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K–12 School Principals’ Perceptions Regarding Leadership Practices Supporting Teachers Who Experience Burnout

Veronica Parish
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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Veronica Michelle Parish

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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Walden University

2024

Abstract

K–12 School Principals' Perceptions Regarding Leadership Practices Supporting

Teachers Who Experience Burnout

by

Veronica Michelle Parish

BS, Mississippi Valley State University, 1998

MA, Delta State University, 2001

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

February 2024

Abstract

Excessive workplace stress and burnout have been persistent issues for teachers in the public school setting. The problem addressed in this project study was that K–12 school principals are inconsistently implementing leadership practices (LPs) to support teachers who experience burnout in two public school districts under study. Guided by the instructional leadership theory of Hallinger and Murphy, the purpose of this project study was to examine the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their implementation of LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. In this basic qualitative research design 10 K–12 principals from a local school district were purposefully selected for semistructured interviews. Interview data were analyzed using open and axial coding to identify themes. The themes revealed that the K-12 principals applied their LPs to (a) support teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback, (b) retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues, (c) create a positive work environment for teachers, and (d) clearly communicate curriculum expectations to teachers. These findings reinforce the need for principals to provide support aimed at preventing and mitigating burnout among their teachers whenever possible. Thus, a position paper was developed with recommendations for K–12 school principals to apply LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. By helping K–12 school principals better understand and address the needs of teachers who experience burnout, teachers may be better prepared to teach and more likely to remain in the teaching profession, prompting positive social change over time.

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Dedication

I dedicate this EdD project study to my loving, caring, and supportive family. I am so thankful for my parents, Curtis and Rosie Williams, my children, Derrick Pearson, Veronese, and Peyton Parish, V. Finally, I dedicate this study to Christopher and Monica Boddy, and Phield Parish, IV.

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Section 1: The Problem

The Local Problem

The teaching profession is stressful (Brunsting et al., 2022). Some teachers have left the teaching profession because it was challenging (Skaalvik, 2020). Workload stress can affect the performance of elementary school teachers (Hussain et al., 2021). Stressors in the work environment, such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishments, and other work-related issues have been shown to cause teacher burnout (Fotre, 2022; Hunter & Springer, 2022; Maric et al., 2021). Burnout syndrome is a reaction to excessive work-related stress (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022). Teachers have experienced burnout caused by emotional exhaustion (Grant & Drew, 2022).

Principals can influence teachers' stress (Meyer et al., 2022). Research has demonstrated that the leadership practices (LPs) of school principals can affect teacher burnout (Schaak, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022), and principals have struggled to decrease teacher burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). Principals should support teachers who experienced burnout (Skaalvik, 2020; Sneba & Maheswari, 2020) to improve their teaching practices (Cece et al., 2022). According to Rachmawati and Suyanto (2021), principals' competencies influence teachers' work commitment. The problem under study in this project study was that K–12 school principals were inconsistently implementing LPs to support teachers who experienced burnout in two public school districts.

The teaching profession is stressful, and teacher burnout affects teaching (Brunsting et al., 2022). Workload stress affects the performance of teachers (Hunter & Springer, 2022; Hussain et al., 2021) and causes emotional exhaustion (Bartosiewicz et

al., 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022). Principals' LPs affect teacher burnout (Schaak, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022) because principals influence teachers' stress (Meyer et al., 2022; Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021). Principals have struggled to decrease teacher burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022).

Teachers' burnout is an issue in schools that could be minimized through principals' support (Skaalvik, 2020). The support teachers received from school principals can depend on the principals' LPs (Shaalvik, 2020). Cece et al. (2022) and Robinson (2018) stated that principals should implement their LPs to support teachers' teaching practices. The school principal should support teachers who experienced burnout because school principals' support influences teacher burnout (Grissom et al., 2019). Moreover, school principals' support skills are characteristics of LPs (Schaak, 2020).

Work-related stress influences teacher burnout. Farmer (2020) found work-related stress to be the main cause of why teachers left the profession. Supportive principals can indirectly prevent the stress that their teachers felt (Farmer, 2020). Teachers in Farmer's study reported being required to have content knowledge of students' needs to request the necessary referrals, and as upsetting circumstances threatened the safety of students, teachers were on the frontline and these extreme expectations caused teachers to have a direct connection to the well-being of teachers. Additionally, Farmer described principal support as the measures principals implemented to make teachers' workload easier and support them to improve their instructional practices. The lack of principal support appears to play a significant role in teacher attrition (Farmer, 2020).

The setting for this project study was two public school districts located in the Southwest United States. The study site school districts comprised 102 schools with 102 K–12 principals. The sample for this study was 10 K–12 principals (two from elementary schools, Grades K-5; three from middle schools, Grades 6-8; five from high schools, Grades 9-12). According to senior school district administrators, at the study sites, K–12 school principals were inconsistently implementing LPs to support teachers who experienced burnout. According to the deputy superintendents of schools, K–12 principals at the study sites struggled to support teachers who experienced burnout.

Per a senior district administrator at one of the study site districts, teachers indicated that K–12 school principals at the study sites were inconsistently implementing LP to support teachers to remain in the teaching profession. According to a teachers' union representative for the study sites, K–12 teachers who experienced burnout similarly reported that K–12 school principals were inconsistently implementing LP to support them to remain in the schools. Historically, teachers reported the same thing. According to the Board of Education meeting minutes (the Board of Education officials for the study sites meet monthly and record their meetings), between 2015 and 2019, teachers who experienced burnout indicated that K–12 school principals inconsistently implemented LPs to support them to remain in the schools.

The superintendent of the study site schools made yearly reports to the Board of Education members about staffing placements, such as how many teachers and administrators are hired, retired, or left the school districts at the study site. The superintendent of the study site schools also compiled a staffing report yearly, and based

on the staffing reports, teachers who experienced burnout left the school districts in large numbers every academic year, with more than 45% of teachers having left since 2015. Senior district administrators, such as the superintendent of schools, associate superintendent, and deputy superintendent of schools, and Board of Education senior members met on a yearly basis to discuss staffing issues that they reported to the Board of Education members during their quarterly meetings. These senior district administrators decided in the academic year 2015 to support K–12 principals at the study sites by visiting the schools biweekly to help teachers who were experiencing burnout and found that K–12 school principals were inconsistently implementing LPs to support these teachers to remain in the teaching profession. Thus, the research problem under study was that K–12 school principals were inconsistently implementing their LPs to support teachers who experienced burnout in two public school districts located in the Southwest United States.

Rationale

Education is an evolving and stressful profession (Richards et al., 2018). It is one of the professions linked to the highest rates of stress and burnout (Brasfield et al., 2019). According to Elyashiv (2019), teachers leave the profession due to work-related stress. Bezzina and Farrugia (2022) reported that principals can help to decrease teacher burnout. Therefore, there is a need to understand how the LPs of school principals affect teacher burnout. Grissom et al. (2019) reported that principals know about teacher instructional practices, while Gui (2019) found that principals' LPs affect teacher attrition and principals should improve their LPs to support teachers' practices.

Teachers experience burnout, which is classified as behavioral, physical, and psychological, and the main factor is work-related stress (Bozkus, 2018). Sneba and Maheswari (2020) wrote there is an association between work-related stress and burnout with teachers' work performance. Skaalvik (2020) examined principals' instructional leadership and reported that emotional exhaustion was a factor for teachers' burnout. Teachers experience burnout because of work-related problems (O'Brennan et al., 2019). Bottiani et al. (2019) reported that teachers in low-income schools had higher levels of burnout and stress than their counterparts. Teacher satisfaction reduces teacher turnover (Grissom et al., 2019).

Researchers have stated that school principals need to support and help teachers to manage stress in their work (Cece et al., 2022). School administrators should understand the importance of supporting teachers (Robinson, 2018) because teachers who are supported by their principals are more than likely to remain in the teaching profession (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). Instructional dialogue between teachers and principals is linked to higher levels of burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022).

The study site comprises two public school districts located in the Southwest United States that serve over 10,000 students. The demographics of the study sites' students are 70% African American, 20% White, and 10% Hispanic. Additionally, the districts employ over 1,000 teachers. According to the superintendents of schools under study, teachers are leaving the school district in increasing numbers (see Table 1).

Table 1*Percentages of Teachers Leaving the Local School Districts*

School year	Elementary	Middle	High school
2018	11.00%	12.02%	11.00%
2019	11.30%	12.43%	11.30%
2020	11.76%	12.39%	11.76%
2021	12.55%	13.51%	12.55%
2022	13.15%	13.51%	13.15%

This project study addressed a gap in practice concerning teacher burnout and the implementation of K–12 school principals’ LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. The research problem was that K–12 school principals are inconsistently implementing their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout in a public school district located in the southwest United States. To address this research problem, I gathered qualitative data via participant interviews to examine the LPs of K–12 school principals concerning teacher burnout.

The findings of this project study could lead to further research concerning ways to help K–12 school principals better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. Specifically at the study sites, the findings may help senior school district administrators to help K–12 principals to support teachers who experience burnout in the schools under study. Furthermore, the findings of this project study will be presented to K–12 school principals in the study site district so these attendees can learn new strategies to support teachers who experience burnout.

From this study, I developed a position paper for K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout. The position paper may help school district

leaders with strategies to support K–12 school principals with new ways to reduce teachers’ burnout. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

Administrators need to adequately support teachers (Cece et al., 2022). Principals should improve their LPs to support teachers, and there is a need to understand how the LPs of school principals affect teacher burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). School leaders should examine the factors of teacher burnout (Daniels et al., 2020).

I conducted this study because K–12 school principals at the study sites were inconsistently implementing LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. To address this problem, qualitative data were collected via one-on-one, semistructured interviews with 10 K–12 school principals. The purpose of this project study was to examine the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their implementation of LPs to support teachers who experience burnout.

Definition of Terms

School leadership: A relationship and task-oriented behavior between school principals and teachers (Daniels et al., 2020).

Teacher burnout: A gradual condition caused by work-related stress where teachers feel emotionally exhausted (Mahmood, 2020).

Significance of the Study

This project study addressed a gap in practice concerning teacher burnout and the implementation of K–12 school principals’ LPs to support teachers who experience

burnout. The findings of this project study could lead to further research concerning ways to help K–12 school principals better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. This project study is significant because the findings may contribute to the existing knowledge on LPs of K–12 school principals and teachers who experience burnout. The findings of this project study have significance for district stakeholders (i.e., senior district administrators, K–12 principals, teachers who experience burnout, students, community, and researchers) because they include strategies to help K–12 school principals better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout in the two public school districts under study. The findings may help senior school district administrators help K–12 principals support teachers who experience burnout at the study sites.

Helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout in the schools under study may benefit students should they have the same teachers teaching them throughout the academic year instead of having multiple teachers who are replacing the teachers assigned to grades who may have different teaching practices. By having their assigned teachers teaching them throughout the academic year, the students may be better prepared to meet proficiency in state testing. The new findings may also be used by K–12 school principals to support teachers to remain at the schools under study. Furthermore, the findings may help K–12 school principals to know how to better support teachers who experience burnout. I developed a position paper for K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12

school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

Research Question

What are the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding the implementation of their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout?

Review of the Literature

I used Google Scholar and ProQuest to search for peer-reviewed journal articles in order to review the literature relevant to this project. The following keyword search terms were used: *instructional leadership practices, supporting teachers, experiencing burnout, public school district, perceptions of K–12 school principals, instructional leadership practices, leadership theory, functions engaged by the principal, the activities performed by the principal, and the procedures and practices of the school organization*. The peer-reviewed journal articles included in the literature review were published between 2018 and 2023.

Conceptual Framework

I used the instructional leadership theory of Hallinger and Murphy (1985) who hypothesized that school leaders apply the same instructional LPs to manage schools. The conceptual framework for this project study was based on the main concepts of the instructional leadership theory: (a) identifying academic goals, (b) managing school academic programs and school climate, (c) providing ongoing professional development opportunities, (d) addressing time concerns, and (e) celebrating the successes of teachers and students. School principals engage in school functions, activities, procedures, and

practices of the school organization (Hallinger, & Murphy, 1985). The activities performed by school principals include communication with teachers, and the procedures and practices of the school organization refer to adhering to state and district policies and procedures of the school and yearly state assessments (Hallinger, & Murphy, 1985).

