

TEACHER RETENTION IN BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA K-12 SCHOOLS

by

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## ABSTRACT

This descriptive study was designed to determine the extent to which selected self-reported practical and professional factors of teaching influenced teacher job satisfaction and retention within the K-12 public education system. The population of the study was 1321 certified teachers from a large Central Florida school district. The researcher developed the survey instrument based on the constructs of teaching known for motivating teachers to remain within the public school setting (Brunetti, 2001; Farkas, Johnson, & Folena, 2005). The researcher's survey was based on the studies of Perie (1997), Brunetti (2001), and Gary (2002). The researcher personally distributed 1321 surveys, respondent informed consent letters and instructions for completing the survey during faculty meetings in November and December 2005. Extra surveys were left at the schools for those who were unable to attend the faculty meetings. A total of 890 surveys were returned for a response rate of 67.4%. The percentage returned was 72.4% for elementary teachers, 58.7% for middle school teachers, and 68.9% for high school teachers.

Teacher satisfaction and job retention were influenced by safe working conditions, a collaborative interaction among colleagues, and a supportive administration. Most of the teacher respondents indicated that it was not "very important" to be recognized for being a teacher nor was it "very important" to take on additional

leadership roles and responsibilities. Instead, teachers indicated it was “very important” to be given the opportunities to help children develop their talents and skills.

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

#### Introduction

Throughout the United States, the demand for qualified teachers has been on the rise. Three factors combined to create this increased demand. One factor was the growth in the population of elementary and secondary students. Another factor was the push for smaller class sizes, and the third factor was the attrition of teachers through retirement (Fox, 1998). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the nation's public elementary and secondary school enrollment soared to an all time high of 54 million students in 2001. This represented a 19 percent increase since 1988. The NCES projected Florida would experience a 5.4 percent increase in the number of public school K-12 students between 2001 and 2013 (NCES, 2003).

A Constitutional Amendment to limit class size was adopted by the Florida voters in 2002 and was implemented in May, 2003. The expectancy was that by the school year 2010-2011, the maximum number of students in core-curricula courses would be limited to 18 students in pre-kindergarten through grade three, 22 students in grades four through eight, and 25 students in grades nine through twelve (FL. Dept of Ed, 2004). The goal within the next ten years would be to bring about smaller class sizes, which in turn would increase the number of teachers needed to staff the classrooms. Also, older

teachers were beginning to retire in large numbers, just as student enrollments were beginning a decade-long rise. As of the 1993-94 school year, one-quarter of all public school teachers were 50 years of age or over. Almost one-third of all U.S. teachers had been in the profession for over 20 years – and more than six of every 100 teachers were leaving the profession each year. Most of these veteran teachers were retiring, but one in every five was simply deciding to quit (Kronholz, 1997).

According to Norton (1999), teacher turnover was one of the most serious problems facing schools. The loss of teacher talent continued to plague school districts. As many as 25% of teachers left the profession after only one year, and only about 50% remained after five years of service. No business or organization should have been happy with losing its best personnel, and yet evidence suggested that education was indeed losing many of its most talented people (Norton).

The National Center for Education Statistics (2003) presented data that showed approximately a third of America's new teachers left teaching some time during their first three years of teaching; almost half left during the first five years. This phenomenon led to school districts hiring unqualified and under-prepared replacements (Rebora, 2003). Johnson and Birkeland (2003) recognized dissatisfied teachers left their current teaching positions to seek different teaching assignments, to find support in their efforts to implement the curriculum, to establish lines of parent-teacher communication and/or to acquire administrative and colleague support. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) released a study in 2002 that suggested that, if teachers could be retained to gain experience, they were more likely to stay in the profession after their seventh year (Rebora).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of what a K-12 public school teacher looked like in the Brevard County, Florida K-12 public school system and to determine what teacher perceived practical and professional retention factors existed among elementary, middle and high school level teachers in Brevard County. This study also identified retention factors among elementary, middle, and high school level teachers, to develop an overall picture of perceived practical and professional factors that contributed to teacher job satisfaction and retention in Brevard's K-12 public education system.

### Definition of Terms

For the purpose of clarification, the following definitions were used throughout the study:

Core-curricula Courses – Courses in the school curriculum in the four major subject areas: mathematics, science, social studies and language arts.

Retention – Retained teachers were those teachers who remained in the teaching profession for more than one year.

Beginning Teacher – Beginning teachers were defined as teachers with less than three years of teaching experience.

Experienced Teacher – Experienced teachers were defined as teachers with more than three years of teaching experience (Grawel, 1997).

Highly Qualified Teacher– Highly qualified teachers were those with a bachelor’s degree, full state certification or licensure, and passing subject area test scores (U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Practical Factors – Practical factors included salary, relationships, social prestige, and a supportive working environment (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2005). Practical factors also included personal life influences like age, gender, family and security (Herzberg, 1968).

Professional Factors – Professional factors included levels of education and experience along with administrative and staff support (Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2005). Professional factors also included added responsibility, professional advancement in the institution, and recognition for achievement (Herzberg, 1968). An additional professional factor focused on the importance of the work itself (Brunetti, 2001).

#### Delimitations

1. The teachers surveyed were full-time teachers in the Brevard County, Florida Public School System.
2. A sampling of teachers at different grade levels in twenty-four Brevard County Schools were given a survey to complete during the 2005-06 school year.
3. The results of this study were not used to make generalizations about all K-12 school teachers. Since this study was conducted only in Brevard County, the applicability of the findings were considered limited.

## Assumptions

1. It was assumed the individuals in this study would respond honestly and accurately to the questionnaire.
2. It was assumed that the Brevard County School District Recruiting and Retention Office would benefit from the results of this study.

## Significance of the Study

The shortage of qualified teachers in the United States gained great attention since the 1970s. The shortage suggested a crucial need to improve the size and skill of the teaching forces in order to provide basic instruction in elementary and secondary schools. A key strategy to increasing the size and skill of the teaching force was to modify conditions in the teaching work place so that skilled teachers would remain in the profession. Teachers often felt they were not supported by their administration, or empowered in their teaching assignment, or safe in their environment (Ax, Conderman, & Stephens, 2001). According to the Southern Regional Education Board, the main reasons teachers exited the profession were poor preparation, uncomfortable working conditions, little support from administration or staff, and salary related issues (Rebora, 2003). Brissie (1988) declared another reason many capable teachers left the teacher workforce was teacher burnout. Teacher burnout was described as a manifestation of behavior that brought about emotional and physical exhaustion from stressful situations that were not adequately met by effective coping strategies. When teachers dealt with unruly students, excessive paperwork, little parent support, little recognition, and poor

monetary compensation, they often reached a point of hopelessness and fatigue. The end result often led to a career-ending decision (Deutsch, 2003).

