schools, 1 intermediate school, 39 elementary schools, 12 early childhood/pre-

kinder schools, two alternative schools, one-night school campus, and one credit recovery

campus. The enrollment of the district at the time of this study was nearly 70,000

students. The population of the district is significantly diverse: 73% of students were

Hispanic, 23% were Black, 2% were White, 1% were Asian, and 7% were wo or more

Races. Additionally, 73% were considered at risk, 34% were limited English proficient,

99.8% were designated as qualifying for Title 1, and 89% were considered economically disadvantaged. Important to note, on the local level, the Texas Academic Performance Report (2019) showed the teacher turnover rate between the 2012 and 2018 school years had increased by 2%. Also, when comparing the 2017 and 2018 Texas Academic Performance Reports, the local district's turnover data to the state's, presented a 4.1 percent increase.

Table 1

Demographics of the Participants

Participant	Years as Principal	Campus Level	Gender
P1	12	Elementary	M
P2	1	Elementary	M
P3	2	Elementary	F
P4	2	Elementary	F
P5	2	Elementary	F
P6	4	Elementary	F
P7	7	Elementary	F
P8	1.5	PreK/Kinder	F
P9	1	Elementary	F
P10	8	Elementary	F
P11	5	Elementary	F
P12	1	High School	F

Data Collection

Twelve principals participated in this study. Participants experiences ranged from 1 to 12 years as principal in an urban school setting. After receiving Walden Institutional Review Board approval, each principal received the informed consent invitation through email. After receiving principals' consent, I contacted each principal to schedule phone interviews.

All interviews were auto transcribed using the Otter online application. Participants were reminded that interviews were confidential, and they could withdraw consent at any time. I explained the design of the interview and the interview protocol. After each interview, I shared the transcriptions with all participants to ensure that it was an accurate account of their perspectives on the topic.

Phone interviews took place from May 2-May 16, 2020 and ranged from 20-45 minutes. I used prepared, prewritten, self-designed interview questions during the interviews and also asked additional questions for clarity, for elaboration or to probe for additional information. I took handwritten notes and also audio-recorded interviews to ensure accuracy.

After I transcribed the audio-recorded interviews, I emailed each participant a copy of their interview transcript. I asked participants to read and verify the interview transcriptions for content accuracy and to respond with any discrepancies or clarifications within 72 hours. Participants exited the study after member checks were completed. Next, I read and annotated each transcription to get a sense of the patterns and trends throughout the interviews.

Data Analysis

I answered the research questions by thoroughly reading and reviewing the interview transcripts multiple times and using open coding with thematic analysis. All data and research related material is being kept confidential and secure by using NVivo for data storage. The data is password protected. I followed Saldana (2016) methods for data analysis and coding. He suggested that qualitative data should be analyzed line by

line as to identify themes and categories of interest. Saldana added that researchers should look for codes to emerge during the data analysis process. After thoroughly reviewing the data through the open coding process, I reviewed the codes for emerging themes.

I used Saldana's (2016) recommended steps to analyze the data in this study. I organized and prepared the data for analysis by reviewing the written transcripts. I read through the transcribed data and reflected on the information provided by the participants, then began a detailed analysis using the coding process by organizing the data into sentence segments and then into categories and labeling the categories with terms that were used by participants. In addition, I used the coding process to develop a description of the participants and represented the themes' descriptions in the qualitative narrative. I included the themes that emerged during data analysis in the narratives to represent findings from the participants' responses. Finally, I interpreted the meaning of the data. Primarily, I focused on and made meaning of the participants' perspectives of their experiences, paying specific attention to exact language, and to the conclusions drawn by each participant.

During the data analysis of participants' interview transcripts, several common themes and patterns emerged. The following major themes were developed from participants' responses to the interview questions:

- Principals Impact Teacher Retention
- School culture important to teacher retention
- Personal connections support teacher retention

Theme 1: Principals Impact Teacher Retention

The campus principal is very instrumental to retaining teachers. They are influential to promoting a positive workplace environment for everyone. Participants expressed that they see the importance to providing a supportive and collaborative workplace to help with teacher retention. Participant P2 stated that "the workload is demanding, so I support as much as I can by learning with my teachers, so I stay connected to the amount of demands placed on them." He went on to state that he supports by being a lead learner. Participant P1shared the same sentiment that supporting staff by modeling growing as a leader. He stated, "it is important to the campus culture that the teachers see leadership growing as learners." Participant P7, an eight-year principal, indicated "if administrators offer genuine support and assistance to teachers, students benefit, and they achieve."