The instructional leadership model was expanded in the past 4 decades and has been cited in the literature that explores the instructional leadership practices of school principals (Modeste et al., 2022). According to Modeste et al. (2022), Hallinger and Murphy (1985) had school leaders as participants to identify their common instructional leadership experiences. Researchers use the instructional leadership model to find how school principals implement instructional LPs to improve student learning (Ma & Marion, 2021; Mattar, 2012). Researchers found that school principals expand their instructional LPs regarding students' academic achievement (Maestre et al., 2015) and establishing clear school goals (Karacabey et al., 2020).

I used the instructional leadership theory to understand the functions of K–12 school principals, the types of LPs applied to support teachers who experience burnout, and the procedures and practices of the school district regarding how K–12 school principals support teachers who experience burnout. I also used this conceptual framework to develop the interview questions and analyze the interview transcripts.

Review of the Broader Problem

In this literature review, I present the conceptual framework of this project study along with present studies related to K–12 school principals' implementation of their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. I discuss literature on leadership and

teaching practices regarding teachers who experience burnout. I present literature on principals' support of teachers, how principals struggle to support teachers, teacher burnout, factors contributing to teachers' burnout, work-related stress and teachers' burnout, predictors of teacher burnout, the teaching curriculum and teacher burnout, the teaching environment and teacher burnout, principals supporting teachers, the teaching curriculum and teacher burnout, the teaching environment and teacher burnout, self-efficacy and teacher burnout, workload and teacher burnout, and teacher's job satisfaction and burnout.

Principals Support of Teachers

Teachers describe the teaching profession as stressful, and many of them experience burnout (Brunsting et al., 2022). Researchers examined the LPs of principals such as principals' support and roles, effective collective beliefs, and teacher collaboration in a school setting and found that principals' LPs create structures that facilitate teachers' work by reducing burnout (Grissom et al., 2019). Specifically, Grissom et al. (2019) studied the quality of a school's leadership and found that effective principals exhibited efficient teacher instructional practices. Semistructured interviews with principals revealed that they lacked the understanding of how to support teachers and could apply LPs to reduce teacher burnout (Grissom et al., 2019).

Researchers have suggested that principals should support teachers by providing feedback to the teachers (Cece et al., 2022). Principals should have feedback conversations with teachers (Hunter & Springer, 2022) and should support teachers because support is an indicator of teacher burnout that could be applied to decrease

teacher burnout by demonstrating concern for teachers and understanding teachers have responsibilities outside of work (Lawrence et al., 2019). Benita (2019) indicated that principal support affects teacher depersonalization, and principals should be supportive of teachers and prevent teacher depersonalization. School administrators should adequately support teachers (Pendola, 2022; Robinson, 2018). Ebersold (2019) examined how support by school principals influences positive and negative attributes of teachers' well-being having a sample of 49 high school teachers and indicated that school and district leaders need to comprehend teachers' well-being.

Researchers have examined principals' competencies on teachers' job satisfaction and work commitment (Meyer et al., 2022; Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021). Rachmawati and Suyanto (2021) examined the effect of a principal's managerial competence on teachers' job satisfaction and work commitment having a sample of 77 randomly selected middle school principals who responded to a questionnaire. Rachmawati and Suyanto stated that work commitment significantly influenced teachers' job satisfaction, and the principal's competencies significantly influenced teachers' work commitment and job satisfaction. Meyer et al. (2022) interviewed 20 secondary school teachers and found that principals have an effect on teachers' stress.

Jensen and Solheim (2019) reported that school administrators' support plays a significant role in teacher burnout, so school administrators should be aware of the importance of supporting teachers to prevent burnout because teacher burnout affects student achievement, and school administrators should provide support to teachers who experience burnout. There is a connection between school principal support and teacher

burnout (Sliskovic et al., 2018). Sliskovic et al. (2018) investigated the connection between principal support, work-related expectations, and teacher burnout using a sample of 868 lower grade teachers and 1,057 upper grade teachers. Sliskovic et al. collected data via surveys in which participants responded to questions regarding measuring burnout, work engagement, principal support, and teacher-support rapport. Sliskovic et al. indicated that principal support determined workload and teacher burnout.

Principals Struggle to Support Teachers

Researchers reported that school principals experience difficulties in supporting teachers (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022; Brunsting, 2022; Grissom et al., 2019). Brunsting indicated that school districts should support school principals with the stresses of the profession to retain teachers and teachers who are supported by their principals are more likely to remain in the teaching profession. Grissom et al. (2019) investigated the barriers principals have when supporting teachers and stated that principals struggle to support teachers due to lack of central office support and the use of teacher observation data to make decisions. Bezzina and Farrugia (2022) indicated that school principals struggle to support teachers to remain in the teaching profession and struggle to decrease teacher burnout and increase the number of teachers remaining in the teaching profession.

Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout is a national issue (Brunsting, 2022) and a response to stress (Fotre, 2022). Camacho and Parham (2019) reported more stress of the teaching profession compared to other professions that “teachers in urban schools often experience challenges in the workplace resulting in them experiencing chronic stress, burnout, and

attrition” (para 4). Farmer (2020) noted that principals should support teachers because organizational and administrative conditions cause work-related stress. Brasfield et al. (2019) indicated that the teaching profession is one of the highest-ranking professions linked to stress and burnout and that teachers leave the profession after the first 5 years of teaching due to stress and burnout. Brasfield et al. concluded that school leaders should examine the factors of teacher burnout. Bottiani et al. (2019) reported that school leaders affect teachers’ burnout; based on a sample of 255 teachers from low-income urban middle schools, the researchers reported that teachers had higher burnout than their counterparts due to the lack of instructional dialogue between teachers and principals, which was linked to higher levels of burnout.

Factors Contributing to Teachers’ Burnout

Butyrina and Perima (2018) examined teachers’ work-related burnout by examining the factors causing burnout to identify ways to reduce burnout and reported that reducing teachers’ burnout is crucial to retain teachers because the factor causing teacher burnout was work-related issues. Lawrence et al. (2019) examined high school teachers who experienced work-related stress by using a sample of 215 teachers who completed an online survey and reported that high school teachers experienced work-related stress. According to Toom (2018), low-burnout teachers manage work-related stress, teachers having high-burnout experience difficulties in the work environments, and teachers’ self-concept affected teacher burnout via teacher efficacy. Teachers’ work-related conditions are linked with burnout (Brunsting, 2022). Skaalvik (2020) examined principal’s LPs and factors affecting teachers’ burnout by using a sample of 340

elementary and high school principals and reported that emotional exhaustion was a factor for teachers' burnout. Grant and Drew (2022) indicated that teachers experience burnout, which is caused by emotional exhaustion.

Work-Related Stress and Teachers' Burnout

Researchers examining the association between work-related stress and burnout with teachers' work performance have found there is an association between work-related stress and teacher burnout because the teacher profession is stressful, and the confrontational and compelling work environment and teacher responsibilities cause teachers to experience burnout (O'Brennan et al., 2019; Sneba & Maheswari, 2020). Richards et al. (2018) indicated that the teacher profession is stressful, which creates teacher burnout, and teacher development should decrease teacher burnout. O'Brennan et al. (2019) examined if school-related issues contribute to teacher burnout using a sample of 3,225 high school teachers from 58 high schools and found that work-related issues resulted in teachers experiencing burnout. Elyashiv (2019) indicated that teachers leave the profession due to work-related stress, teacher attrition is one of the most challenging factors that contributes to teacher burnout, and school principals should identify the causes of attrition and reduce teacher burnout. Luthar (2020) indicated that teachers are at high risk for experiencing burnout as extra stress can be caused on teachers from providing empathic support to troubled students, and school administrators can support teachers to reduce burnout. Luthar (2020) suggested that school leaders must be proactive in finding preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout. Bodenheimer and Shuster

(2019) investigated how burnout impact teachers' work-related experiences and indicated that work-related expectations cause teacher burnout.

Shaheen and Mahmood (2020) indicated that teacher burnout is related to stress caused by work-related issues, and found that burnout is related to emotional fatigue, depersonalization, and personal achievement. In another study, Shaheen and Mahmood (2018) described burnout as a stress condition that has indicators of physical, emotional, and psychological status of an individual at work. Additionally, burnout does not only cause low performance of teachers but also negatively influences other teachers within the school (Shaheen & Mahmood, 2018). Shaheen and Mahmood (2018) administered an emotional burnout scale to 427 primary, elementary, and secondary teachers. The level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and inadequateness were the categories as well as burnout sub indicators such as fatigue, boredom, isolation, oppressive behavior, low self-esteem, and lack of job accomplishment (Shaheen & Mahmood, 2018). Shaheen and Mahmood (2018) indicated that the top three reasons for teacher burnout are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

According to Habib (2020), there is a correlation between the principals' commitment and work-related burnout of teachers. Habib examined the managerial commitment and work-related burnout of secondary school teachers, using a sample of 200 randomly selected secondary school teachers, and found a significant link between the principals' LPs and teacher burnout. Hussain et al. (2021) examined workload stress and the performance of 228 elementary school teachers who completed a self-administered questionnaire and noted that because of workload stress, teachers are

inefficiently teaching. Hussain et al. found that workload stress affected the performance of elementary school teachers.

Predictors of Teacher Burnout

Bartosiewicz et al. (2022) indicated that burnout syndrome is a reaction to excessive work-related stress. Mahmood (2020) assessed the predictors of burnout using a hypothesized model of burnout and its predictors regarding emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishments. Mahmood revealed that the personal factor strongly predicted emotional exhaustion whereas the environmental factor was found to be a strong predictor for depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments. Maric et al. (2021) investigated the level of stress and burnout in the work environment in primary and secondary teachers who completed a questionnaire regarding the characteristics of the work environment. Maric et al. found that the burnout syndrome is caused by stressors such as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishments in the work environment. Akin (2019), using the Maslach Burnout Inventory to collect quantitative data and semistructured interviews to collect qualitative data, found that emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and self-failure cause burnout because employees experience stress and low performance, which is described as burnout. According to Benita (2019), who conducted longitudinal studies and examined teacher depersonalization, the main factor of burnout is emotional exhaustion, and found teachers develop negative attitudes toward students.

The Teaching Curriculum and Teacher Burnout

Yu (2018) examined why beginning teachers quit the teaching profession in alarming numbers and found that the curriculum and teacher workloads are the factors of teacher burnout causing mental health concerns. Yu reported that mental health concerns are caused by workloads and lack of support from principals resulting in teachers leaving the teaching profession. Yu found that valuable support from principals for early year teachers decreases teacher burnout, and principals' commitment and work-related burnout of teachers are correlated.

The Teaching Environment and Teacher Burnout

Administrative climate is strongly linked with new teacher burnout and school leaders can prevent new teacher burnout by providing a positive teaching environment (Daniels et al., 2020; Genc, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022). Genc (2020) examined teachers' burnout levels, using a sample of 477 teachers who responded to a questionnaire, and found that the levels of teachers' emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were low. Daniels et al. (2020) examined school leaders' and teachers' perceptions on LPs and noted that school leaders would be more effective and teacher burnout would be at a lower level when school leaders develop teacher collaboration. Daniels et al. held focus groups and reported that school leadership is a relationship between school leaders and teachers. School leaders should be collaborating with teachers because teachers indicated that support, encouragement, and recognition are vital to decreasing burnout and job dissatisfaction (Daniels et al., 2020).

School principals should address teachers' psychological needs in the teaching environment (Ford et al., 2019). Ford et al. explored how school leaders' actions and behaviors support positive teacher outcomes by addressing teachers' psychological needs such as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational. The interpersonal stage such as teacher-to-principal interactions are primarily functions to cultivate organizational commitment among teachers (Ford et al., 2019). The organizational stage cultivates a trusting and enabling work environment where teachers can build on existing knowledge and skills resulting in decreasing teacher burnout (Ford et al., 2019).