### Conceptual Framework

The rationale and theoretical framework for this study was drawn from research theories related to practical and professional factors affecting retention in the workplace. The perceived practical and professional factors that influenced teachers to remain in the public school teaching profession were found to relate directly to teacher job satisfaction, recognition, professional development, decision-making and employee motivation (Brunetti, 2001). The three major need-based theories of motivation and job satisfaction generally believed and embraced by American businesses and education institutions were those of Frederick Herzberg, Abraham H. Maslow and Douglas McGregor. Herzberg, a psychologist, proposed a theory about job factors that motivated employees (Herzberg, 1968). Maslow, a behavioral scientist, developed a theory about the rank and satisfaction of various human needs and how people pursued those needs (Maslow, 1954). McGregor, also a psychologist, contrasted theories of individual behavior described as Theory X and Theory Y (McGregor, 1960). Frederick Herzberg's motivation theory, Abraham H. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and McGregor's X and Y theory each showed relationships of influential factors of motivation, job satisfaction and employee retention in the work place and education profession. Following will be a description of the three theories.



## Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg, a professor and chairman of the psychology department at Case Western Reserve University, developed a need-based theory of motivation.

Herzberg concluded there were two basic sets of factors with which employees were concerned: hygiene and motivators. Herzberg believed that when employees felt happy with their jobs, they most often described factors related to their task or to indicators that made them feel successful or to feeling like there was an opportunity for professional growth. On the other hand, when employees felt unhappy, it was because of the conditions that surrounded the job itself (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959).

Hygiene factors were those associated with types of supervision, company policies, pay, physical working conditions, interpersonal relations, status, job security and personal life. According to Herzberg, proper attention to these factors was important in preventing employees from becoming dissatisfied in their work (Terpstra, 1979).

Hygiene factors removed health hazards from the environment. They were not cures; they were preventatives (Herzberg, et al., 1959). Herzberg asserted that these factors did not play an important role in satisfying or motivating employees, as only motivator factors could do this. The motivator factors included achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, growth and the work itself. To the extent that the motivator factors were present on the job, Herzberg contended, motivation would occur (Terpstra).

Both kinds of factors played an important role in meeting the needs of employees. However, it was primarily the motivating factors that brought about the job satisfaction

that was necessary for improved performance and retention in the work force (Herzberg, et al., 1959).

For example, salary, fringe benefits, working conditions, climate and attitudes and policies of the administration were sources of dissatisfaction. However, if one improved the salary-benefit package and working conditions and developed a more humane, concerned administration, one could expect to reduce dissatisfaction, but one could not expect to motivate the workers by such means (Owens, 2001). Herzberg called these conditions “hygiene” factors. This term was chosen because Herzberg felt these conditions had a preventive quality. Two different needs of man were involved here. One set of needs was thought of as stemming from man’s built-in drive to avoid pain from the environment, plus all the learned drives became conditioned to the basic biological needs. The other set of needs related to that unique human characteristic, the ability to achieve and, through achievement, to experience psychological growth. Herzberg (1968) indicated that growth and motivation generated themselves from achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement. These were called motivating factors or motivators. Herzberg indicated that motivators were the primary cause of satisfaction, and hygiene factors were the primary cause of unhappiness on the job. Thus, the only thing that could be expected by satisfying the needs for hygiene was the prevention of job dissatisfaction and poor job performance (Herzberg, et al., 1959).

Again, Herzberg (1968) explained that motivation was composed of two separate, independent factors: motivational factors, which led to job satisfaction and maintenance factors, which had to be sufficiently present in order for motivational factors to come into

existence. The only way to motivate employees was to give them challenging work in which they could assume responsibility.

Traditionally, it had been believed that the opposite of job satisfaction was job dissatisfaction. By eliminating the sources of dissatisfaction, the job would become motivating and satisfying (Owens, 2001). Herzberg (1968) suggested that the opposite of job satisfaction was not job dissatisfaction but, rather, no job satisfaction; and, similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction was not job satisfaction but no job dissatisfaction. Thus, eliminating sources of dissatisfaction did pacify, or reduce the dissatisfaction of a worker, but this did not mean that such reduction motivated the worker or led to job satisfaction.

Owens (2001) believed Herzberg's theory suggested that it was not possible to motivate people at work through hygiene factors. This was not to say hygiene factors were not important. Minimal levels of hygiene factors had to be maintained in order to avoid too much dissatisfaction so that motivators would have their expected effect. Hygiene factors were considered pre-requisites to motivation. According to Owens, Herzberg had three underlying propositions for those who practiced his theory. He believed employers needed to enrich the job and make it more interesting, more challenging and more rewarding. He also believed the employer had to increase autonomy by increasing the amount of participation in making decisions as to how the work should be done, and finally he believed employers had to expand personnel administration to create or design jobs that motivate the incumbents.

Hall, Pearson and Carroll (1992) conducted a study in a large urban school district in Florida to identify factors that related to teacher retention. These factors revolved

around various job satisfaction issues such as compensation, decision-making and staff development opportunities. The study also included factors related to teacher attitudes toward their careers and their school site administrators. Three of these factors were recognition, increased autonomy, and opportunities to contribute to important work-related decisions. The study was conducted in an attempt to identify different factors that had an impact on teacher retention. The results of the study suggested that teachers who planned to quit teaching and those who planned to stay could be reliably distinguished by the pattern of work-related attitudes and perceptions that they expressed. The teachers who said they planned to quit expressed less satisfaction with their current employment and with their current salary and had more negative attitude toward both teaching as a career and the school administration.

Herzberg (1968) believed satisfaction at work arose from the work itself or, job satisfaction came from achievement. His studies indicated that recognition, achievement, and advancement were major forces in motivating workers to lift their performances to approach their maximum potential. In the late 1960s, Herzberg's theory appeared to be supported among teachers. The findings indicated that achievement and recognition were important motivators for teachers, along with the work itself, responsibility, and the possibility of growth (Owens, 2001). However, a 1990s study by the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (TCLP) indicated a hygiene factor, salary, was the most important influence of teacher decisions and teachers perceived salary as being tied to achievement and other motivation factors (Grawel, 1997).