In reference to providing a collaborative culture, P3 shared, "as the coach, I am not off to the side. I am right there in the game." She has seen teachers' mindsets shift when they see principals doing the work alongside them. P4 also stated "I stay consistent with communicating the vision for our campus." Collaboration is amazing for retaining teachers. All of the participants communicated professional learning communities as instrumental to keeping a support and communication valuable.

Theme 2: School culture important to teacher retention

Collectively, the participants believed that school culture was priority to keeping teachers. Principals identified various elements to campus culture. P2 stated, "leaders must value staff to get the best from them." It is important for teachers to feel a part of

the community. Several of the participants spoke about a favorable work climate will influence and motivate teachers to stay in urban schools. P7 described the importance of a principal to stay aware of the climate and culture, "we try and make sure people feel valued. We give them input and decision-making power. We learn things about them and their families to make person connections." Additionally, P9 echoed that principals' play a key role in building culture. She stated, "make them feel a part of our practices and policies." Having a supportive environment is essential for motivating teachers to staying in urban schools. She shared, "the biggest thing a principal can do to retain teachers is to support and recognize their efforts."

Another important aspect for school culture is an awareness to culture and putting safeguards in place. P10 stated, "your leadership style impacts the culture. What you are putting forth for your culture is important to retaining your staff." Participant P11 also shared, "I believe sometimes teachers may feel incompetent, they may feel inadequate. I have to try and figure out ways to support them. It could be training or just a listening ear." P12 also shared, "people are trying to balance the heavy workload of obligation. I have to be more supportive." She went on to say, "I have to be intentional to check on them efficiently every two weeks."

Theme 3: Personal connections support teacher retention

An interesting theme emerged from the interviews with all participants was the fact of personal connections supporting teacher retention. Majority of the principals discussed being deliberate in connecting to staff personally. P1 spoke of:

I hire a young teacher for reading. I might be looking at another young qualified

teacher for math to team with so that camaraderie and connection happens easier.

They are looking for some type of connection to develop relationships.

Another principal P3 shared, "personal connections with your staff and getting to

know them for who they are as an individual, and just getting to know them on a personal

level is important." She indicated that by having conversations and not just talking about

school has made personal connections and she keeps staff. She added, "this is a simple

innovative idea to keep staff excited you know and feeling connected." P5 stated that

"I've always found a way to make teachers feel that they can rely on each other, that we

can count on each other not just for schoolwork." She was concerned about teachers feel

she cared about them beyond campus life. P7 shared that "school principals must work

really hard to build relationships with our teachers." She continued to say, "we go above

and beyond to try and make personal connections with them." She shared that she

personally interviewed all newly hired staff for her campus. This principal expressed that

people tend to stay places where they are connected and feel happy. She shared, "you

should not stay somewhere you are not happy." Life is to short, not to be happy."

Most of the principals saw celebrating staff accomplishments as making personal

connections and building relationships. Participant P8 stated:

A principal should build rapport and relationships for a positive campus

environment. For example, celebrating by making birthdays special, or

acknowledging a new grandmother, or cultural holidays. We are not just talking

about PLC, or general things, but making sure they know we care about them in general.

Results

Research participants were interviewed to gain insight about their perspectives and experiences as to why there persist a high retention rate in urban schools. Individual participants were identified using alphanumeric codes in both interview transcripts and results. This section presents results based on participants' responses to the interview questions that relate to each research question. Further discussion of these themes is provided in Chapter 5. In order to address the research question, principals were asked six questions related to teacher retention is urban schools. A disaggregation of themes related to each of the interview questions is included in the following sections.

Interview Question 1

The first interview question was: What do you think are the causes of high rates of teacher attrition with urban settings? Themes related to lack of support, inadequate preparations, cultural differences, demanding workload emerged from responses to this question.