Self-Efficacy and Teacher Burnout

Lorenzo et al. (2018) indicated that teacher burnout signifies a problem for teachers and teacher burnout increases teachers' absenteeism, turnover, health issues, and job dissatisfaction. Lorenzo et al. used an empirical test of the social identity model stress to assess 2,685 teachers and found that school leaders could decrease teachers' stress by increasing the perception of social support and thereby decreasing teachers' perceptions of workload. Similar to the study of Lorenzo et al., Abu-Hilal et al. (2020) examined teacher burnout and indicated that school principals should decrease teacher burnout and found that low self-efficacy contributed to teacher burnout. Findings concluded that negative emotions were related to teacher burnout. Ozturk et al. (2021) investigated self-efficacy and teacher burnout with a sample of 284 middle school teachers and reported that work-related issues affected teachers' self-efficacy and burnout. Furthermore, teacher burnout is an issue in the teaching profession, which is linked to job satisfaction (Iancu et al., 2018).

Workload and Teacher Burnout

School principals could decrease teachers' burnout by addressing the increased workload (Doherty, 2020). Doherty examined work-related factors and indicated that school principals should address the increased workload that teachers are required to perform in order to reduce teacher burnout. Doherty indicated that teacher workload is a critical factor that affects teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession as well as negatively influencing teacher retention. Teacher burnout and school principals' LPs were factors impacting teacher attrition (Doherty, 2020).

Researchers reported that English foreign language teachers experience burnout (Gunes & Uysal, 2019). Gunes and Uysal conducted a qualitative study and collected data via semistructured interviews to investigate English foreign language teachers' burnout and work-related issues. Gunes and Uysal indicated that teachers begin the teaching profession with great perfectionism and high expectations; however, after they begin teaching, they recognize the gap between their initial ideals and the reality of the teaching environment. Gunes and Uysal noted that English foreign language teachers rarely receive the support they needed from school principals to reduce burnout. According to Gunes and Uysal, the factors that caused EFL English foreign language teachers' burnout was heavy workload.

Teacher's Job Satisfaction and Burnout

Teachers' job satisfaction is a predictor of teacher burnout. Zincirli (2021) investigated the correlations between teachers' job satisfaction, burnout, and individual performance perceptions using a sample of 359 teachers and the job satisfaction, burnout,

and the individual performance scales to collect data. Teachers' job satisfaction perception was a predictor of burnout, and teachers' job satisfaction was a predictor of individual performance perception (Zincirli). Huk et al. (2018) stated that irrational beliefs are linked to unhealthy emotions adding to occupational teacher burnout when considering school resources, job demands, and teacher characteristics. Huk et al. had a sample of 79 high school teachers who completed a questionnaire measuring burnout, school demands and resources, and irrational beliefs and found that burnout was positively connected to school demands. Huk et al. noted, "Burnout was negatively connected to school resources such as support from principals and colleagues, as well as negatively being connected to self-efficacy and positively connected to irrational beliefs" (para 3).

Iancu et al. (2018) reported that principal-teacher interventions affect emotional exhaustion of teachers. According to Anama-Green (2020), over 40% of new teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching due to work-related burnout, and teacher burnout could be prevented with targeted interventions. Madigan and Kim (2021) examined the reasons teachers leave the profession and suggested interventions to decrease teacher attrition, and reported that exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment are factors resulting in teacher burnout.

Implications

I developed a position paper for K-12 school principals to better implement their LP to support teachers who experience burnout in the public-school districts under study. The position paper will be presented to the education stakeholders of the participating

school districts to help K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout in the public school district under study (see Appendix A). Additionally, the findings may inform school district leaders about K–12 school principals' perceptions regarding their LPs to support teachers to stay in the teaching profession. K–12 school principals' perspectives may shed light on their LPs to support teachers to remain in the teaching profession. School district leaders should know K–12 school principals' LPs regarding teacher retention for these leaders to support each principal. Researchers may use the findings in future studies concerning the LPs of K–12 school principals to improve teacher retention. The position may help K–12 school principals with strategies to support teachers to reduce burnout and may help school district leaders with strategies to support K–12 school principals with new ways to reduce teachers' burnout at the study site (see Appendix A). The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

Summary

There is a significant link between the principals' LPs and teacher burnout (Habib, 2020), and principals' LPs should be applied to create structures to reduce teacher burnout by supporting teachers (Cece et al., 2022). Rachmawati and Suyanto (2021) reported that principals' competencies influence teachers' work commitment and job satisfaction. School principals should investigate why teachers experience burnout (Skaalvik, 2020) and could support teachers to reduce burnout (Luthar, 2020).

Negative emotions are related to teacher burnout (Atmaca et al., 2020), teachers are at high risk for experiencing burnout (Luthar, 2020), and teachers experience burnout (Brunsting, 2022). There is a positive association between work-related stress and teacher burnout (Sneba & Maheswari, 2020), and principals should support teachers (Farmer, 2020). Mahmood (2020) indicated that teacher burnout is caused by work-related stress because teachers feel emotionally exhausted. School leaders should be collaborating with teachers because teachers indicated that support, encouragement, and recognition are vital to decreasing burnout (Daniels et al., 2020).

Workload stress effect the performance of teachers (Hussain et al., 2021), and work-related issues affected teachers' burnout (Ozturk et al., 2021). Teacher workload is a critical factor that affects teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession (Doherty, 2020), and teachers' job satisfaction is a predictor of burnout (Zincirli, 2021). Teacher burnout could be prevented with targeted interventions (Anama-Green, 2020) because exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment are factors resulting in teacher burnout (Madigan & Kim, 2021). Teacher burnout affects teaching (Brunsting et al., 2022) when workload stress affects the performance of teachers because of emotional exhaustion (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022; Hunter & Springer, 2022). Principals have an effect on teachers' stress (Meyer et al., 2022) and struggle to decrease teacher burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). In Section 2, I present the methodology used in this project study.

Section 2: The Methodology

The problem for this study is that K–12 school principals are inconsistently implementing LPs to support teachers who are experiencing burnout in the public school districts under study. The purpose of this basic qualitative research study is to examine the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their LPs to support teachers who are experiencing burnout. Upon institutional review board (IRB) approval, I used a basic qualitative research design to select a purposive sample of K–12 principals and collected data via one-on-one semistructured interviews. In Section 2, I will describe the research design and approach, research questions, selection of the participants, the role of the researcher, and data collection and analysis procedures.

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

I conducted this basic qualitative study to answer the research question by gathering and interpreting in-depth data from interviews to understand the K–12 school principals' perceptions of their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. Qualitative data were collected via one-on-one semistructured interviews with K–12 school principals guided by the research question (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The following research question guided this project study: What are the perceptions of K-12 school principals regarding the implementation of their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout?

A qualitative research design is inductive in nature (see Merriam, 2009). For this project study, a qualitative research design was suitable to examine the perceptions of K–12 school principals at the study site (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To answer the

research question focusing on the experiences of the participants, a qualitative research design was applied to conduct interviews with K–12 school principals (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As I am a novice researcher, a qualitative method was appropriate to investigate the phenomenon of LPs of K–12 school principals (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The reason qualitative data were collected was to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants who were K–12 school principals from the project site (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A basic qualitative study was used to explore the perceptions of the participants that could not be evaluated through quantitative statistical research (see Yin, 2014).

The basic qualitative design was also more appropriate than other qualitative designs, such as ethnography, phenomenology, or grounded research, due to the nature of this study (see Yin, 2014). An ethnography focuses on an entire cultural group (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For this project study, the focus was not on the culture of the participants and therefore an ethnographic qualitative design was not suitable (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I did not select phenomenology or grounded theory for the following reasons. The purpose of phenomenology is to study human experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Phenomenology is not suitable when feelings and reactions are researched (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), therefore the approach was not used in this study. A grounded theory design is used to create a new theory (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), which was not the focus of this project study.

This project study was bounded by the perceptions of the participants. The goal of this study was to gain knowledge of a specific phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). The central

phenomenon was the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their LP to support teachers who experience burnout. I used a basic qualitative research design to collect qualitative data via interviews from a sample comprised of 10 K–12 principals who were selected using purposive sampling (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). During the interviews, an interview protocol containing the interview questions was used (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

For a quantitative design, statistical analyses are conducted (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). However, the purpose of this study was not to discover statistical findings (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A quantitative research design for this project study was not selected because numeric data, such as state test scores from schools in the local setting, were not collected to examine the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their implementation of LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. A quantitative research design does not provide the naturalistic, descriptive, and analytic components that qualitative research allows (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Mixed methods design was not appropriate for this project study because this design involves both quantitative and qualitative inquiry (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A qualitative research method was used to understand the participants in their natural settings in ways to reflect the meaning that the participants make out of their own experiences (see Yin, 2018).

Participants

The setting for this project study was two public school districts located in the Southwest United States and was intentionally selected to collect qualitative data regarding a central phenomenon (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The population for this

project study was 102 K–12 principals from two public school districts who were invited to participate in this project study to examine, “a predetermined phenomenon” via interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, para 2). Qualitative data contain words from a small sample of participants; however, a sample size of six participants is appropriate for qualitative studies (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

I used a sampling plan that included a sampling method, a sample size, and procedure for recruiting participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Sample size varies and depends on the details about each participant, and the time to collect and analyze qualitative data (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Determining the sample size is important to have data saturation, which can be reached when there are no new data, no new codes or themes, and the study can be replicated (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Data saturation refers to data adequacy, meaning the point at which no new information is obtained and the researcher is obliged to present the findings to permit transferability (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Upon IRB approval (Approval no. 02-20-23-0654546), I invited all K–12 principals using purposive sampling because the participants were selected for a specific reason (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The sample consisted of K–12 principals who met the selection criteria . In order to participate, principals needed to (a) have been working at the study site for at least 3 academic years, (b) be state-certified, and (c) have had experience with teacher burnout. A sample size of over six participants may be sufficient to answer the research question because the participants are selected based on the

selection criteria for being knowledgeable of the phenomenon of the research (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

The participants had school district email addresses posted on the website of the two public school districts, and I used the websites to locate and copy their email addresses. The websites provided information such as the names of the principals and the number of years they have been serving as principals. Those K–12 principals at the project site met the aforementioned selection criteria. I sent out emails to invite them to participate in interviews with me. In the emails, I included the purpose and significance of the project study, the participant selection criteria, and information about the interviews, such as duration of the interviews and the use of the Zoom videoconferencing platform. Those K–12 principals who were interested in participating in the interviews, I asked them to reply with “I consent.” Those who consented to participate in the study, I contacted via email to schedule the Zoom conferences. I provided each participant with the Zoom meeting link and the date and time of the conference call based on each participant’s availability. This process was repeated and 10 K–12 principals agreed to participate in the study. The sample included 10 K-12 principals from two elementary schools, three middle schools, and five high schools (serving Grades K–5, 6–8, and 9–12, respectively).

Data Collection

Data were collected using semistructured interviews and an interview protocol (see Appendix B). The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership framework, which was used to develop the open-ended interview questions (see

Appendix B). Two retired K–12 principals reviewed the interview questions for clarity and ambiguity and provided feedback to ensure that the interview questions created an inquiry-based conversation (see Appendix B). Those retired principals who reviewed the interview questions did not participate in this project study.

Regarding instrumentation, data were collected using semistructured interviews and an interview protocol to ask the same interview questions to each participant (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For each interview, I explained the purpose of this project study, the time for each interview, and confidentiality. Interviews are used to engage with the participants to understand, describe, and analyze the participants' meaning of their lived experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I used the responsive interviewing technique to collect data from the participants who had expert knowledge of the phenomenon being studied by hearing their answers to the interview questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I obtained IRB approval through Walden University before the data collection process began.

I conducted the interviews via Zoom and developed a professional novice researcher–participant working relationship with each participant, and each interview was scheduled on a date and time convenient for each participant. After the interviews were scheduled, each participant received an email invitation for when the Zoom conference was held and was informed their participation in the interviews was voluntary and the responses will be kept confidential, and each participant had the right to withdraw from this project study at any time.

During the Zoom conferences, I created a good rapport with each participant and ensured that each participant was comfortable to answer the interview questions with honesty. Each interview was between 50 minutes and 1 hour. I audio-taped each interview with each participant's permission, and each recorded interview is stored securely on my home computer that I will keep for 5 years. I assigned an alphanumeric code to each participant, such as P1 for the first school principal, P2 for the second school principal, and so forth. Member checks were used simultaneously during each interview to ask each participant to verify that I accurately described their responses (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). After each interview, I transcribed the interview and saved the interview transcripts on my personal computer for analysis.