According to Bellott and Tutor (1990), the problems with Herzberg's work were that it occurred in 1959 – too long ago to be pertinent – and did not cover teachers. They

cited earlier research with the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (TLCP) as a means of overcoming both problems. TLCP established three levels, the largest and beginning one of which had 30,000 members. Bellott and Tutor believed the data from the study clearly indicated that the participants were as influenced by motivation factors as by hygiene factors, contrary to Herzberg's position that hygiene factors did not motivate. The survey asked classroom teachers whether salary influenced their decision to participate in the (TLCP) program. The teacher responses indicated that teachers viewed salary as a strong motivating factor, well above the other Herzberg hygiene factors listed on the survey.

### Maslow's Need Hierarchy

Abraham H. Maslow (1954) first published "Motivation and Personality," which introduced his theory about how people satisfied various personal needs in the context of their work. He concluded, based on his observations as a humanistic psychologist, that there was a general pattern of needs recognition and satisfaction that people followed in generally the same sequence. He also theorized that a person could not recognize or pursue the next higher need in the hierarchy until his or her currently recognized need was substantially or completely satisfied, a concept called prepotency. Maslow's hierarchy of needs was often illustrated as a pyramid with the survival need at the broad-based bottom and the self-actualization need at the narrow top. Teacher retention has been influenced by two sets of factors, those that satisfy and motivate an individual to stay in the profession and those that cause dissatisfaction with teaching leading to departure from the profession (Grawel, 1997).

Maslow, a behavioral scientist, observed that individuals were motivated to satisfy five different levels of needs. The lowest level of need was the physiological need. This included the concept of homeostasis: the human body's automatic efforts to maintain itself. Examples included food, air, and warmth. Also included at the physiological level were the needs for sleep, exercise and stimulation. Physiological needs were considered the most prepotent of all needs. Human beings who were unable to satisfy the different levels of needs would try to satisfy the physiological need more strongly than any other need. If the physiological needs were met, a second level of needs appeared. These were the safety needs. They included protection, order, dependency, stability, security, law and the freedom from fear. If the physiological and safety needs were gratified, belongingness needs emerged. A person who moved to the belongingness level in Maslow's hierarchy of needs confronted loneliness, rejection, friendlessness, and ostracism. Most people want to belong. The fourth level of needs was self-esteem. Most individuals have a need or desire for a high evaluation of themselves or self-respect. The description of these needs often included desires for achievement, adequacy, importance, recognition, status, dignity and appreciation. Satisfying self-esteem needs may then lead to feelings of self-confidence and worth. Finally, the highest level of need was self-actualization. This need referred to a person's desire for self-fulfillment. A person had the restlessness to do what he was individually suited to do. This may have taken on the form of being an athlete, an artist or a parent. The emergence of self-actualization may have rested upon some prior satisfaction of the physiological, safety, belongingness and self-esteem needs (Maslow, 1954).

Maslow proposed that these needs were related in the form of a hierarchy and

each need emerged sequentially. He stated the physiological needs of an individual would have to be largely satisfied or fulfilled before the next level of needs could motivate behavior. A need that was relatively satisfied lost its importance as a motivator, causing the next higher level of need to come into consideration and motivate the individual (Terpstra, 1979).

Maslow's theory had an emphasis on motivating employees by appealing to their individual needs. To motivate employees, one had to accurately identify and gauge their most important needs and utilized those needs by linking their satisfaction to effort or performance. The primary value of Maslow's need hierarchy theory was its focus on the recognition and identification of individual needs for the purposes of motivating behavior. Every need a person had was a potential motivator, with the range of human needs in a hierarchical order. Man's behavior could be dominated by his unsatisfied needs, for when one need was satisfied he aspired for the next higher one (Terpstra, 1979).

Chapman and Hutcheson (1982) found that motivational factors had a direct impact on teacher retention. Their study showed evidence that motivation factors such as salary, shared decision-making, recognition, staff development, and autonomy increased the chances teachers stayed in the education business.

According to Owens (2001), satisfying needs was therefore seen as an ongoing activity in which a person was totally absorbed in order to attain perfection through self-development. The highest state of self-actualization was characterized by integrity, responsibility, magnanimity, simplicity and naturalness. Self-actualizers focused on problems external to themselves. Maslow (1954) stated a person's salvation would be

achieved by working hard and having a total commitment to the job he or she was destined to do. This was different than what Frederick Herzberg believed. According to Owens, Herzberg implied that only the higher-order needs were truly motivating. Maslow's lower-order needs could be conceptualized as the Herzberg hygiene factors. Salary, working conditions, job security and supervision were generally physiological and safety-oriented needs. On the other hand, motivational factors of recognition, advancement, responsibility, growth, achievement, and the work itself tended to be closely related to the desire for esteem and self-actualization (Owens).

Individuals often have problems consistently articulating what they want from a job. Therefore, managers often tell their employees what they want, based on what managers believe employees would want under the circumstances. Frequently, these decisions are based on Maslow's needs hierarchy. As a person advances through an organization, the manager supplies or provides opportunities to satisfy needs higher on Maslow's pyramid (Grawel, 1997).

According to data from the Tennessee Career Ladder Program (TCLP) survey, teachers were less satisfied with their personal achievement of esteem (a middle level need according to Maslow) than with their achievement of self-actualization. Therefore, it can be concluded that self-actualization was a prepotent need to esteem (Tutor, 1986).

Grawel (1997) stated that Herzberg's Motivation/Hygiene Theory related to Maslow's Theory of Needs through the underlying premise that all humans have two sets of needs: the need for psychological growth and the need to avoid unpleasantness. Although Herzberg's paradigm of hygiene/motivation factors and Maslow's hierarchy of needs may still have broad applicability in the business world, at least one aspect of each,



Herzberg's indication of salary as a hygiene factor and Maslow's indication of esteem as a lower order need than self actualization, does not seem to hold in the case of elementary and secondary school teachers. Grawel indicated these findings might begin to explain why good teachers are being lost to other, higher paying positions and to help administrators focus more closely on the esteem needs to teachers, individually and collectively.

### Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas McGregor (1960) challenged the belief that workers were inherently lazy. He proposed two models, Theory X and Theory Y based on his examination of the way people behaved in the workplace. Theory X assumed that average human beings disliked work, and humans would avoid work unless they were controlled and threatened. Without active intervention by management, people would be passive and even resistant to organizational needs. Thus, in Theory X, most people had to be coerced, directed, punished and/or controlled to get them to put forth the efforts to achieve an organizational objective. A Theory X assumption was that most people disliked work so much, that the promise of rewards did not overcome it. Only threats of punishment increased effort. Managerial efforts often reflected the Theory X assumptions. Managers would often "direct" workers because they felt most people wished to avoid responsibility or they felt people had little ambition.