Lack of support. Principals unanimously agreed that teachers are more likely to leave because of lack of support from leadership, parents, peers, or district level administrators. P2 stated that "If teachers do not see the support from administrators or from their school community, they will look for a new school or profession." Participant P3 shared:

When the school level district people do not offer support for major discipline

issues through policy, or procedures to support them, they will unsupported by

them get fed up and they leave. She also believes they need parent support with

students' behavior issues.

Participant P5 described how she offers support early by assigning mentors to teachers

needing support. She prefers to take a more proactive approach. By offering coaching and

guidance, she knows teachers will not feel they are doing the work alone.

Inadequate preparations. Participants also discussed the need for teachers

coming into teaching needing to be prepared to work in urban schools. P8 expounded on

how teachers coming from the universities are lacking in classroom management and

have a tough time with discipline in communities with high numbers of disadvantaged

students. P6 echoed with "teachers come with passion and dreams and want to do the best

they can." She went on to say, "but, the reality of handling students having behavior

issues is difficult to cope with." Participant P1 stated:

When teachers come from the university or alternative certification programs they

have not been exposed to the rigorous workload and students from low social

economic issues. They have a tough time balancing the two. These are urban

school issues that teachers may not be used to. So, the result is the possibility of

them leaving the campus.

P6 also spoke about teachers may not stay in urban schools because it is difficult. He

said, "teaching has changed and really requires teachers to meet the needs of the whole

child. When they experience all that comes with educating students in urban schools, it can be difficult for them to remain in the school."

Cultural differences. Some of the participants reported feeling like teachers leave urban campuses because the find it difficult to relate to the cultural norms of impoverished communities. P7 shared the following on cultural differences:

Well I think some of the causes are some teachers come inadequately prepared to deal with some of the students who happen to be in schools that are in urban settings. They are not able to identify with the cultural differences of some of the students.

P9 addressed cultural differences by stating "often times teachers are not equipped to make the connections with the demanding work in urban setting to help students to be successful." P11 put a different viewpoint on the table for addressing cultural differences:

Based on some of the feedback I've had from teachers is the lack of social emotional support for students. Many teachers that serve students in urban school settings have the compassion to make a difference. Working in urban settings present a challenge. It is presented as challenging because we see in our classrooms as an extension of the low socio-economic conditions for which most of our students are from. As a teacher, it is very difficult to address those particular challenges by yourself. You need support of other entities. Most of us in urban settings need a wealth of social emotional learning.

Demanding workload. Participants noted that the workload demands of teaching has increased. Participant P2 stated, "attrition can be attributed to the actual difficulty of the profession." He believed that the teaching profession had changed and really required teachers to address the whole child. Participant P3 also believed workload demands to be influential to teacher attrition. She assigns mentors with teachers that need support because she wants them to receive immediate supports. She shared, "I designate a mentor to support and this could help teachers to keep them encourage to stay in the profession." P4 echoed the other participants by stating. "one reason for high attrition is because of them getting burnt out from all of the requirements and mandates from state and local levels." Most of the principals related demanding workload to be something they had no control over. They just offer supports such as, mentors, professional development, open communications, and emphasizes on campus culture.

Interview Question 2

The second interview question was: How have you, as the school principal, worked to retain effective teachers? Themes related to support systems, focus on climate, and principals' awareness to personal connections emerged from responses to this question.

Support systems. Principals indicated an importance to having strong support system to retaining teachers. The interviews eluded to different supports. Support in forms of professional development, content knowledge, mentorship, coaching, or effective communication. In regard to support as coaching, P1 stated, "I communicate yes I am the appraiser, but I am also your coach to offer a support system." P2 also shared,

"if they do not see the support from administrators and school community, teachers leave for the next school or profession." So, having a support system can retain teachers. "lack of supports cause teachers to get fed up, frustrated, then leave.", stated P3." We must value the work being done. This thought process was repeated by P6, saying, "this is done by being intentional in providing specific support for each teacher based on his/her needs." Both participants P5 and P6 shared that they have planned out how to communicate support to their staff and see the retention of staff increasing.