Data Analysis

Qualitative researchers use inductive data analysis to read the interview transcripts and code the data for emergent themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). After I transcribed all interviews and saved the interview transcripts on my personal computer, I started the analysis. I used NVivo (v. 10) to organize the interview transcripts and read each interview transcript multiple times to understand the participants' responses.

Qualitative data analysis involves open and axial coding (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I compiled the participants' responses and searched for keywords, phrases, and sentences from the interviews and recorded them on a chart (Saldaña, 2016). I used a coding process to chart similar phrases and keywords, using axial coding to identify common words and phrases (Saldaña, 2016). During open coding, I highlighted sections of the interview transcripts and used labels (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). During axial coding, I

grouped the open codes into categories to identify themes (Ravitch & Carl, 2016), and revised and refined the categories and themes until no new information was found (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Through reviewing and re-reviewing common words and phrases, categories and subcategories emerge, and from the subcategories and categories, themes emerge (Saldaña, 2016). I reviewed all themes for consistency and performed member checking with each participant for the participants to acknowledge that the interview transcripts were accurate (Ravitch & Carl, 2016); the participants did not request revisions. I considered all data and searched for discrepant cases and found none (Yin, 2018).

For Theme 1, the common keywords were: *apply, burnout, experience, feedback, LP, provide, support, and teachers*. The common phrase was applied LPs to provide feedback to teachers to support them. Theme 1 was that the participants applied their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback.

For Theme 2, the common keywords were: *issues, retain, teachers, resolve, and work-related issues*. The common phrase was applied LPs to resolve teachers' work-related issues. Theme 2 was that the participants applied their LPs to retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues.

For Theme 3, the common keywords were: *create, environment, positive, teachers, and work*. The common phrase was applied LPs to create a positive work environment for teachers. Theme 3 was that the participants applied their LPs to create a positive work environment for teachers.

For Theme 4, the common keywords were: *clear, clearly, communicate, communication, curriculum, expect, expectations, and teaching*. The common phrase was applied LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. Theme 4 was that the participants applied their LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers.

I have been a school principal for over 15 academic years and have a passion for supporting teachers to remain in the teaching profession. I minimized my potential researcher bias by maintaining professionalism, following ethical research standards, and obtaining IRB approval from Walden University and the senior school district administrators from the study sites (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During each interview, I kept a reflexivity journal to record predispositions to minimize researcher biases and reactivity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Concerning internal validity, professionals who were not associated with the study sites reviewed the findings, and the feedback from these professionals focused on the emergent themes representing the findings (Connelly, 2016). Regarding confirmability, I reviewed the participants' responses to the interview questions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Evidence of Quality

Data were collected using only interviews. The sample was 10 K–12 school principals. I interviewed the participants using one-on-one semistructured interviews and collected qualitative data. The 10 interviews were sufficient to answer the research question as no new information emerged. The emergent themes are a reflection of the participants' perceptions. Two retired principals who were not interviewed or associated

with this study site helped me conduct an external audit by reviewing the findings. I asked the participants to review their responses to the interview questions during member checking. I kept a reflexivity journal to record predispositions to minimize researcher biases and reactivity. In order to establish trustworthiness in my study, I used transcripts, a reflective journal, and member checking to verify data. The themes may apply to similar public school districts.

Trustworthiness or rigor of a study is the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Connelly, 2016; Ravitch & Carl, 2016). During the data analysis for this project study, I ensured trustworthiness that the interview data were accurately represented and that the findings provided an accurate reflection of the participants' experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Trustworthiness includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). During the data analysis, I ensured trustworthiness, credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. I describe below the process used to establish trustworthiness.

Credibility

Credibility describes the internal validity of the study. The following strategies were used to ensure credibility. I asked two retired K–12 principals familiar with teacher burnout in the local setting to review the interview questions for clarity and ambiguity to provide me with feedback, and to review the potential themes. These two retired principals helped me conduct an external audit because these professionals were not associated with this study site. These retired K–12 principals were not interviewed or

associated with this study site; however, they reviewed the findings. I asked the participants to review their responses to the interview questions during member checking.

The data collection plan was used to ensure credibility of this project study. The setting of this study has been described in Section 1. The participants were given up to 1 hour during the interviews to answer the interview questions. Member checks were used for each participant to verify the accuracy of their responses (see Creswell & Creswell, 2017). In the findings, excerpts from the participants' responses are included. A reflexivity journal was used to record predispositions to minimize researcher biases and reactivity (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). I used transcripts, reflective journal, and member checking to establish trustworthiness (Connelly, 2016).

Transferability

Transferability refers to the ability to compare a research study with other studies (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Regarding transferability, the findings include quotes from interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). A description of the setting of this project study is provided in Section 1 and a description of the participants is provided in this section (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In Section 3, a detailed description of the findings is provided (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I provide detailed descriptions of the interview data, including thick descriptions of each interview in Section 3.

Dependability

A dependable research study must be accurate and consistent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), a qualitative researcher should have an audit of the data by following the data collection and analysis process, participant

selection criteria, and the interview protocol. I provided a detailed description of the data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Regarding dependability, I ensured that the interview data were consistent (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I described how I collected and analyzed the data for this project study and provided evidence that the data collection and analysis process was aligned to the problem and purpose statements in Section 1 (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I asked two retired K–12 principals to review the findings and provide feedback.

Confirmability

According to Ravitch and Carl (2016), confirmability refers to the extent to which the findings of a study are based upon the data. One way in which to remain objective when conducting a research study is to stay “as close to the data as possible,” and in this case, that means with the language used by the participants during the interviews while coding (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 265). Furthermore, recognizing one’s own biases will ensure that the researcher remains objective. Any theories or assumptions noted while gathering, assessing, and interpreting data were indicated via written analytical memos. After interviewing each participant, reactions and biases were recorded. Finally, notes on the process for analyzing the data, as well as the procedural aspects of the data were noted.

Regarding confirmability, coding was used to identify patterns in the interview transcripts. The findings included evidence to support the emergent themes that were documented. As a novice researcher, I applied my work-related experience and education background during the data collection and analysis process.

Discrepant Cases

The interview transcripts were analyzed for emergent themes. Using this coding technique allowed me to determine if discrepancies existed in this data. There were no substantial discrepancies in the data obtained from the participants that prompted the need to exclude data. Yet, important differing opinions and ideas were expressed by the participants. These data were included in the analysis to strengthen the credibility of my study.

Data Analysis Results

The study's conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory, which theorized that principals apply the exact instructional LPs to manage schools. Data analysis results supported the following themes:

Theme 1: K-12 School Principals Applied Their LP to Support Their Teachers who Experienced Burnout by Providing Feedback

The 10 participants applied their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback. The participants explained that feedback refers to the instructional dialogue between teachers and principals. All participants said the teaching profession is stressful and supported teachers to reduce teacher burnout by providing feedback to the teachers. All participants reported having feedback conversations with teachers to identify teacher burnout. P1 said their role as an administrator is to be supportive of teachers and prevent teacher depersonalization by providing feedback. P2 provided feedback to the teachers to adequately support them. P3 emphasized the need to support teachers on a regular basis by providing feedback. P4 reported school principals' LPs

influence teachers' well-being by providing feedback. P5 agreed with P4 that school principals need to understand teachers' well-being. P6 applied their LPs to influence teachers' job satisfaction by providing feedback. P7 reported the LPs of school principals influenced teachers' burnout because of work commitment and principal's feedback influences teachers' job satisfaction. P8 reported applying LPs to ensure that teachers do not experience stress because of work commitment and as a result principal's feedback helps teachers reduce their stress. P9 and P10 emphasized the need to apply LPs to support teachers for teachers to remain in the teaching profession. Thus, all participants said they supported teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback.

Theme 2: K-12 School Principals Applied Their LP to Retain Their Teachers who Experienced Burnout by Resolving Teachers' Work-Related Issues

The second theme was K–12 school principals retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues. P1 said when work-related issues are resolved between the principal and the teachers, the principal is not causing stress on the teachers and teachers stay in the teaching profession. P2 said teachers experience work-related issues resulting in teachers' burnout. According to P2, teachers leave the teaching profession when they cannot manage or cope with work-related issues and as a result, they experience burnout. P3 spoke about the application of LPs to help teachers manage work-related stress for those teachers not to experience difficulties in the work environment. P3 implied school principals should resolve work-related issues directly with the teachers. According to P4, teachers' work-related issues cause burnout. P4 applied LPs to resolve work-related issues with teachers to reduce teachers' burnout. P5 said they applied burnout and out

why teachers experience burnout and reported that work-related issues must be resolved between the principal and the teachers because these issues cause stress on the teachers, and stress results in burnout. P6 reported teachers experience burnout when work-related stress levels increase. P6 applied their LPs to ensure that teachers' work-related stress levels are decreased by resolving work-related issues directly with the teachers. P7 noted teacher attrition at the study site was influenced by work-related stress levels. P7 attempted to resolve work-related issues directly with the teachers by applying LPs to identify teachers who experience burnout. P7 concluded teacher attrition was associated with principals' LPs. P8 noticed teachers' stress caused by work-related issues resulted in teachers' burnout. P8 applied LPs to resolve work-related issues one-on-one with the teachers. P9 noted teachers' work performance was influenced by work-related issues. According to P9, the teaching profession is very stressful when work-related issues are not resolved between the school principal and the teachers. P9 stated that unresolved work-related issues created teacher burnout. According to P10, as a school principal, they recognized when teachers are experiencing burnout and identified ways to address the work-related issues directly with teachers experiencing burnout.

All participants agreed that teachers experience work-related issues resulting in teachers' burnout. Based on Theme 2, school principals apply their LPs to resolve teachers' work-related issues with the teachers for teachers to stay in the teaching profession because work-related issues cause stress on the teachers, and stress results in burnout. Thus, the second theme was that K–12 school principals retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues with the teachers.

Theme 3: K-12 School Principals Applied Their LP to a Positive Work Environment to Support Their Teachers who Experienced Burnout

The third theme was that the participants applied their LPs to create a positive work environment for teachers. P1 stated school principals may prevent teacher burnout by providing a positive work environment. According to P1, a positive work environment means the principal is not causing stress on teachers. P1 explained that when the principal is not creating a positive work environment, teachers' levels of stress increase, which is a factor of burnout. P2 noted the work environment causes teacher burnout. P3 said that they are proactive in finding preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout. The example P3 gave was that the principal must apply LPs to create a work environment that is positive for teachers. P4 reported teacher burnout affects the work environment, and teacher burnout is caused by stress. According to P5, teacher burnout is associated with stress caused by school principals. P5 emphasized that teacher burnout causes low performance of teachers and affects other teachers within the school. According to P6, school principals can stress teachers and cause emotional exhaustion. P7 emphasized that school principals should create a positive work environment for teachers to prevent teacher burnout. P8 reported that when a principal creates a positive work environment, the levels of teachers' emotional exhaustion are low. According to P9, when the principal does not create a positive work environment then teacher burnout increases. P9 said teachers' absenteeism is an indicator that the principal does not create a positive work environment. P9 reported teacher burnout is the result of not creating a positive work

environment. According to P10, a positive work environment is a predictor of teacher burnout. P10 said teachers leave the profession when the work environment is negative.