McGregor (1960) supported Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory by stating, "Man is a wanting animal – as soon as one of his needs is satisfied, another appears in its place. The process is unending...Man continuously puts forth effort – works, if you please – to

satisfy his needs” (p. 36). However, McGregor went on to say that most people in the Theory X model who satisfied their lower-level needs were no longer motivated to satisfy those particular needs. According to McGregor, a satisfied need was not a motivator of behavior.

The second model of human behavior described by McGregor (1960) was Theory Y. This model assumed the average human being did not dislike work. In fact, work was a possible source of satisfaction. Man was seen as a self-directing and self-controlling individual who could commit to an organizational objective. The commitment to the objective manifested itself through achievement. In the Theory Y model, the average person could learn and accept responsibility and the average person could exercise specific qualities to solve organizational problems.

Theory Y assumed that if workers were respected and involved in decision-making, they would be highly motivated. The motivation, the potential for development, the capacity for assuming responsibility, and the readiness to direct behavior towards organizational goals were present in all people. Management did not put them there (Creighton, 2002). Acceptance of Theory Y did not imply managerial permissiveness or lack of managerial control. Theory Y assumed people would exercise self-direction and self-control in the achievement of organizational objectives as long as they were committed to those objectives. If the commitment were small, then external influences would be necessary. Thus, an integration of the two models allowed for managerial authority and self-control to achieve an organizational objective (McGregor, 1960).

Heil, Bennis and Stephens (2000) found the intriguing part about McGregor’s theories was that it challenged traditional managerial assumptions and practices. His

motivational models of Theory X and Theory Y referred to the set of assumptions held by managers toward their workers. These theories were not managerial strategies but rather underlying beliefs about the nature of man that influenced managers to adopt one strategy rather than another. Thus, McGregor felt it was essential for managers to analyze their own assumptions in order to effectively lead and motivate others.

McGregor's Theory Y principle influenced the design of personnel policies, affected the way companies conducted performance reviews, and shaped the idea of pay for performance. McGregor was given credit for the term "human resources" instead of personnel department. He was also given credit for the notion of treating people as assets (Creighton, 2002).

Heil et al. (2000) determined Maslow and McGregor believed most people were naturally motivated to pursue their higher level needs as well as their physiological needs. In order to build a motivated workforce, managers needed to create an environment in which personal needs and organizational goals were aligned. Eggen (2002) conducted a survey of 359 South Carolina public school teachers. She concluded there were a number of motivational factors that influenced teacher decisions to stay in the classroom. A number of these retention factors focused on areas of support. Many of the teachers shared their needs for community, administration and financial support. Eggen's study led to a focus on some of the influential factors that could be addressed at the school level in order to retain teachers. These retention factors included increased pay, smaller class sizes, mentoring programs, opportunities for communication, voices in decision-making, and participation in professional development programs.

## Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of a K-12 public school teacher from Brevard County, Florida in 2005?
2. What teacher perceived practical factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida K-12 public school teachers in the teaching profession?
3. What teacher perceived professional factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida public school teachers in the K-12 classroom?

## Methodology

### Population

The target population of this study consisted of 1321 schoolteachers. The teachers were chosen from 24 of the eighty-two public schools in Brevard County, Florida. The sampling included teachers representing the elementary, middle, and high school levels. One high school was selected from each of the four quadrants in the school district. Two middle schools were selected from each of the four quadrants in the district. Three elementary schools were selected from each of the four quadrants in the district. Overall, teachers from 24 schools were surveyed. The surveys were conducted during scheduled faculty meetings at each school. The researcher introduced the survey-taking procedure. A survey and a consent letter were issued to each teacher. Before leaving the room, the researcher solicited the assistance from a randomly selected teacher on staff to collect the

surveys and letters, place them in separate envelopes, and return them to the researcher via the district courier system.

### Data Collection and Instrumentation

With the assistance of the 24 school principals, a sample of 1321 schoolteachers in Brevard County was surveyed using a teacher-retention study questionnaire. Among the eighty-six K-12 schools in the Brevard County School System, a sampling at each grade division was made (elementary, middle and high school). Teachers were administered the survey during scheduled faculty meetings. Each teacher at a selected school was given a survey and consent letter during the meeting and asked to return the two items to a teacher-volunteer before they were dismissed. The school principal would then send the completed surveys to the researcher via the district mail courier system.

The researcher's survey was based on the studies of Marianne Perie and David Baker (1997), Professor Gerald J. Brunetti (2001), and Dr. Karen Gary (2002) who developed survey instruments based on similar factors that influenced teachers' job satisfaction and their decisions to remain in the public school classroom settings. An associate professor at the University of Central Florida, reviewed the survey for format and readability. The survey was then pilot tested using five classroom teachers and one school administrator for further refinement prior to final approval of its use in the study.

The survey questionnaire was specifically designed to provide information about teachers' satisfaction and their motivations for remaining in the classroom. The survey addressed the related research questions: (a) Research Question 1, demographic profile of a Brevard County public school teacher; items 1-4, 6-8, 13-14, 22-26; (b) Research

Question 2: perceived practical factors that contribute to keep teachers in their profession, items 5, 6, 9,10, 13, 14, 22, 23, 25, 26, 36-38; (c) Research Question 3: perceived professional factors that contribute to keep teachers in their profession, items 10, 12, 15-21, 27-35.

### Data Analysis

The frequency and percentage analyses were conducted utilizing Windows EXCEL. Responses to each item were tabulated using Descriptive Statistics.

### Organization of Study

Chapter 1 introduced the problem statement and its design components. Chapter 2 will review the literature and related research relevant to the problem of this study. Chapter 3 presents the methodology and procedures used for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 describes an analysis of the data. Chapter 5 offers a summary and discussion of the findings of this study, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Throughout the United States, the demand for qualified teachers has been on the rise. Three factors combined to create this heavy demand. One factor was the growth in the population of elementary and secondary students. Another was the push for smaller class sizes and the third factor was the attrition of teachers through retirement (Fox, 1998). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the nation's public elementary and secondary school enrollment soared to an all time high 54 million students in 2001. This represented a 19 percent increase since 1988. The NCES projected Florida would experience a 5.4 percent increase in the number of public school K-12 children between 2001 and 2013 (NCES, 2003). The Florida Department of Education (2006) reported that the total pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade public school student membership in Florida in the Fall 2005 was 2,673,563 students. When compared to the Fall 2001 membership of 2,500,161, the Fall 2005 membership showed an increase of 173,402 students or 6.94%. Of the 48 districts that showed increases in membership during the same period, the greatest percentage increase occurred in Flagler County (54.45%).