Focus on climate. Every principal was quite aware of climate and culture connections to retaining staff. They each had some uniqueness in how they focused on climate. Participant P4 addressed climate by offering opportunity to a leadership academy. She stated, "we offer opportunities for growth professionally by allowing for leadership around the campus. We focus on growing leaders to empower teachers." P5 offered, "I support by being available and visible in classrooms." She communicated how this allows her to address any struggles quickly and to offered support right away. Addressing specific essentials of staff, helps teachers to experience the principal as a coach. P9, shared, "I have learned as a first-year principal is building relationships and letting teachers know that I am in the trenches with them." However, it was not evident that it was successful over time. No responses indicated links to data or from a historical spectrum of how many teachers stay or for how long they stay on the campuses.

Principals' awareness to personal connections. This discovery of personal connections was interesting. This sub theme features little things the principal does to

show personal connections. P7 explained how she used social emotional learning to show she values them:

> The start of school this year, we had a week of social emotional learning through counseling services. We were able to make connections as a newly formed staff in just one week. Sometimes it takes years for people to make relationships.

To have a positive campus climate, relationship building is important. Participant P8, explained, "to build relationships, we celebrate staff. We celebrate birthdays, recognize special holidays, and on a personal level any special moments staff have such as, births of children/grandchildren, and graduations." P9, shared how she does her connecting, "make teachers feel a part of practices and policies for the campus." I asked her to share more specifics to how she makes connections. She shared, "teachers have expressed they are grateful that they can come comfortably to her to talk about anything." Even if they were sharing frustrations, P9 noted, they still communicated those concerns going on to state, "There seems to have been a shift from let us keep this professional to I need to learn about you more as a person to connect more on campus."

Interview Question 3

The third interview question was: How do you perceive leadership impacting high/low rates of teacher attrition with urban settings? Themes related to leadership matters, supporting effective practices, and keeping an open mind emerged from responses to this question.

Leadership matters. Principals all concluded a principal heavily impacts teacher attrition. Some things they shared pertaining to leadership: Participant P10, stated, "staff

needs to know the principal is in charge with a clear vision." The principal should communicate the expectations and the direction the campus is steering towards. "P2 remarked, "if you are always about the bottom-line, you will loss staff." P3, answered, "I must make sure that we have structure and stability." She defined structure as supportive, open minded, a great communicator. Also, she stated, "your campus will fall apart without good leadership." Principals must be the lead learners. P5 said, "you should be doing the same things you ask teachers do. You must model what is expected." P4 shared, "leaders must remember the multiple hats teachers wear." She discussed how listening and understanding builds a climate of support. P9 poetically stated, "people do not leave campuses where they are happy. Therefore, leadership matters."

Supporting effective practices. Emerging from the interviews was this theme. Principals that follow effective practices retain teachers. P9 conversed people in your building are important. You must push them to grow and help them to see their potential. P10 echoed the same message that you support with training. She stated, "training can span from the teacher needing classroom management, academic, or social emotional learning. Supporting staff is important to retaining them." Participant P11 shared:

> I have a conversation with them about what their needs are as a teacher and how to make sure that I'm rendering support to be effective in the classroom and with that also talk to them about their personal plan for professional development. If the case may be, promotion or whatever. I develop those relationships and also meeting teachers where they need the support.

Keeping an open mind. I concluded from the principals' interviews that no teacher will stay on a campus where leadership is not open to opinions or suggestions. Participant P4 spoke of how she encouraged out of the box thinking. She also has a campus leadership academy to inspire future leaders. Participant P9 also believed that principals should push teachers to grow.

Interview Question 4

The fourth interview question was: Explain how you perceive high rates of teacher attrition impacts student learning? Themes related to lack of proficiency and loss of community emerged from responses to this question.

Lack of proficiency. Retaining teachers is important to students' academic achievement. All of the principals agreed that student learning is impacted by high rates of attrition. P1 got emotionally connected to this theme. P1 stated,

It is devastating. In particular for African American boys. Having a new teacher consecutively, doubles the risk of low achievement. For example, students in second grade have new teacher coming into teaching and learning how to teach. Then, those students get another new teacher in third grade, possibly brand new, you will start seeing they do not have the academic proficiency that they need. As a principal, you know it is the direct result of the fact that they have had consecutive years with new teachers.