Theme 4: K–12 School Principals Applied Their LP to Clearly Communicate Curriculum Expectations to Teachers

The fourth theme was that the participants applied their LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. P1 stated school principals may prevent teacher burnout by clearly communicating the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. According to P1, when the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are clearly communicated to teachers, they do not cause stress on teachers. P1 explained that when the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are unclearly communicated to teachers, teachers' levels of stress increase and teachers become emotionally exhausted, which is a factor of burnout. P2 noted that when the teaching curriculum expectations are unclearly communicated to teachers by the school principal, the teachers experience burnout. P3 said that they are proactive in finding preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout. The example P3 gave was that they clearly communicated the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. P4 reported teacher burnout affects the delivery of the teaching curriculum. P4 said the teaching curriculum expectations is a factor of teacher burnout causing stress on teachers when the principal's expectations are unclearly communicated to teachers. P5 mentioned LP must include the principal's commitment to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. According to P5, teacher burnout is associated with stress caused by the unclear curriculum expectations of school principals. P5 emphasized that

teacher burnout, caused by the unclear principal's teaching curriculum expectations to teachers, results in low performance of teachers and affects other teachers within the school. According to P6, school principals should clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers because unclear expectations can stress teachers and cause emotional exhaustion. P7 emphasized that school principals need to have teacher-to-principal interactions when the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are unclear. P7 reported that the principal should apply LPs to prevent teacher burnout. According to P8, when the principal applies LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers, the levels of teachers' emotional exhaustion are decreased. P8 applied LPs, especially collaboration with teachers, to reduce teacher burnout. P8 said collaboration with teachers is vital to decrease burnout. P9 mentioned when the principal does not clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers, teacher burnout increases. P10 said they applied their LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers, because communication between the principal and teachers is a predictor of teacher burnout.

Interpretation of the Findings

I conducted this basic qualitative research. The conceptual framework was the instructional leadership theory of Hallinger and Murphy (1985) who stated that school leaders apply the same instructional LPs to manage schools. School principals are engaged in school functions, activities, procedures, and practices of the school organization (Hallinger, & Murphy, 1985). The activities performed by school principals include communication with teachers, and the procedures and practices of the school

organization refer to adhering to state and district policies and procedures of the school and yearly state assessments. I used the main components of the instructional leadership theory: setting school instructional goals and communicating them to the school staff and stakeholders, managing school instructional programs, and development of school climate by supporting teachers' professional development, addressing time management, and providing incentives and rewards for both teachers and students.

For this project study, the emergent themes answered the research question. The findings of this project study are in line with the findings of scholars who explored the instructional LPs of school principals (Mattar, 2012; Modeste et al., 2022). Researchers stated that school principals apply the instructional leadership theory to improve student learning at schools (Ma & Marion; Maestre et al., 2015) because they have common instructional leadership experiences (Modeste et al.) School principals establish clear school goals as educational leaders in teaching and learning (Karacabey et al., 2020).

Theme 1

The first theme was that the participants applied their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback. The findings of this project study are in line with the findings of scholars who reported that school principals should support teachers (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022; Brunsting, 2022; Farmer, 2020). The findings revealed that teacher burnout is caused by stress (Fotre, 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022), teachers' work-related conditions are linked with burnout (Sneba & Maheswari, 2020), and school principals should apply LP to investigate why teachers experience burnout (Skaalvik, 2020). Luthar (2020) wrote that school administrators can support teachers to reduce

burnout, and Habib (2020) found a correlation between the managerial commitment and work-related burnout of secondary school teachers. School principals influence teacher burnout (Genc, 2020) and should support teachers because principals' support is vital to decreasing burnout (Daniels et al., 2020). Abu-Hilal et al. (2020) and Atmaca et al. (2020) found that school principals should decrease teacher burnout and should support teachers to decrease teacher attrition.

The findings of this project study are in line with the findings of researchers who reported that school principals should support teachers. School leaders should support teachers (Jeon et al., 2022) because principals' support affects teacher burnout (Herman et al., 2023). In a study conducted by Kaiser and Thompson (2021), principals should focus on supporting teacher efficacy and retention within a school district with high rates of teacher attrition by creating collegial relationships and seeking feedback on individual teacher needs. Like Kaiser and Thompson, Bukko et al. (2021) emphasized that principals should support teachers to retain them in schools.

According to Cece et al. (2022), principal's support of teachers influences secondary teachers' burnout, and recommended school principals should support teachers by providing pedagogical expertise to teachers during the school year. Zilka et al. (2019) reported that principal support enhances teachers' professional growth because principal support influences teacher burnout and concluded that teachers believe support from the principal shapes their mindset regarding teaching growth.

Eğimli (2021) conducted a quantitative study to understand principal support and teacher retention and stated that principals' lack of support influences teachers'

confidence and principal leadership should include supporting teachers. The school principal should provide teachers with individual support because principal support increases the levels of teacher retention, and there should be no absence of principal support when teachers experience teaching problems (Eğinli, 2021). Similar to the recommendations made by Eğinli stated that principal support is needed to help teachers remain at schools. Hwang (2022) found that mathematics teachers' stress is influencing teachers' dialogic instruction and those mathematics teachers who had high stress were less likely to implement dialogic instruction. Teachers with unsupportive leaders are likely to have low job satisfaction because stress is associated with burnout (Hwang, 2022).

School leaders' support is a factor influencing teachers' stress, and school leaders should foster collaboration between teachers and leaders (Carroll et al., 2021). Researchers found that a strategy to reduce teacher burnout is for school leaders to support teachers to improve self-efficacy (Zheng, 2022) because school leaders' support of teachers increases teachers' job satisfaction (Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022). Similar to the studies of Carroll et al. (2021), Ghanbari and Majooni (2022), and Zheng (2022), school leaders should support teachers by using strategies to help teachers improve their well-being by coping with stress (Froehlich et al., 2022).

Theme 2

The second theme was K–12 school principals retained teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues. The findings revealed that school principals resolved work-related issues with the teachers. The findings of this project study are in line with the

findings of scholars who reported that teacher burnout is caused by work-related stress (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022; Mahmood, 2020; Maric et al., 2021). Hussain et al. (2021) stated workload stress affects the performance of elementary school teachers, and Ozturk et al. (2021) wrote work-related issues affect middle school teachers' burnout. According to Doherty (2020), school principals should address work-related issues, which is a critical factor affecting teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession. Anama-Green (2020) said teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching due to work-related burnout.

Theme 2 is in line with the findings of researchers who found that principals may retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues. School leaders should support teachers whose work-related demands are high, and job demands refer to work-related stressors associated with teacher burnout and as a result school leaders should strive to improve teachers' working conditions (Jeon et al., 2022). In a study conducted by Zheng (2022), college English language teachers' job burnout was influenced by work-related issues. Zheng wrote that the correlation between college English language teachers' job burnout and self-efficacy is negative. School leaders who study burnout should take into consideration work-related stressors, and a strategy to reduce teacher burnout is for leaders to support teachers to improve self-efficacy (Zheng, 2022). School leaders should use interventions to support teachers to improve their self-efficacy resulting in the reduction of teacher burnout (Zheng, 2022). Ghanbari and Majooni (2022) agreed with the findings of Zheng (2022) and wrote that school leadership is a factor influencing teacher burnout, and toxic leadership negatively affects work-related issues. Similar to

the findings of Zheng and Ghanbari and Majooni, teachers of English as foreign language experience burnout because the teaching profession is stressful and teacher burnout affects both teaching and learning because teachers' workload has the strongest effect on burnout (Cheng, 2022). School leaders should resolve teachers' heavy work-related issues and provide feedback to teachers (Cheng, 2022). Carroll et al. (2022) explored work-related stress and burnout and found that teachers in rural and remote areas were very stressed and considered leaving the teaching profession. School leaders should notice that teachers' well-being is a predictor of stress and should use interventions to target the well-being of teachers as an attempt to reduce teachers' stress (Carroll et al., 2022).

Theme 3

The third theme was that the participants applied their LPs to create a positive work environment for teachers. The findings revealed that school principals created a positive work environment for teachers. The teaching environment influences teacher retention (Eğinli, 2021). Maas et al. (2022) stated teachers experience stress in the teaching environment and Zincirli (2021) wrote that teachers' job satisfaction perception is a predictor of burnout. Supporting a school environment is conducive to student academic achievement (Tookes et al., 2020). According to Zilka et al. (2019), when the teaching environment is unsupportive by the principal support, teachers experience burnout. Researchers found that principals should create and support the teaching environment at schools via actions such as honesty and reliability by clearly communicating with teachers with respect and integrity (Bukko et al., 2021). Eğinli

(2021) noted, “collaborative principal-teacher relationship can create a safe work environment that involves feelings of satisfaction, trust, open communication, and collegiality” (p. 914). In the study of Carroll et al. (2021), teachers reported stress in the teaching environment and the need to find strategies to reduce stress.

Theme 4

The fourth theme was that the participants applied their LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. The findings revealed that the participants applied their LPs to clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. The instructional leadership includes the component that the principal manages the school curriculum. The findings of this project study are in line with the findings of scholars who reported that communication among teachers and principals is necessary regarding the teaching curriculum expectations. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), principals should support teachers to focus on student learning the curriculum. Brandmo et al. (2021) noted school principals should apply LPs to prioritize school goals, and Reyneke (2020) acknowledged that school principals should manage instructional programs.

According to Cece et al. (2022), school principals should provide pedagogical expertise to teachers regarding the curriculum. Carroll et al. (2021) recommended the need for better systems to support teachers because school leadership influences teachers’ work experience regarding expectations such as the curriculum. According to Carroll et al., school leaders should foster collaboration between teachers and leaders, and should have more reasonable curriculum expectations of teachers. In a study conducted by Fox

et al. (2020), secondary special education teachers reported stress is related to academic standards such as the curriculum. Fox et al. wrote that school leaders' expectation for teachers to cover certain amounts of the curriculum put pressure on the teachers. The secondary special education teachers in the study of Fox et al. said that standards-based curriculum and the pressure from school leaders increased their levels of stress. Carroll et al. (2022) explored work-related stress and burnout and found that teachers in rural and remote areas were very stressed and considered leaving the teaching profession because the curriculum is a primary factor of teachers experiencing burnout. School leaders should notice that teachers' well-being is a predictor of stress and should use interventions to target the well-being of teachers as an attempt to support teachers to reduce their stress associated to the curriculum (Carroll et al, 2022).

Project Deliverable

Based on the emergent themes, the project deliverable is a position paper, and its content can be used by K–12 school principals to better apply LPs to support teachers who experience burnout at the project sites. Senior school district leaders can support K–12 school principals at the project site to review and implement the content of the position paper to help teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper sheds further light on the perceptions of K–12 school principals regarding their implementation of LPs to support teachers who experience burnout. The field of education benefits from the content of the position paper, which is new information that K–12 school principals can use at the project study. The content of the position paper

may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay at the schools.

Summary

For this project study, I used a basic qualitative research design. The instructional leadership theory was the conceptual framework, which I used because school principals apply the same instructional LPs to manage schools. The findings of this project study are in line with the findings of scholars who explored the instructional LPs of school principals and stated that school principals apply the instructional leadership theory to establish clear school goals as educational leaders in teaching and learning. The project deliverable is a position paper that can be used by K–12 school principals to better apply LPs to support teachers who experience burnout at the project site. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession. In Section 3, the project is presented.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The project is a position paper developed for K–12 school principals. The recommendations found in the position paper may help K–12 school principals with ways to reduce teachers’ burnout. I will present the position paper to K–12 school principals at the study sites. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

The position paper contains excerpts from the participants who indicated that they applied LPs to support teachers who experience burnout by providing instructional feedback and prevent teacher depersonalization by understanding teachers’ well-being and influencing teachers’ job satisfaction by providing feedback. The position paper also contains excerpts that LPs should be applied to create a positive work environment for teachers because school principals may prevent teacher burnout by providing a positive work environment meaning the principal is not causing stress on teachers and by clearly communicating the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers.

Rationale

A position paper was developed to provide data analysis of a critical concern regarding K-12 principals at the study sites. It provides recommendations for positive change within the study sites. This study was conducted in two local school districts in which K-12 school principals have been inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout. A position paper can

offer opportunities for district leaders to gain insight into the problem in a broader way and to understand the sense of urgency to support principals to improve their leadership instructional practices to decrease the number of teachers who experience burnout.