In 1996, California implemented a plan to improve the quality of education students received by embarking on a costly program to reduce class size (Howard, 2003). In 2002, Florida also enacted a Constitutional Amendment to reduce class size. The Constitutional Amendment adopted by the Florida voters was implemented in May, 2003. The expectancy was that by the school year 2010-2011, the maximum number of students in core-curricula courses be limited to 18 students in pre-kindergarten through grade three, 22 students in grades four through eight, and 25 students in grades nine through twelve (FL. Dept of Ed, 2004). The goal within the next ten years would be to bring about smaller class sizes, which in turn would increase the number of teachers needed to fill the classrooms. Also, older teachers were beginning to retire in large numbers, just as student enrollments were beginning a decade-long rise. As of the 1993-94 school year, one-quarter of all public school teachers were 50 years of age or over. Almost one-third of all U.S. teachers had been in the profession for over 20 years – and more than 8 of every 100 teachers were leaving the profession each year. Most of these veteran teachers were retiring, but one in every five was simply deciding to quit (Kronholz, 1997). Ingersoll (2001) noted that more than a quarter-million teachers left the profession each year, and retirees accounted for less than a third of those. He stated school conditions were the biggest reasons for teacher dissatisfaction. These conditions included poor administrative support, lack of faculty influence, poor salary and classroom intrusions. Ingersoll studies showed more teachers left the profession or moved because they were dissatisfied rather than because they retired.

According to Norton (1999) teacher turnover was one of the most serious problems facing schools. The loss of teacher talent continued to plague school districts.



As many as 25% of teachers leave the profession after only one year, and only about 50% remain after five years of service. Berry (2000) estimated that in order to serve the growing number of children expected to be in schools by the year 2005, the nation would need to recruit 200,000 teachers annually. According to the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), retention of high-quality teachers was one of the greatest causes of teacher shortage (NASBE, 1998).

### Teacher Profile

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1998) the teaching occupation represented 4% of the entire civilian workforce in the United States. There were twice as many K-12 teachers as registered nurses and five times as many K-12 teachers as either lawyers or professors. However, data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2003) showed approximately a third of America's new teachers left teaching some time during their first three years of teaching; almost half may have left during the first five years. Howard (2003) agreed that approximately half of all beginning teachers left the profession within their first five years. In addition, nearly 16 percent of beginning teachers left without making it through their first year. An analysis done by Darling-Hammond (1999) showed that, since the late 1980s, 50,000 emergency or substandard licenses were issued by states around the country. This trend led to school districts hiring unqualified and under-prepared replacements (Rebora, 2003).

The National Center for Education Information (2005) conducted a nationwide survey of K-12 public school teachers in America. The survey showed that the teacher work force was becoming more female and older. Eight out of 10 public school teachers

were female. Eighty-four percent of teachers who had five or fewer years of teaching experience were women. Lucksinger (2000) attributed many of the trends in recent years of the K-12 teacher population to the Baby Boom generation of the 1940s – 1960. A significant number of the Boomer population became teachers in the public school system. In 2005, many of these same people were close to retirement, and the current age of one-fourth of all teachers in the United States was 50 years or older. With more women getting into the workforce and other social factors, the teaching profession continued to be a female dominated profession. According to Kronholz (1997), as teachers of the Baby Boom generation reached their 40s and 50s between the years 1990 and 2000, the United States was close to witnessing its largest-ever wave of teacher retirement. In the late 1990s, approximately one-fourth of public school teachers were over age 50; almost one-third were in the profession for more than 20 years; and close to half of the teachers at the time were expected to retire by the year 2010. Darling-Hammond (2000) indicated that teacher shortages at the secondary level were greater than at the elementary level. Her research also indicated that teachers of color were underrepresented at all levels, and that male teachers were most scarce at the elementary levels.

Although the majority of students enrolled in teacher preparation institutions were white, (80.5%), and female, (74.2%) there was evidence of a shift to an increased number of teacher of color (AACTE, 1999). The National Center for Education Information (NCEI) (2005) reported that the proportion of teachers who were white shifted from 91 percent in 1986 to 85 percent in 2005 with the fastest growing group of non-white teachers being those of Hispanic origin. Gordon (1992) reported many individuals from

culturally diverse groups held negative views of the teaching profession. Discipline problems, low salaries, and lack of potential for upward mobility were among the factors contributing to the profession's lack of appeal. Ford and Grantham (1997) noted that minority teachers were more likely to leave the teaching profession than were non-minority teachers. They reported an attrition rate for minority teachers at twice the rate as non-minority teachers. Brown (2002) stated that many African-American teachers left teaching for higher salaries and more prestigious professions. Brown added that better incentives by state departments of education and local school districts needed to be provided in order to recruit and retain quality teachers.

Chaddock (1998) reported that in most big cities in Texas, Hispanics made up the majority of the student population, but more than 2 of 3 teachers were Anglo. To address this issue, more than 26 Texas school districts set up alternative-teacher-training programs that brought more minorities and mid-career professionals into the teaching profession.

### Teacher Shortage

According to Hope (1999) estimates have shown that by the year 2009, more than two million teachers will be needed to meet the growing student population in the United States. This would equate to adding approximately 200,000 new teachers annually. Howard (2003) stated the U.S. Department of Education estimated that by the year 2013 approximately 2.2 million teachers would be needed – an average of more than 200,000 new teachers annually. Hope also stated that only 100,000 new people will enter the teaching profession each year, and many of the new recruits will not stay. The

decreasing numbers show that up to 40 percent of new teachers leave after their first two years of teaching (Hope). Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2003) showed approximately a third of America's new teachers left teaching some time during their first three years of teaching; almost half may have left during the first five years. Lucksinger (2000) stated the current teacher shortage was affected because almost one-fourth of all teachers in the United States were 50 years or older. According to Gerald and Hussar (2001), by the year 2008, over three million teachers will be needed in the United States. Most of the growth will be found at the elementary levels and most of the need will be in urban, high poverty public schools. Howard reviewed a study conducted in Texas that revealed almost 30 percent of those who studied to become teachers never entered the field. Another study done in Texas by Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2004) showed the percentage of teachers leaving low performing schools (20%) was higher than high performing schools (15%).

### Incentives and Recruiting

According to Chaika (2005), the teacher shortage problem was being addressed in a variety of ways throughout the United States. Because of inadequate induction programs, poor working conditions, and a growing salary gap between teachers and other college graduates – a difference of more than \$32,000 for experienced teachers with master's degrees - the worst shortage of qualified teachers in history has developed. In urban and rural districts and in hard-to-fill areas of special education, mathematics and science, the problem has been so severe that school districts throughout the country have made some drastic decisions to lure and retain teachers in their schools. Forty-two states

issued emergency credentials to people who never took an education course and never taught a day in their lives. One-fourth of new teachers were not licensed to teach in the field in which they were teaching. Twenty percent of new teachers left the profession within the first three years; most that left were those with the highest college entrance exam scores. Forty-nine percent of those who left did so because of job dissatisfaction or to pursue another career (Chaika, 2005).