P3 responded with, "teacher attrition impacts the student learning and there is constant turnover, a rotating door and students are not able to have continuity of structure." In urban settings, students thrive on structure and stability.

P6 elaborated on the effects of longevity on quality instruction. She stated,

when a team has been working together over time, they know one another's

strengths and weaknesses. So, that is going to transfer to the students' instruction

and to the students' academic achievement. So, I was saying that they need to stay

to grow in the delivery of instruction. I would say at least three years to be

beneficial to the students.

P9 shared:

the students are the ones that suffer in the long run. This year, for example, I've

had vacancies that I had from the start of school. I had a teacher starting mid-year.

He came late, so my students were behind. Then, they had to catch up with

building culture in the classroom and building the academic side. Teacher

vacancies is a hard trial to go through as a campus. When students have long term

substitutes all school year, it will impact students' grades.

Loss of community. Some of the principals made connections to teacher attrition

affecting the school community. Students miss opportunities to know teachers' multiple

years for a sense of community. P3 shared this:

Whenever a campus experiences high turnover year after year, students miss

connecting to teachers, and they are not seeing the same teachers on campus. For

example, a student might see [a specific teacher] that taught in 1st grade, but they

are now in 3rd grade remembering the teacher from years ago.

P7 shared,

When you have a different group of teachers every year, that is going to affect student learning. Students learn best where there is structure and stability. If every year you got a huge turnover rate, that is saying and speaking volumes what is going on a campus. That is an issue with climate. As a principal, you should ponder, why do people feel like I got to get out of here after only nine months. Kids need the best that we can offer them, that means the best teachers and best instructional practices.

Interview Question 5

The fifth interview question was: How do you perceive transformational leadership characteristics impacting teachers' decisions to stay or leave urban school settings? Themes related to principals are learners, lead with vision, and creativity in leadership emerged from responses to this question.

Principals are learners. P10, shared, "as a principal, you must beware of your own need to learn and grow. I feel that we are all leaders, the principal is not the only leader. However, I must model professional development." P5, shared "a good leader is going to produce good staff and the staff is going to produce good results that will impact the student academic achievement."

Lead with vision. P12 put it like this, "you have to communicate your vision, and you have to be safe enough to say I do not have all of the answers, but this is where I want to see us go. If we have the same vision, we are getting people on board with us." P10 shared, "communication is an important piece with teachers. They need to know what direction and expectation of the principal." P7 shared, "we try and make staff feel

valued. We encourage them to have input in decisions made on campus. I want them to know I value them. I am an open communicator."

Creativity in leadership. P8 talked about that she had a teacher wanting to use yoga to help with classroom management. She elaborated on the fact that teachers have ideas and leaders should inspire creativity. She said, "schools that are committed to keeping and supporting teachers create an attractive environment that may appeal to teachers staying." P7, echoed this thought saying, "teachers need to be able to be in a school where they can be productive and have autonomy to be creative and think outside of the box."

Interview Question 6

The sixth interview question was: How do you see transformational leadership as important to teaching attrition within urban settings? Themes related to engagement on campus and positivity and retention emerged from responses to this question.

Engagement on campus. When principals and teachers share leadership, this strengthens engagement and cohesiveness. P9 stated, "you need to must connect with people, that is a huge thing with being the leader recognizing and connecting with your staff, and if you do not connect with them, you are going to lose them." P10 shared, "give positive feedback that is honest, helps with communication and engages teachers." She also, discussed having an open door for communication, and showing respect for teachers' opinions encourages engagement. P12 echoed with this, "you must model expectations and communicating them. Engaging people in those conversations has been helpful in people wanting to stay." P5 summoned up engagement up with this, "principals

that offer good working conditions and engage staff will increase likelihood of teachers staying."

Positivity and retention. P3 shared a story of a time with her coaches sharing how a teacher did not seem to respond to the support. She said, "you are going to model and coach or that teacher until they get it. I want to empower and strengthen teachers." P5 said this:

> You are motivating teachers to do their best. Principals should look for their potential and strengths, and to learn from mistakes. Not just focus on the weaknesses, yet to help them overcome the weaknesses.