The content of the position paper will be presented to K-12 school principals at the study sites for the attendees to learn how to support teachers who experience burnout. K-12 school principals will apply leadership practices to adequately support teachers who experience burnout by:

- providing instructional feedback on a regular basis to teachers who experience burnout to reduce teachers' stress (Yu, 2018)
- having conversations with teachers to identify teacher burnout by assessing teacher attrition (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022)
- having dialogue on instructional practices with teachers who experience burnout (Schaak, 2010; Shrestha & Bhattari, 2022)
- positively influencing teachers' well-being via mentoring and professional development (Farmer, 2020)
- striving to understand teachers' well-being (Farmer, 2020)
- positively influencing teachers' job satisfaction in order for teachers to remain in the teaching profession (Meyer et al., 2022; Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021)
- identifying ways to resolve directly with the teachers work-related issues causing burnout in order to retain teachers because such issues cause stress on the teachers, and stress results in burnout (Hussain et al., 2021)

- striving to decrease teachers' work-related stress levels (Hunter & Springer, 2022; Hussain et al., 2021)
- recognizing when teachers are experiencing burnout (Yu, 2018)
- creating a positive work environment for teachers by preventing teacher burnout (Daniels et al., 2020; Genc, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattari, 2022)
- being proactive in finding preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout by striving not to stress teachers or cause emotional exhaustion
- clearly communicating the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers by having teacher-to-principal interactions when the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are unclear (Yu, 2018)
- recognizing that teacher burnout affects the delivery of the teaching curriculum because the teaching curriculum expectation is a factor of teacher burnout causing stress on teachers resulting in low performance of teachers and affecting other teachers within the school (Yu, 2018)
- collaborating with teachers to reduce teacher burnout

These recommendations are in line with the findings of researchers in the field of education. Researchers reported school principals should support teachers to manage stress in the teaching environment for teachers to remain in the teaching profession (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022; Cece et al., 2022). Researchers have also reported that work-related stress is associated with burnout of teachers (Skaalvik, 2020; Sneba & Maheswari, 2020). The teaching profession is stressful, and teacher burnout affects teaching (Brunsting et al., 2022). Researchers have emphasized the need for school principals to

have instructional dialogue with teachers to reduce burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). Workload stress affects the performance of teachers and causes emotional exhaustion (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022; Hunter & Springer, 2022; Hussain et al., 2021). Principals' LP have an effect on teachers' stress (Meyer et al., 2022; Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021; Schaak, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022). Principals' LP should be applied to support teachers' teaching practices (Cece et al., 2022).

The lack of principal support affects teacher attrition, and work-related stress influences teacher burnout; principals could prevent teachers' stress, and their expectations are associated with the well-being of teachers (Farmer, 2020). Principals could work with teachers to decrease teacher burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022) because work-related stress is associated with teacher burnout (Sneba & Maheswari, 2020), and principals need to support teachers to manage stress (Cece et al., 2022) to remain teachers in the teaching profession (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022).

Researchers have recommended that school principals apply LPs to support teachers (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). Teacher self-efficacy is linked to job stress (Carroll et al., 2021; Zheng, 2022). Teachers' stress affects students (Cheng, 2022; Herman et al., 2023). Principals' expectations cause teacher stress (Kruse & Edge, 2023). School leadership affects teacher burnout when these leaders do not identify, track, and counter burnout (Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022; Kruse & Edge, 2023). Principals should assist teachers in improving self-efficacy because teachers' self-efficacy is associated with teacher burnout (Zheng, 2022).

School leaders should offer interventions to teachers who experience burnout and should clearly communicate with teachers (Kruse & Edge, 2023; Lindqvist et al., 2021). Teacher interventions should focus on the well-being of teachers when job demands cause teacher burnout (Carroll et al., 2022; Kaiser & Thompson, 2021), and principals should intervene to reduce burnout by discussing job demands with the teachers (Jeon et al., 2022; Russell & Liggans, 2020). Researchers found that teachers' working conditions influence teachers' job satisfaction (Baroudi et al., 2022; Carroll et al., 2022) because there is an association between school principal support and teachers' job demands (Maas et al., 2022). Researchers recommended principals' support when teachers experience teaching problems (Bukko et al., 2021; Eğinli, 2021; Zilka et al., 2019) and found that principals' assistance reduces teachers' job-related stress (Hwang, 2022) when principals foster collaboration (Carroll et al., 2021); otherwise, pressure from school leaders increases teachers' levels of stress (Fox et al., 2020).

Review of the Literature

I conducted a literature review pertaining to the content of the position paper. The main content of the position paper is that K–12 principals should apply their LPs to (a) support teachers who experience burnout by providing feedback, (b) retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues, (c) create a positive work environment for teachers, and (d) clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. I used Google Scholar and ProQuest to search for peer-reviewed journal articles. I used the following search terms: *position paper, support teachers who experience burnout, providing feedback, retaining teachers, resolving teachers' work-related issues, creating*

a positive work environment for teachers, communicating the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers, instructional leadership practices, supporting teachers, experiencing burnout, public school district, perceptions of K–12 school principals, instructional leadership practices, leadership theory, functions engaged by the principal, the activities performed by the principal, and the procedures and practices of the school organization. I found peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2018 and 2023.

My position paper is based on research evidence after studying the problem of K-12 school principals inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teacher who experience burnout. Positions inform policies. Siddiki and Curley (2022) noted that policymakers conceptualize policy design in the policy process to define and write the content of the policy. According to Desouza and Lin (2011), decision makers set clear goals after gathering information related to a problem and plan alternatives to meet goals. Policymakers use evidence-driven policy design based on accurate information referring to research findings to improve organizational performance (Desouza & Lin). “Evidence should appear in a generic form yet still be easy to interpret by diverse stakeholders” (Desouza & Lin, p. 7). According to Brown and Duguid (2001), policymakers use strategic coordination focusing on individual motivation to achieve organizational goals and success. The content of a policy is used for learning and knowledge, and the benefit of knowledge is to coordinate success within an organization (Brown & Duguid). According to Fang et al. (2010), the learning process involves individuals who learn from others in an organization “because most of an individual’s contacts are also contacts of each other” (p. 633).

The content of the position paper is in line with the findings of researchers who explored the instructional LPs of school principals (Modeste et al., 2022) who establish clear school goals as educational leaders in teaching and learning (Karacabey et al., 2020). One component of this position paper is that school principals apply the instructional leadership theory to support teachers who experienced burnout. they have common instructional leadership experiences (Ma & Marion, 2021; Modeste et al., 2022). A second component of this position paper is in line with the findings of scholars who reported that the recommendation on LPs can help school principals support teachers (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022; Brunsting, 2022; Farmer, 2020) because teacher burnout is caused by stress (Fotre, 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022) and teachers' work-related conditions are linked with burnout (Sneba & Maheswari, 2020). A position paper on principals' instructional leadership practices about burnout may help school administrators to reduce burnout (Luthar, 2020) because there is a correlation between the managerial commitment and work-related burnout of secondary school teachers (Habib, 2020). A position paper on principal instructional leadership practices may help school administrators to decrease teacher burnout (Daniels et al., 2020) and teacher attrition (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

A third component of this position paper is in line with researchers who recommended support for K-12 principals with implementing instructional practices to support teacher who experience burnout. Additionally, to recommend ways for school principals to provide pedagogical expertise to teachers for teachers' professional growth. According to Cece et al. (2022), principals' support of teachers influences secondary

teachers' burnout, and secondary school teachers reported that support from the school principal was associated with teacher burnout. Cece et al. recommended school principals should support teachers by providing pedagogical expertise to teachers during the school year. Zilka et al. (2019) reported that principal support enhances teachers' professional growth because principal support influences teacher burnout. The findings concluded that teachers believe support from the principal shapes their mindset regarding teaching growth.

A fourth component of this position paper is in line with researchers' recommendation on how school principals may influence teachers' dialog on instructional practices. Eğinli (2021) conducted a quantitative study to understand principal support and teacher retention because principals' lack of support influences teachers' confidence and principal leadership should include supporting teachers. According to Eğinli, the school principal should provide teachers with individual support because principal support increases the levels of teacher retention. There should be no absence of principal support when teachers experience teaching problems. Similar to the recommendations made by Eğinli, Maas et al. (2022) maintained that principals' support is needed to help teachers remain at schools. Hwang (2022) found that mathematics teachers' stress is influencing teachers' dialogic instruction and those mathematics teachers who had high stress were less likely to implement dialogic instruction. Teachers with unsupportive leaders are likely to have low job satisfaction because stress is associated with burnout (Hwang, 2022).

A fifth component of this position paper is in line with researchers who found that a strategy to reduce teacher burnout is for school leaders to support teachers to improve self-efficacy (Zheng, 2022) because school leaders' support of teachers increases teachers' job satisfaction (Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022). School leaders' support is a factor influencing teachers' stress, and collaboration between teachers and leaders is needed (Carroll et al., 2021). Similar to the studies of Carroll et al. (2021), Ghanbari and Majooni (2022), and Zheng (2022), school leaders should support teachers by using strategies to help teachers improve their well-being by coping with stress (Froehlich et al., 2022).

A sixth component of this position paper is in line with researchers who found that school principals resolved work-related issues with the teachers. Scholars reported that teacher burnout is caused by work-related stress (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022; Mahmood, 2020; Maric et al., 2021). Hussain et al. (2021) stated workload stress affects the performance of elementary school teachers, and Ozturk et al. (2021) wrote that work-related issues affect middle school teachers' burnout. According to Doherty (2020), school principals should address work-related issues, which is a critical factor affecting teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession. Anama-Green (2020) said teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching due to work-related burnout.

A seventh component of this position paper is in line with researchers who found that principals may retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues. School leaders should support teachers whose work-related demands are high, and job demands refer to work-related stressors associated with teacher burnout and as a result school leaders should strive to improve teachers' working conditions (Jeon et al., 2022). In a

study conducted by Zheng (2022), college English language teachers' job burnout was influenced by work-related issues, and the correlation between college English language teachers' job burnout and self-efficacy is negative. School leaders who study burnout should take into consideration work-related stressors and lack of leaders' support, and a strategy to reduce teacher burnout is for leaders to support teachers to improve self-efficacy (Zheng, 2022). School leaders should use interventions to support teachers to improve their self-efficacy resulting in the reduction of teacher burnout (Zheng, 2022). Ghanbari and Majooni (2022) agreed with the findings of Zheng and wrote that school leadership is a factor influencing teacher burnout, and toxic leadership negatively affects work-related issues. Like the findings of Zheng and Ghanbari and Majooni, teachers of English as foreign language experience burnout because the teaching profession is stressful, and teacher burnout affects both teaching and learning because teachers' workload has the strongest effect on burnout (Cheng, 2022). School leaders should resolve teachers' heavy work-related issues and provide feedback to teachers (Cheng, 2022). Carroll et al. (2022) explored work-related stress and burnout and found that teachers in rural and remote areas were very stressed and considered to leave the teaching profession. School leaders should notice that teachers' well-being is a predictor of stress and should use interventions to target the well-being of teachers as an attempt to reduce teachers' stress (Carroll et al.).

An eighth component of this position paper is in line with researchers who found that school leaders apply LPs to create a positive work environment for teachers. The teaching environment influences teacher retention (Eğinli, 2021) and teachers experience

stress in the teaching environment (Maas et al., 2022). Zincirli (2021) wrote that teachers' job satisfaction perception is a predictor of burnout. Supporting a school environment is conducive to student academic achievement (Tookes et al., 2020). According to Zilka et al. (2019), when the teaching environment lacks principal support, teachers experience burnout. Researchers found that principals should create and support the teaching environment at schools via actions such as honesty and reliability by clearly communicating with teachers with respect and integrity (Bukko et al., 2021). Eğinli noted, "collaborative principal-teacher relationship can create a safe work environment that involves feelings of satisfaction, trust, open communication, and collegiality" (p. 914). In the study of Carroll et al. (2021), teachers reported stress in the teaching environment and the need to find strategies to reduce stress.

A ninth component of this position paper is in line with researchers who found that school leaders should clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. Scholars reported that communication among teachers and principals is necessary regarding the teaching curriculum expectations. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), principals should support teachers to focus on student learning the curriculum. Brandmo et al. (2021) noted school principals should apply LPs to prioritize school goals, and Reyneke (2020) acknowledged that school principals should manage instructional programs. According to Cece et al. (2022), school principals should provide pedagogical expertise to teachers regarding the curriculum. Carroll et al. (2021) recommended the need for better systems to support teachers because school leadership influences teachers' work experience regarding expectations such as the curriculum.