Jim Hunt, former governor of North Carolina and chairman for the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future stated that school leaders get upset at the beginning of each year when they do not have enough good teachers. Hunt was quoted, "...we should have been focusing on improving working conditions in the school, having greater career opportunities for teachers, having the right pay for them, and showing the right kind of appreciation" (CNN Report, 2003).

Chaika (2005) noted that school districts had to come up with different strategies and creative ways to lure and retain teachers. In Massachusetts, school districts offered \$20,000 signing bonuses in their recruiting packages. In New York, city districts were having such a difficult time finding quality teachers locally that they expanded their recruiting efforts to other countries such as Austria, Puerto Rico and Spain. California and Texas recruited Spanish-speaking teachers from Mexico. In order to entice out-of-state teachers, they also streamlined the process by which out-of-state teachers could obtain credentials. The city of Detroit found bonuses, housing assistance, moving expenses, and free graduate courses to be attractive inducements for outsiders to join its districts. Connecticut raised teacher salaries throughout the state to make it easier for poor districts to attract certified teachers.

Chaika (2005) described how Hartford, Connecticut lured teachers by paying for health care insurance, offering different teaching options such as charter and magnet schools, and provided bonuses for veteran teachers of \$100 annually for every year served. Miami, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis paid teachers more money to teach in critical-needs areas. In Kansas, minority teacher candidates interested in special education were given financial assistance, and they were provided opportunities for more in-class experiences with mentor teachers before being asked to step in front of their own classes. Indianapolis and Atlanta subsidized on-site day care centers for teachers with young children in hopes to recruit teachers. Many other districts throughout the country used financial rewards or benefits to lure and retain teachers to their schools; however, the state of Nevada came up with something that was unique to most. Nevada offered an extra year of retirement credit for every five years teachers taught in special-needs schools. Also, teachers in rural schools would be able to convert their unused sick leave into one year of retirement credit, and finally, newly hired teachers were able to receive full credit for their years of experience elsewhere.

Chaddock (1998) noted that school districts have historically not been very creative in the ways they go about recruiting teachers, but the recent decline in numbers and the lack of retention of quality teachers have forced many school districts out of the old routines. Chaddock also found that in New York City, new math and science teachers were recruited from Austria and bilingual teachers from Spain. The state of Mississippi offered free college education to students who committed to teaching in districts with critical shortages. Texas and California were making teachers out of ex-aerospace engineers and volunteer parents. In Kentucky, the situation developed to such a

desperate level that the state allowed five districts to hire substitutes who only had high school diplomas.

According to Hope (1999), estimates have shown that by the year 2009, more than two million teachers will be needed to meet the growing student population in the United States. Chaika (2005) emphasized that streamlining hiring procedures, expanding the search beyond customary borders, forgiving loans, offering financial incentives such as bonuses and housing, providing mentoring programs, and enticing retirees to return or enter teaching can all play significant roles in recruiting teachers to the profession and getting them to stay. Based on a report by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003) hiring more teachers was not the simple answer for solving the teacher shortage. About one-third of newly hired teachers quit during their first three years, and almost half leave within five years. Turnover was highest in poor, predominantly minority schools. The teacher shortage problem was evolving not because of the number of teachers America generates each year but because of retaining those teachers once they enter the profession.

### Retention Factors in Theory

Experienced teachers, those that have been in the profession for at least three years, were motivated to stay in the profession by professional rather than practical motivators of teaching. Retention of teachers has been influenced by two sets of factors, those that satisfy and motivate an individual to stay in the profession and those that cause dissatisfaction with teaching leading to departure from the profession (Grawel, 1997). The factors of teacher job satisfaction and dissatisfaction have been explained through

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Motivation/Hygiene Theories. Grawel stated that Herzberg's Motivation/Hygiene Theory related to Maslow's Theory of Needs through the underlying premise that all humans have two sets of needs: the need for psychological growth (motivation piece) and the need to avoid unpleasantness (hygiene piece). Under this theory, motivational factors can cause satisfaction or no satisfaction, while hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction when absent and no dissatisfaction when present (Herzberg, 1968). Salary, job security, social needs and prestige, company policy and administration, supervision, relationships and environmental conditions have been associated with Herzberg's hygiene factors and serve as examples of practical teacher retention factors (Brunetti, 2001; Owens, 2001). Self-actualization, recognition, achievement, professional advancement, autonomy and the work itself have been identified as professional teacher retention factors and provide examples of Herzberg's motivation factors (Brunetti, 2001; Terpstra, 1979).

Frataccia and Hennington (1982) conducted research based on the work of Maslow and Herzberg to find what factors influence job satisfaction in the teaching profession. They concluded that teacher burnout and attrition were due to teachers trying to find a way to avoid unpleasantness in their current situation as well as an inability to satisfy personal psychological growth. Teachers who remained in the profession reported being satisfied with the work itself as well as the importance and responsibility of teaching, which has been identified as the motivation component of Herzberg's Hygiene Theory. However, teachers were dissatisfied with the level of recognition, advancement and achievement within this area. The same group of teachers reported dissatisfaction within Herzberg hygiene factors citing low teacher salary, loss of teacher status, difficulty



classroom environments and unreasonable teacher workloads. Frataccia and Hennington concluded that most of the teacher retention factors that caused dissatisfaction and teacher attrition were under the direct influence of school-level and district-level administrators.

Retention of classroom teachers has occurred through the development of policies and work environments that have provided teachers an opportunity to satisfy both hygiene and motivation needs. Failure to satisfy both sets of needs has led to teacher attrition (Grawel, 1997). The principal, acting as the school's instructional leader, has had the ability to influence and assist teachers in satisfying their needs related to the hygiene and motivation factors of Herzberg's Theory. According to Charlotte Advocates for Education (CAE) (2004), teachers consistently cite working conditions as a major factor in determining whether they stay at a school. The CAE specifically said principal leadership was often given as the key component in creating a positive working environment. Hope (1999) fully supported the notion that the principal's role in teacher retention was critical. What the principal does or neglects to do when hiring, orienting, and managing teachers within the public education system has implications for a district's recruitment and training procedures, teacher commitment and retention, as well as the stability of school staff, and ultimately school effectiveness.