Reinforcing the role of positivity, P7 shared, "people tend to say places where they are connected. They feel connected and happy. My personal thing is, you should not be somewhere you are not happy. Life is to short, not to be happy."

Evidence of Trustworthiness

I conducted this study by establish trustworthiness of data through the implementation of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability strategies. I informed each participant that the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Before the interview, I established a rapport with the participants and encouraged them to be open and honest in their responses. During the interview, I used probing questions or asked the participant to elaborate. Also, I recapped and verified the responses. Furthermore, I ensured credibility in the study by allowing the participants to read interview transcripts and give offer valid recordings of their responses. This enabled me to fill in any information for clarity. This process allowed participants two

opportunities to verify their responses. After themes were developed, I conducted member checks by emailing a summary of the data analysis to each participant. I did not receive any feedback from the participants for changes. Finally, I had a peer review to confirm accuracy and quality.

Regarding transferability, it would be precarious to make generalizations from this single study and apply it to other situations. This study offers enough details about the fieldwork so that readers can decide if their own potential research environment is a similar enough situation for the study's findings to be applied. I used rich description so that future researchers can make decisions about the possible transferability of the findings.

I addressed dependability throughout my research practices in this study by utilizing detailed description of the steps taken during this research process. These descriptions included raw data, the process of analysis, and correspondence with participants, and all other notes relevant to this study. This will enable readers to gain a thorough understanding of the methods used. Future researchers could repeat the work in a similar situation and gain the same results.

I sought to ensure confirmability through examining my own assumptions by utilizing a reflexivity journal. In qualitative studies, researchers are expected to not only collect data, but to also analyze and interpret participants' responses, perspectives and experiences. The journal allowed for documenting the coding process, personal thoughts, interpretations of the data, and reasoning for determining specific themes. I was able to

reflect to beware of my own biases, positions, and values. Lastly, I ensured transparency so that the study was done through honesty.

Ethical Procedures

Obtaining approval from the appropriate Institutional Review Board; ensuring confidentiality, anonymity, and transparency; and obtaining informed consent are all instrumental components of ethical considerations in data collection (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). In conducting research, it is important to keep all ethical obligations such as, keeping information disclosed during the course of the study confidential, and all identities should not be disclosed. In addition, when doing a study, participants should fully be aware of the purpose, benefits, potential risks, allowed to ask questions, and to give full consent. When conducting this study, I obtained all required permissions and approvals from Walden University, school district administration, and the participants.

I secured all research data by keeping participants information anonymous and using NVivo store and maintain confidentiality. A password protected USB drive held all notes. Data will be stored for a period of no less than 5 years after Walden has officially accepted the dissertation. All electronic data will be destroyed by means of deletion.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. Twelve principals were interviewed, with years serving as principal ranging from one year to twelve years. Data were analyzed using open coding and thematic analysis, and three themes emerged. Themes include:

Principals impact teacher retention, school culture important to teacher retention, and personal connections support teacher retention.

All research participants agreed that there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition in urban schools. Each participant gave an account of the effects of this problem in urban schools. Principals identified leadership impacting teacher attrition, school culture is important to retaining teachers, and teachers need personal connections to remain in urban schools. Collectively, the participants concluded that high rates of teacher turnover can result in school instability, disruption of a cohesive culture, and lessen student opportunities to achieve academically.

In chapter 5, I summarized and interpreted the study's findings and described the study's limitations to trustworthiness, recommendations for further research, the potential impact for positive social change, and empirical implications, Lastly, I provided a conclusion to the study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. Twelve principals from this district participated in semistructured phone interviews. Data were coded and put into themes based on participants' interview responses to the research questions. Participants responses to interview questions provided a range of perspectives and experiences from principals who have been involved in retaining staff on their campuses. The three themes that emerged from the data analysis were (a) principals impact teacher retention, (b) school culture is important to teacher retention, and (c) personal connections increase the probability for teacher retention.