According to Carroll et al., school leaders should foster collaboration between teachers and leaders, and should have more reasonable curriculum expectations of teachers. In a study conducted by Fox et al. (2020), secondary special education teachers reported stress is related to academic standards such as the curriculum, and school leaders' expectations for teachers to cover certain amounts of the curriculum put pressure on the teachers. The secondary special education teachers in Fox et al.'s study said that standards-based curriculum and the pressure from school leaders increased their levels of stress. Carroll et al. (explored work-related stress and burnout and found that teachers in rural and remote areas were very stressed and considered leaving the teaching profession because the curriculum is a primary factor of teachers experiencing burnout. School leaders should notice that teachers' well-being is a predictor of stress and should use interventions to target the well-being of teachers as an attempt to support teachers to reduce their stress associated to the curriculum (Carroll et al., 2021).

School Principals Should Support Teachers

Bukko et al. (2021) wrote principals should support teachers to retain them in schools. Teachers need the support of school principals by creating collegial relationships and supporting teachers via feedback on individual teacher needs (Kaiser & Thompson, 2021). School leaders' lack of support has a strong effect on teacher burnout (Cheng, 2022) and teachers need support because support increases teachers' job satisfaction (Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022). There should be no absence of principal support when teachers experience teaching problems (Eğimli, 2021) because teachers believe support from the principal shapes their mindset regarding teaching growth (Zilka, 2019).

According to Cece et al. (2022), principal's support of teachers influences secondary teachers' burnout, and secondary school teachers reported that support from the school principal was associated with teacher burnout (Cece et al., 2022). Eğinli (2021) conducted a quantitative study to understand principal support and teacher retention and found principals' lack of support influences teachers' confidence and principal leadership should include supporting teachers. According to Eğinli, the school principal should be providing teachers with individual support because principal support increases the levels of teacher retention, and suggested no absence of principal support when teachers experience teaching problems.

Leadership support, such as school principal support affects mathematics teachers' stress because principals' support enhances teachers' professional growth and influences teacher burnout concluding that teachers believe support from the principal shapes their mindset regarding teaching growth (Zilka et al., 2019). According to Hwang (2022), mathematics teachers' stress is influencing teachers' dialogic instruction because mathematics teachers with high stress were less likely to implement dialogic instruction, and teachers with unsupportive leaders are likely to have low job satisfaction. Teacher stress is associated with burnout and principals should help teachers reduce teachers' job-related stress (Hwang).

According to Carroll et al. (2021), external and internal factors affect teacher burnout based on the perceptions of teachers interviewed. Carroll et al. recommended the need for better systems to support teachers because school leaders' support is a factor influencing teachers' stress. School leaders' expectation of teachers has been cited as

source of stress for teachers, and school leaders should foster collaboration between teachers and leaders and should have more reasonable expectations of teachers because trust between teachers and principals is a mediating factor influencing teacher burnout (Carroll et al., 2021).

A position paper will provide recommendations for district leaders to support school leaders with implementing instructional practices that will decrease teacher burnout, retain teachers, establish school leaders and teacher relationships, and support school leaders on how to provide effective feedback in order to improve teachers' instructional practices.

School Principals Should Create a Positive Work Environment for Teachers

Principals' instructional leadership practices influence teacher retention (Eğimli, 2021). Principals should create and support the teaching environment at schools via actions such as honesty and reliability (Bukko et al., 2021). According to Zilka et al. (2019), when the teaching environment is unsupportive by the principal's support, teachers experience burnout. According to Eğimli, "collaborative principal-teacher relationship, can create a safe work environment that involves feelings of satisfaction, trust, open communication, and collegiality" (p. 914). Maas et al. (2022) stated teachers experience stress in the teaching environment and principal's support is needed to help teachers remain at schools. In the study of Carroll et al. (2021), teachers reported stress in the teaching environment and the need to find strategies to reduce stress.

A position paper can provide district school leaders with recommendations of how to create a positive work environment where teachers thrive and experience less

burnout and more job satisfaction. In a positive work environment, teachers are more likely to take risk and be acceptable to feedback provided by school leaders (Mass et al., 2022).

School Principals Should Clearly Communicate Curriculum Expectations

Research found that the curriculum is a primary factor of teachers experiencing burnout, and school principals should support teachers by providing pedagogical expertise to teachers regarding the curriculum (Carroll et al., 2022). According to Carroll et al. (2021), school leadership influences teachers' work experience regarding expectations such as the curriculum. In a study conducted by Fox et al. (2020), secondary special education teachers reported stress is related to academic standards such as the curriculum. Fox et al. wrote that school leaders' expectation for teachers to cover certain amounts of the curriculum put pressure on the teachers. The secondary special education teachers in the study of Fox et al. said that standards-based curriculum and the pressure from school leaders increased their levels of stress.

A position paper will provide recommendations for district leaders to support school leaders with comprehending the components of the curriculum. Additionally, provide recommendations on how to support leaders with structures of how to utilize the curriculum to develop high-quality lesson to meet the needs of every student. A position paper will provide recommendations for district leaders to support school leaders with their leadership instructional practices to identify differentiated interventions based on the needs of teachers who experience burnout. Finally, a position paper will provide recommendations on how to track and monitor data and utilize it to determine

educational support to principals need to improve their instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout.

The Teaching Profession is Stressful

According to (Brunsting et al., 2022), the profession of teaching is stressful. Work related stress has resulted in teachers leaving the profession world-wide (Carroll et al., 2021). Cheng (2022) found that when teachers experience work-related stress due to the lack of principal support, resulting teachers experiencing burnout.

Teachers who experience burnout and stress can also affect student outcome. A position paper can provide recommendations that district leaders can use to improve K-12 school leaders' perceptions regarding instructional leadership to support teachers who experience burnout. The content in the position paper will also provide recommendations for district leaders to support school leaders with implementing instructional practices to retain teachers.

Teacher Burnout is Linked to Self-Efficacy

School leaders' instructional leadership practices are a determining factor to decreasing or increasing the number of teachers who experience burnout (Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022). Teacher burnout affects both teaching and learning (Cheng, 2022). School leaders should identify preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout (Kruse & Edge, 2023).

The social cognitive theory posts that teacher's self-efficacy is linked to teacher burnout, and Zheng (2022) found a correlation between college English language teachers' job burnout and self-efficacy is negative. A position paper will provide district

leaders with recommendations to support school leaders with strategies to identify preventative measures to improve instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout and to improve self-efficacy.

Teaching Work-Related Issues Cause Burnout

School leaders should be equipped with instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout due to work-related high demands (Kaiser and Thompson, 2021). According to (Russell and Liggans, 2020), reducing job demands could help to reduce burnout. Early childhood special education teachers who work with students with disabilities have additional responsibilities that cause burnout (Jeon et al., 2022).

According to Jeon et al. (2022), job demands refer to work-related stressors associated with teacher burnout. In a study conducted by Zheng (2022), college English language teachers' job burnout was influenced by work-related issues. School leaders who study burnout should take into consideration work-related stressors and lack of leaders' support (Zheng). According to Baroudi et al. (2022), researchers in the education field have studied the effect of school leaders on teacher burnout. Ghanbari and Majooni (2022) found that toxic leadership influenced teacher burnout. School leaders should resolve teachers' work-related issues because teachers' workload has the strongest effect on burnout (Cheng, 2022). Carroll et al. (2022) surveyed Australian primary teachers to explore their experience of work-related stress and burnout and found that teachers in rural and remote areas were very stressed and considered to leave the teaching profession.

Teacher workload is cited as a source of teacher stress and workload refers to teaching-related and non-teaching related tasks (Carroll et al.).

A position paper will provide recommendations for district leaders to support school leaders with improving their leadership practices to identify expectations of teachers' workload. Additionally, a position paper will recommend methods to strategically identify ways to decrease the workload to support teachers who experience burnout.

Project Description

A position paper was developed for K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper will be presented to K–12 school principals at the study sites to help them to learn new ways to reduce teachers' burnout. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

Needed Resources, Existing Supports, Barriers, and Solutions

Because this project study was conducted at two public school districts, I will request permission from the two school districts' superintendents to present the content of the position paper to their K–12 school principals. At the study site, K–12 school principals attend meetings at the school board of education at their principals' meetings held each month. I will request permission from the school district representative, at the first school district, responsible for the K–12 school principals' monthly meetings for me to present the content of the position paper to the attendees in the middle of each month. I

will also request permission from the school district representative, at the second school district, responsible for the K–12 school principals’ monthly meetings for me to present the content of the position paper to the attendees at the end of each month.

I will need approximately 1 hour to present the position paper to the attendees. As a result, a potential barrier could be the agendas of the K–12 school principals’ meetings at the boards of education. A potential solution will be to present the first half of the position paper on a date and time convenient to the attendees and the second half of the position paper on a following date and time convenient to the attendees.

Project Implementation and Timetable

There are two public school districts that comprise the study site. Each school district has 12 K–12 school principals’ meetings per year held at the school district boardroom. At the first school district, K–12 school principals’ monthly meetings are held in the middle of each month. At the second school district, K–12 school principals’ monthly meetings are held at the end of each month. I developed the project timetable to present the position paper to K–12 school principals at their monthly meetings. In the academic year 2023-2024, I will present the position paper once at each school district. The date and time of my presentation depends on the representatives responsible for the K–12 school principals’ monthly meetings.

Roles and Responsibilities

I will present the position paper once to K–12 school principals at each study site. My role will be a leading role to present the content of the position paper to the attendees. My responsibilities include the explanation of the content of the position paper to the

superintendents of the two school districts and to the attendees based on my research. I will encourage the superintendents of the two school districts to review the position paper.

Project Evaluation Plan

After presenting the position paper recommendations, K-12 school principals will complete a reflective survey (see Appendix C). The survey will include four questions. Questions 1 and 2 ask school leaders to name the leadership practices that they have consistently implemented and to explain whether the practices reduced teacher' burnout. Question 3 asks school principals to identify which leadership practices recommendations do they feel will be more beneficial in supporting teachers who experience burnout. Question 4 asks school leaders to identify and list leadership practices recommendations that they will need intense support to ensure that they are equipped to support teachers who experience burnout.

Project Implications

Additional research will be needed in order to determine what is effective and what is ineffective to improve principals' instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout. Research forthcoming will require school district leaders (Curriculum Academic Coach, Principals' Professional Development Trainers, Evaluators, etc.) along with K-12 principals and other stakeholders. This goal-oriented research should aim to indicate if the newly suggested recommendations were effective or ineffective. One barrier to conducting further research will be to identify specific

instructional leadership practice trends, establish goals, and to decide on how the goals will be measured.

Social Change

The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout in order to remain in the teaching profession. Teachers who experience burnout may benefit from the position paper because K–12 school principals may better support the teachers by resolving teachers’ work-related issues, creating a positive teaching environment, and communicating curriculum expectations. Senior school district administrators will benefit from this the position paper by reviewing its content and supporting K–12 school principals to identify and support teachers who experience burnout.

Social Change Implications

Given that the two school districts’ K-12 principals’ implement the recommended instructional leadership practices, there should be evidence of a decrease in the number of teachers experiencing burnout, an improvement in teacher effectiveness and student achievement, and an increase in the number of teachers remaining in the profession. Teachers could also receive bonuses and promotions. Although, these improvements may take time, the community will be impacted by receiving educated students who are contributors to their communities. Additionally, these improvements could decrease crime, drugs and gang activities resulting in communities being conducive and safe to living, raising families, and owning businesses.

Principals implementing the recommended instructional practices could indicate improvement in teacher effectiveness. Improving teacher effectiveness could result in improving student attendance and behavior decreasing student absences and out of school suspensions. Finally, parents will not have to face truancy notices due to the lack of student attendance. The time parents have to work to conference with school leaders to re-admit students to class after having been served an out-of-school suspension could decrease.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

In Section 4, I present my reflections and conclusions. I will also present the project's strengths and limitations. Recommendations for alternative approaches are presented. I conclude this section with implications, applications, and directions for future research.

Project Strengths and Limitations

I developed a position paper for K–12 school principals to better implement their LP to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper is the strength of this project because it is research-based and the two public school districts I collected data from do not have a policy on K–12 school principals supporting teachers who experience burnout. Another strength of the position paper is that it may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession. A further strength of the position paper is the list of recommendations for K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout to stay at the schools.