### Retention Factors in Industry

Education has not been the only group concerned about recruiting and retaining talented employees. The Information Technology (IT) industry has had to deal with an employee retention issue as well. According to McGee (2005), a study of 10,000

employees by staffing company Hudson showed just 49% of managers say top talent tended to stay at their companies while only 35% of the workers said top talent tended to stay with their companies. A poll of 146 information technology (IT) pros revealed that 69% of them were actively or somewhat actively looking for a new job or another employer. The top five reasons were (a) dislike of current employer's management or culture (64%), (b) desire for higher compensation and benefits (56%), (c) more personal fulfillment (56%), (d) desire for more interesting work (50%), and (e) the need for less stress (34%). Also the technology industry was similar to the education industry in that there was clear evidence of a shortage of qualified and talented workers. Like education, turnover was a prime reason for a worker shortage along with company growth (Information Week, 2005).

### Retention Factors in Teaching

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) recognized dissatisfied teachers left their current teaching positions to seek different teaching assignments, to find support in their efforts to implement the curriculum, to establish lines of parent-teacher communication and/or to acquire administrative and colleague support. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) released a study in 2002 that suggested, if teachers could be retained to gain experience, they were more likely to stay in the profession after their seventh year (Rebora, 2003).

A survey study of 8400 teachers conducted by Luekens, Lyter and Fox (2001) found the following reasons teachers moved or left the teaching profession: (a) an opportunity for a better teaching assignment, (b) dissatisfaction with support from

administrators, (c) dissatisfaction with workplace conditions, (d) better salary or benefits, (e) retirement, (f) pursuit of another career, and (g) child rearing or health. Norton and Kelly (1997) found five reasons teachers left the profession: (a) too much paperwork, (b) student performance accountability, (c) student discipline issues, (d) lack of administrative support, and (e) low salaries. According to Lucksinger (2000) teachers left the profession for the following reasons: (a) lack of a supportive environment, (b) unhappiness with an immediate supervisor, (c) difficult teaching assignments, and (d) time restraints. Colb's (2001) research identified three key reasons for teachers leaving: (a) retirements, (b) salaries and working conditions, and (c) low social status. A study done by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003) broadly stated that there needed to be better organization and investments in schools, rigorous teaching-quality preparation and standards, and an upgrading of the appeal of teaching through better preparation, mentoring and pay. Michael McKibbin, who directed an \$11 million alternative-certification program for the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, found that teachers tended to stay longer in the profession if schools provided the first year teachers with a solid program that made sense, and schools gave first year teachers adequate supplies and mentors who helped them overcome the initial experience of the coldest of classrooms (Chaddock, 1998).

Ingersoll (2002) analyzed data collected by the National Center of Education Statistics to determine that the amount of turnover in the teaching profession accounted for by retirement was relatively minor when compared with other factors such as teachers' job dissatisfaction and teachers' pursuit of other jobs. The data indicated that a large number of qualified teachers were departing their jobs for reasons other than

retirement. In January 2002, the U.S. Department of Education responded to the teacher attrition problem by implementing The No Child Left Behind Act. This initiated a number of teacher recruiting initiatives: (a) mid-career changes to teaching, (b) alternative certification programs, and (c) financial incentives which included bonuses, loan forgiveness, housing assistance and tuition reimbursement (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Thomas (1998) reported that 28 percent of former public school teachers and 33 percent of private school teachers left the teaching profession to work for private businesses because of better salaries, benefits, or commissions. Howard (2003) found four common factors that contributed to the teacher shortage issue: (a) teacher retirement, (b) increasing student population, (c) new classroom policies, and (d) teacher attrition.

Chapman and Hutcheson (1982) found that motivational factors had a direct impact on teacher retention. Their study showed evidence that motivation factors such as salary, shared decision-making, recognition, staff development, and autonomy increased the chances teachers stayed in teaching.

According to McGee (2005), education is the kind of industry that must focus beyond the paycheck to keep valuable workers since education often pays less than many industry positions. McGee found that certain “perks” worked well in the education environment to retain teacher services. These included flexible schedules, on-campus health centers and daycare centers, and opportunities for personal and educational development. However, the biggest factor helping retain quality employees is establishing a team-spirited culture. Johnson (2001) stated that finding different types of

incentives may attract new teachers, but only improving culture and working conditions of schools will keep them in the profession.

### Classroom Behavior

Teachers who felt that student motivation and discipline were problems in their schools were less likely to want to stay in teaching (NCES, 1997). According to NASBE (1998), many teachers reported discipline problems as a retention factor while other teachers reported that they felt ill prepared to effectively motivate or discipline students. Thus, it was recommended to address these issues and find ways to prepare teachers to be partners in motivating students and discouraging discipline problems in order to encourage more teachers to remain in the field.

### Salary and Benefits

According to a study conducted by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) (2004), the value of the average teacher salary increased by just over \$1000, or \$101 per year since 1994. This was far less than the average increase in private sector salaries and, for the first time since the year 2000, teacher salaries did not keep pace with inflation. Results for the Department of Education's *Schools and Staffing Survey* indicated that one of every three teachers who left the profession before reaching 10 years of experience cited salaries as a reason for departing (Teacher Attrition, 2001). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) showed that in 1964 teachers were paid an average salary of \$5,995 per year. With inflation factors considered, this amount would equate to \$36,531 in 2004 dollars. From 1964 to 2004 teachers have gained \$10,066 in buying

power, or \$251 per year. In the 1970s and 1980s, teacher salaries did not keep pace with inflation.

With expansion of collective bargaining in the 1960s and the recovery from the recession in the early 1980s, teachers' salaries prospered more than other years. Between 1984 and 1989, teachers saw an increase of salary that averaged \$1,039 per year. According to the AFT, the economy grew at almost eight times the rate of teacher pay. Litke (2001) believed the consequence of low teacher salaries developed an undersupply of skilled people entering the teaching profession. He estimated that up to 40% of new teachers left the profession within the first five years because of a lack of financial reward.

It was reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004), that teacher benefit packages were growing at a slower rate than private sector benefits. Since 1994, the percentage increase in private sector benefit costs was greater than the increase in the public sector. The American Federation of Teachers (2004) also reported that in 2004, the average beginning teacher salary was \$31,704, and the average teacher salary was \$46,597. The average teaching experience was estimated at 14.8 years. If assumed the average experience was tracked with average pay, then the value of a year of experience was \$1,006. Between 2002-03 and 2003-04, the beginning teacher salary rose from \$31,351 to \$31,704, just 1.1 percent. This too was not keeping pace with the overall private sector compensation trends. In Florida, the average teacher salary in 2004 was \$40,598, and Florida's average beginning teacher salary was \$30,969. Between 1994 and 2004, the average experience of teachers in Florida declined from 15.5 years to 14.8 years. (American Federation of Teachers).