Interpretation of the Findings

The research question that was developed for this study was designed to help me get insight into principals' perspectives regarding examine the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. The research question was: What are the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

Theme 1: Principals Impact Teacher Retention

My research study supports the concept that principals have a noteworthy influence on teachers' workplace experiences and student achievement. Warrick (2018) emphasized the plausibility of leaders in the future will need to be capable of not just

managing an organization well, but capable of building healthy, high performing organizations as well. The participants in this study gave several accounts of the importance of leadership being instrumental to retaining teachers. P9 shared, "People do not leave a campus where they are happy, so leadership matters." Liebowitz and Poter (2019) found significant evidence supporting when there is positive interaction between teachers and school leaders, teachers are less inclined to leave. P2 said, "if you are always about the bottom-line, you will loss staff." Baptiste (2019) confirmed that leadership effects school culture and ultimately impact teachers' ability to positively teach for learning and student achievement.

Participant P3 openly shared "I must make sure that we have structure and stability." She defined structure as being supportive, open minded, and a great communicator. She also took responsibility for not letting her campus fall apart because of a lack of leadership. On the aspect of leadership matters derived from the theme, P10 shared, "staff needs to know the principal is in charge with a clear vision." The principal should communicate the expectations and the direction the campus is steering towards. Research has continued to support that school principals' practices make a difference on improving students' academic success and impacts teacher attrition when lacking to provide a good workplace environment (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018).

Theme 2: School Culture is Important to Teacher Retention

Research has clearly shown that understanding the dynamics of a principal's impact on creating effective school culture is crucial because it reveals possible causes to teachers leaving the profession quicker than universities can develop future teachers

(Baptiste, 2019). It was interesting that all the participates had unique things to share about addressing culture and climate on their campuses. P4 developed a leadership academy for her teachers. She stated, "we offer opportunities for growth professionally by allowing for leadership around the campus. We focus on growing leaders to empower teachers." P8, explained, "to build relationships, we celebrate staff. We celebrate birthdays, recognize special holidays, and on a personal level any special moments staff have such as, births of children/grandchildren, and graduations." Mayes and Gethers (201)8 found in their study that transformational leaders have vison and generate enthusiasm which strengthens commitment to the organizational goals.

Theme 3: Personal Connections

One of the greatest findings in conducting this study was the majority of the participants reported in some form making personal connections with teachers to encourage retention of staff. Transformational leaders support and create school environments that buffer job stress yet fosters high levels of commitment to a successful school. P9 stated, "you need to connect with people, that is a huge thing with being the leader recognizing and connecting with your staff. If you do not connect with them, you are going to lose them." This participant used a social emotional learning framework to foster personal connections with her team. Participant P7 explained how she used social emotional learning to show she values them. She stated that

> the start of school this year, we had a week of social emotional learning through counseling services. We were able to make connections as a newly formed staff in just one week. Sometimes, it takes years for people to make relationships.

P9 shared how she does her connecting, "I make teachers feel a part of practices and policies for the campus." She said this was paramount for creating a successful school environment and helps with teacher efficacy. P4 made connections by listening, being transparent, and open communications.

P11 expressed that she sought to understand what her teachers needs were so that she could render support. She said,

> I have a conversation with them about what their needs are as a teacher and how to make sure that I'm rendering support to be effective in the classroom and with that also talk to them about their personal plan for professional development. If the case may be, promotion or whatever. I develop those relationships and also meeting teachers where they need the support.

Connecting to staff through some of the practices mentioned by the participants aligns with the transformation leadership theory. Transformational leadership theory is a multidimensional construct that is divided into factors such as charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Martinez, 2019). My analysis of the participants' responses aligns well to previous research that a transformational leader provides an environment that is supportive, peaceful, safe, happy, friendly, and growth minded. When these constructs are evident in their leadership, a strong emotional bond exist in the workplace.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to a small sample size of 12 principals that currently are employed at schools in a large, urban southern school district. Therefore, perspectives

from participants in this study may not be reflective of a larger sample of principal participants in other parts of this or other states. Also, I used only those perceptions of principals in public schools. Each of these limitations presents the possibility for future study, extension, and generalizability.

Recommendations

Based on the results and limitations of this study, I have concluded that there are several topics that warrant further research. Exploring principals' perspectives from a charter school located in similar demographics is worth exploring, as there is uncertainty of whether principals in charter schools would experience some of the same effects of teachers leaving their schools. Additionally, this study had only 12 principals participating. A study with more principals could be conducted to see if different themes would emerge. Additionally, investigating into root causes for teacher attrition in urban schools with a greater number of participants in the study may obtain a deeper understanding about the contextual factors that influence high teacher attrition in schools.