The first limitation of the position paper is the timeframe to present its content to K–12 school principals at the two different public-school districts during the principals' monthly meetings because their agenda may not allow for my presentation, or the attendees may not be interested in the topic of teacher burnout. The second limitation is the availability of the attendees to be present on the date and time I will present the position paper at their school district. The third limitation is the applicability of the

content of the position paper to other public-school districts in the same county as the two public school districts where I conducted this project.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

When investigating problems found in real world settings, consideration of alternative approaches to addressing and potentially those problems is a key element of producing improvement. In the case of this study, an alternative approach is to allow teacher–teacher collaboration. Another alternative approach is to provide sufficient opportunity and penalty-free space for teachers to express concerns linked to burnout. Understanding K–12 school principals’ perspectives about their LPs to support teachers to remain in the teaching profession could help school district leaders to strengthen my position paper.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

I completed this project study as a novice researcher and used a basic qualitative research design to investigate the phenomenon of the implementation of LPs of K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout. As a novice researcher, I developed a professional researcher–participant working relationship with each participant. I applied my education background and work-related teaching experiences during the data collection and analysis process. I also applied ethical research standards and received IRB approval from Walden University and the study site comprised of two public school districts, to protect the rights of the human participants.

I followed IRB guidelines and learned how to apply for IRB approval from Walden University and from the study site. I will conduct more research studies into

teacher burnout to develop a position paper on K-12 principals instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

My leadership role is to present the content of the position paper to the attendees at the study sites and assist the senior school district administrator to implement the position paper. This leadership role is to provide senior school district administrators and K–12 school principals with research-based recommendations to support principals LP to support teachers who experience burnout.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

This research work was important to me because the position paper may help K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay at the local schools. As an educational leader, I have learned how to advocate for teachers who experience burnout via conducting research and creating a position paper for educators for the benefit of the students. I am ready to present the position paper to senior school district administrators and K–12 school principals to implement this position paper at the study sites. I completed this EdD project study and learned about qualitative research and how to prepare a position paper. In conclusion, the position paper may positively influence K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The content of the position paper has implications for the study site because it includes new findings that may be used by K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper may be applied by K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout to stay at the schools. K–12 school principals will benefit from reviewing and implementing the position paper to support teachers who experience burnout. The content of the position paper is designed for the study sites and may not be applicable to other public-school districts in the same county where I conducted this project study.

Researchers who wish to replicate my study may use a larger sample. I recommend that researchers interview K–12 school principals and teachers who experience burnout. I also recommend that researchers interview senior school district administrators and teachers who experience burnout. Future researchers may also use quantitative methodology to examine the attrition of teachers who experience burnout.

Conclusion

This position paper is based on my own research and designed for K–12 school principals at the study site. By implementing this position paper, K–12 school principals will be in a better position to support teachers who experience burnout by providing instructional feedback, retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues, create a positive work environment for teachers, and clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers. The focus of the position paper is on supporting teachers who experience burnout and encouraging K–12 school principals to support

teachers who experience burnout. The position paper may encourage senior school district administrators to help K–12 school principals to support teachers who experience burnout at the study site. This position paper adds new knowledge to the field of education regarding the LPs of K–12 school principals. The position paper may support positive social change by helping K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs to support teachers who experience burnout to stay in the teaching profession.

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Appendix A: Position Paper

Background of Existing Problem

The local setting for this project study was two public school districts where K-12 principals were inconsistently implementing instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experienced burnout. Teacher burnout was often the result of work-related issues such as emotional fatigue, depersonalization, personal achievement, as well as their decision to leave the profession. According to (Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021), principals' competencies of instructional leadership practices to support teachers are key factors to teachers experiencing burnout, becoming emotionally fatigued, depersonalized, stressed, and choosing to leave the profession. It is important to note that the superintendents of the study sites compiled a yearly staffing report revealing that teachers who experience burnout are leaving the school districts in large numbers every academic year, which is more than 45% of teachers who have left the teaching profession in the past 5 years. Therefore, my position is that teacher burnout threatens the stability of the education environment, and it is incumbent upon the school administrators to implement research-based leadership practices for combating teacher burnout. When teacher burnout is enhanced through effective research-based leadership practices, teacher retention increases, student instruction improves, and school climate and culture strengthen.

Summary of Findings

All K-12 school principals who had been working at the study sites for at least 3 academic years and were state-certified were invited to participate in this study and 10 K-12 principals agreed to be interviewed for my study. According to these principals,

feedback conversations with teachers regarding instructional practices are helpful to identify teacher burnout, to prevent teacher depersonalization, to adequately support teachers, and to impact teachers' job satisfaction. The 10 participants were able to retain teachers who experienced burnout by resolving one-on-one teachers' work-related issues. According to the study participants, school principals may prevent teacher burnout by creating a positive work environment that leads to a decrease in their stress, which often can lead to their burn out. The study participants also noted the importance of clearly communicating curricular expectations, the absence of which can lead to teacher stress and low professional performance.

Evidence from the Literature Review

An exhaustive search of recent, peer-reviewed literature on the topic of principals' instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout was conducted. A frequent topic of the literature is that leadership instructional practices are often an organizational concern for school principals and teachers (Maric et al., 2021). Stress and emotional exhaustion can cause teacher burnout with teachers leaving the teaching profession (Brunsting et al., 2022; Fotre, 2022; Grant & Drew, 2022). Principals noted their struggle to decrease teacher burnout (Meyer et al., 2022; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022). School principals should be collegial and instructional leaders (Herman et al., 2023) and clearly communicate with teachers with respect and integrity in an effort to decrease teacher attrition (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

Principals who consistently implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout are more than likely to remain in the teaching

profession (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022). In contrast, principals who inconsistently implement instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout are more than likely to leave the profession (Hwang, 2022). It is crucial for school principals to support teachers by providing pedagogical proficiency regarding instructional strategies. By doing so, principals will help build the curriculum and trust between teachers and principals which is a mediating factor influencing teacher burnout and (Carroll et al., 2021). An example of a strategy to reduce teacher burnout is for school leaders to support teachers to improve self-efficacy in an attempt to improve teachers' job satisfaction and improve teachers' well-being as they struggle with work-related stress (Froehlich et al., 2022; Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022; Zheng, 2022).

Work-related issues affecting teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession often occur within the first 5 years of teaching (Anama-Green, 2020; Doherty, 2020). To retain teachers, work-related issues should be resolved by school principals (Bartosiewicz et al., 2022; Froehlich et al., 2022; Ghanbari & Majooni, 2022). School leaders should strive to improve teachers' working conditions and use interventions to support and provide feedback to teachers (Carroll et al., 2022; Cheng, 2022; Jeon et al., 2022; Zheng, 2022). School leaders should support teachers when work-related demands are high (Kaiser & Thompson, 2021) by reducing job demands (Russell & Liggans, 2020). Clear school goals should also be set by principals for teaching and learning (Karacabey et al., 2020) to support teachers (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022).

Evidence from this Research

I present my research-based findings on the topic of K-12 principals' perceptions regarding instructional leadership practices to support teachers who experience burnout. The participants of the study indicated that they often applied LPs to support teachers who experience burnout such as providing feedback on instructional practices. Feedback refers to the instructional dialogue between teachers and principals. Moreover, a principal should support teachers and prevent teacher depersonalization by providing feedback on a regular basis. Finally, principals need to understand teachers' well-being and influence teachers' job satisfaction by providing feedback as part of the effort to reduce teacher burnout.

The participants said that they can better retain teachers by resolving teachers' work-related issues. The participants specified that LPs should be applied to create a positive work environment for teachers because school principals may prevent teacher burnout by providing a positive work environment meaning the principal is not causing stress on teachers. When the principal is not creating a positive work environment, teachers' levels of stress increase, which is a factor of burnout. When a principal creates a positive work environment, the levels of teachers' emotional exhaustion are low.

The participants said that principals should clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers to prevent teacher burnout. When the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are clearly communicated to teachers, they do not cause stress on teachers. The teaching curriculum expectations is a factor of teacher burnout

causing stress on teachers resulting in low performance of teachers affecting other teachers within the school.

Recommendations for K–12 School Principals

The purpose of this position paper is to strengthen K–12 principals' involvement in identifying and supporting teachers who experience burnout in order to reduce the number of teachers leaving the teaching profession at the study sites. A presentation of the position paper will be presented to K–12 principals at the study sites. As the facilitator, I will explain that implementing the position paper may positively influence K–12 principals to support teachers who experience burnout to stay at the local schools. Senior school district administrators responsible for district-wide supporting principals will benefit from this the position paper by reviewing its content and supporting K–12 school principals in their effort to identify and support teachers who experience burnout.

The position paper provides the following recommendations to support K–12:

- School principals will provide instructional feedback to teachers who experience burnout on a regular basis to reduce teachers' stress.
- School principals will have conversations with teachers in order to identify teachers who experience burnout (Bezzina & Farrugia, 2022).
- School principals will have dialogue on instructional practices with teachers who experience burnout in order to reduce teachers' stress (Schaak, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattarai, 2022).

- School principals will provide adequate support via mentoring and professional development to teachers who experience burnout in order to keep them at the local schools.
- School principals will strive to understand and positively influence teachers' well-being (Farmer, 2020).
- School principals will positively influence teachers' job satisfaction (Meyer et al., 2022; Rachmawati & Suyanto, 2021).
- School principals will work directly with teachers having work-related issues because such issues cause stress on the teachers, and stress results in burnout (Hussain et al., 2021).
- School principals will assess teacher attrition by applying leadership practices to identify teachers who experience burnout (Gui, 2019).
- School principals will reduce the stress levels of teachers by creating a positive work environment (Daniels et al., 2020; Genc, 2020; Shrestha & Bhattari, 2022).
- School principals will prevent teacher burnout by finding preventative measures to decrease teacher burnout.
- School principals will strive to decrease teachers' emotional exhaustion levels in the work environment (Hunter & Springer, 2022; Hussain et al., 2021).
- School principals will clearly communicate the teaching curriculum expectations to teachers (Yu, 2018).

- School principals will recognize that teacher burnout affects the delivery of the teaching curriculum (Yu, 2018).
- School principals will recognize that unclear principals' teaching curriculum expectations to teachers result in low performance of teachers and affects other teachers within the school (Yu, 2018).
- School principals will have teacher-to-principal interactions when the principal's teaching curriculum expectations are unclear.

Conclusion

This position paper is based on research drawn from peer-reviewed professional journals. The position paper may assist K–12 school principals to better implement their LPs in order to support teachers who experience burnout and thus remain in the teaching profession. By implementing this position paper, K–12 school principals will become equipped with effective leadership instructional practices needed to effectively support teachers who experience burnout. School principals being able to effectively support teachers using effective instructional leadership practices will reduce teacher burnout, improve teacher effectiveness, improve culture and climate, improve morale, increase student academic achievement, retain teachers, decrease high school dropout rates, increase the number of students pursuing post-secondary education, increase attendance, decrease discipline rate, and overall produce students in becoming productive citizens of their community.

Appendix A: References

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Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Interview questions:

1. How do you apply leadership practices when managing the school?
2. How do you engage teachers in school functions?
3. How do you engage teachers in school activities?
4. How do you engage teachers in school procedures?
5. How do you engage teachers in practices of the school organization?
6. How do you interact with teachers?
7. How do you communicate with teachers?
8. How do you apply district policies regarding teacher burnout?
9. How do you apply district procedures regarding teacher burnout?
10. How do you support teachers who experience burnout?
11. How do you implement your leadership practices to set school instructional goals?
12. How do you implement your leadership practices to communicate school goals?
13. How do you implement your leadership practices to manage school instructional programs?

Appendix C: Reflective Survey

Survey Questions:

1. Based on the position paper, which of the leadership practices have you consistently implement?
2. Did the LPs reduce burnout among teachers?
3. Which LPs do you feel will be more beneficial for school leaders to implement in order to support teacher who experience burnout?
4. List the LPs you (school leader) feel that you would need support with in order to effectively support teachers who experience burnout?