Implications

I have always been attached to the notion of students in urban schools getting a valuable, stable, and effective school experience. The problem used for this study has an effect on teaching careers and the urban schools. This study can greatly impact the lives of urban school children and the teachers who teach them. Thus, this can also impact schools and school districts. This study was conducted because student achievement is connected to teacher's stability and principals 'influences on teachers staying or leaving schools, it is important to investigate how best principals can support working

environments that teachers do not leave because of the leadership. The potential findings from this study might lead to positive social change through professional literature regarding how to develop a cohesive system of education reform taking into account principals' influence on teacher retention (Glazer, 2018; Lambersky, 2016).

Furthermore, I believe this study will be in the best interest to school leaders of hard to staff schools, to prepare strategies that would improve relations with teachers and improve school climate. This could lead to a domino effect of schools adopting strategies that will propel into better campus climates with supportive leadership to help retain teachers.

Conclusion

Data from interviews conducted with 12 principals in a southern large urban school district were analyzed to examine the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within a large urban southern school district. The thorough analysis of the data collected, I determined that principals perceived teacher attrition to have a direct link to their leadership practices. Additionally, the majority of the principals had responses stating that principals' impact teacher retention, school culture is important to teacher retention, and personal connections increase the probability for teacher retention. Future studies in the local context should focus on getting perceptions from principals with school demographics from charter schools to explore comparative data. This study may not solve the difficulty of teacher attrition, but it can be an encouraging step forward. The ultimate goal of this study is to

improve the quality of the educational experience provided to students in urban school communities.

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Appendix A: Research and Interview Questions

Research Question	Interview Questions
1. What are the perceptions of local school principals as to why there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?	How long have you been a principal? What do you think are the causes of high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings? How have you, as the school principal, worked to retain effective teachers? How do you perceive leadership impacting high/low rates of teacher attrition within urban settings? Explain how you perceive high rates of teacher attrition impacts student learning. Transformational leaders foster intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivational, and individual consideration. How do you perceive transformational leadership characteristics impacting teachers' decisions to stay or leave urban school settings? How do you see transformational leadership as important to teacher attrition within urban settings?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Location: _____ **Date/Time:** _____
Alphanumeric ID:_____
Researcher Conducting Session_____

My name is _____ and I will be facilitating this phone

interview. This study will explore the perceptions of local school principals as to why

there are consistently high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings. The study adds

to the research in the area of teacher retention. While there is an abundance of research

on teacher retention from the perspectives of teachers, there is a lack in research on

teacher retention from the perspectives of urban school principals. This study is in partial

fulfillment of the Doctor of Education degree at Walden University. Data collected will

be used for that purpose only.

All data will be kept confidential, and you can be assured of your identity being

anonymous. Data will be kept for five years after the completion of the study and then

destroyed. After this interview, a transcript of the recording will be made available for

you to review and correct errors or to clarify statements. A copy of the results and

discussion section will be made available upon your request. This is a voluntary study,

and you may withdraw your consent at any time without consequence.

Before this interview, you were sent an introductory letter and a consent form to

sign and return. This interview will take approximately 30 minutes and will follow a

designed protocol.

Throughout the interview, I will use phrases such as "Tell Me More," "Could you give me an example?", "Could you explain that?" as prompts to solicit more detailed information when needed.

Do you have any questions?

If there are no further questions, let us get started with the first question.

1. How long have you been a principal?

2. What do you think are the causes of high rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

3. How have you, as the school principal, worked to retain effective teachers?

4. How do you perceive leadership impacting high/low rates of teacher attrition within urban settings?

5. Explain how you perceive high rates of teacher attrition impacts student learning.

6. Transformational leaders foster intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, inspirational motivational, and individual consideration. How do you perceive transformational leadership characteristics impacting teachers' decisions to stay or leave urban school settings?

7. How do you see transformational leadership as important to teacher attrition within urban settings?

8. Is there anything else concerning this topic that you would like to share?

Thank you for your time and cooperation.