According to NCES (1997) less than five percent of public school teachers actually left the profession because of money, however, less than half of all teachers say they were satisfied with their salaries. Less than 30 percent of teachers of color were satisfied with their salaries, and the best paid teachers working in high-poverty schools earned 35 percent less than teachers in low-poverty schools. The NASBE (1998) made the recommendation that state-supplied salary increases should be targeted to encourage teachers not only to stay in the field but also to continue to grow professionally across the course of their careers.

According to a study conducted by Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin (2004), a teacher's decision to teach in a school may be influenced less by increases in salaries than many may believe. In fact, these researchers revealed that in Texas, it was determined that substantial boosts in salary (25-43%) would be needed to retain teachers in low-achieving, high minority urban schools at rates similar to suburban schools. Their findings indicated that salary differentials were nearly irrelevant for women teachers with 10 or more years of experience. As a result, they concluded that improving working conditions of teachers may prove both more effective and more realistic in retaining teachers. Included in these working conditions were things such as safety, discipline, and principal leadership.

### Satisfaction in the Classroom Factors

Exploring teacher satisfaction, especially in high-demand settings such as urban school districts, was important because teachers' satisfaction with their careers had been shown to be associated with teacher retention, commitment, and school effectiveness

(Shann, 1998). In a study of 2000 teachers, Kim and Loadman (1994) cited a number of statistically significant predictors of job satisfaction that included interaction with students and colleagues, professional challenges, professional autonomy, working conditions, and opportunities for employment.

Perie and Baker (1997) conducted a large-scale study of job satisfaction among American teachers. Using a scale to identify teachers as low, moderate, or high in job satisfaction, they found that 26.3 percent of public high school teachers fit in the high category. They also found that as teachers gained experience their levels of job satisfaction dropped. Teachers with three years of experience or less were more likely to rate themselves as highly satisfied as opposed to teachers with twenty years of experience or more.

Brunetti (2001) conducted a factor analysis to identify general categories for factors relating to teacher's job satisfaction. He cited practical factors such as salary, benefits, job security, social prestige, and vacations as well as, professional factors such as autonomy, passion for the subject matter, the desire to work with young people, and to serve society as the two major contributing categories of factors that played key roles in job satisfaction and teacher retention. Brunetti's study revealed that teachers generally rated the professional satisfaction factors higher than the practical satisfaction factors in their decisions to stay in the classroom. He did, however, find that some social factors such as collegiality and a sense of belonging also had an influence on teachers' decisions to stay in the classroom. Ingersoll (2002) found that one of the most influential factors of teacher turnover was the academic field in which the teacher worked. Special education, mathematics and science were found to be the fields with the highest turnover rate.



A study generated by Farkas, Johnson, and Foleno, (2005) which utilized the input of teachers, administrators and superintendents addressed various issues about the perceptions of the teaching profession. The first issue questioned beginning teacher commitment to the job itself. The study showed that the overwhelming majority of beginning teachers said teaching was work they loved to do. Beginning teachers felt that the work itself was rewarding, and the work was something that would allow them to make a difference; thus, beginning teachers felt they would commit to teaching as a lifelong choice. The second issue addressed in the study focused on the talented young people avoiding the teaching profession. It was revealed that most college graduates held teaching in high esteem but were quick to point out the downsides they saw, such as low pay, limited opportunity for career advancement and low social prestige. However, there were those graduates who said they would consider going into the field of teaching if there was a possibility of making a difference in the lives of students and if they could be in an environment where children were well behaved and eager to learn. College graduates also indicated they would consider going into the teaching field if they did not have to go back to school to meet additional certification requirements.

Another item surveyed in the Farkas et al. (2005) study was the issue of salary. The study stated that most administrators and beginning teachers agreed teachers were underpaid. But beginning teachers did not believe money was the key solution for teacher quality, satisfaction, or retention. Beginning teachers named other factors that influenced teacher quality and retention. A safe school and classroom environment along administrative support were the two key factors they felt had a greater impact on teacher satisfaction. The final issue addressed in the study involved teacher preparation. The

teachers and administrators who were surveyed stated training or induction programs were necessary for beginning teachers. However, it was strongly viewed by all that were surveyed that beginning teachers could use more preparation for the challenges of running a real-world classroom. It was felt that more help was needed in managing classroom behavior and assisting students who were doing poorly. Both administrators and teachers indicated mentoring programs that provided additional support were effective in improving teacher quality and satisfaction.

### Out of Field Teaching

Improving teacher retention rates has been impacted by the working assignments given to teachers. The work itself had direct impact on teachers' decisions to stay in the field. A study conducted by the National Association of State Boards of Education (1998) revealed that teacher retention rates required attention to out-of-field teaching placements. Not only were students more likely to receive high-quality instruction from a teacher who was properly qualified, but also, teaching out-of-field imposed added stress on teachers by placing them in jobs for which they were not qualified.

### Supportive School Environment and Relationship Factors

Howard (2003) stated that the three reasons teachers left the profession were directly tied to limited funds for teacher salaries, educational materials, and general maintenance of the overall school environment. Haberman (1995) found that more experienced teachers often left their schools because of bureaucratic constraints that usurped their individual authority and creativity. Howard suggested that administrators

who were willing to grant teachers substantial roles in crucial areas such as testing, instruction, and curriculum development and intervention would see a higher retention rate among effective teachers. Howard said, “Strong, supportive principal leadership also is central to the retention of teachers. Instructional leaders who provide opportunities for professional development, support teachers’ innovations, and create a collegial work environment are critical to the development of optimal school settings” (p. 156). In order to help retain quality teachers in the classroom, the instructional leader had to help provide good physical working conditions. This included providing sufficient amounts of classroom supplies and other support materials. Just as important, instructional leaders had to provide teacher-training institutions – supervisors had to help student teachers negotiate, in a positive manner, challenging situations that they encountered in schools (Howard).

Ax, Conderman, and Stephens (2001) found that administrative support was directly related to teacher isolation, which in turn was directly related to teacher retention. Ax, Conderman, and Stephens suggested that in order to retain productive teachers, instructional leaders needed to address teacher isolation. One way principals of schools addressed the issue of teacher isolation was by developing an in-school support system. A solid support system addressed other retention factors as well. The teachers, who were given administrative support, became more collegial, and teachers felt more empowered with decision-making responsibilities. Both led to professional development opportunities that teachers felt they needed to share experiences, explore teaching strategies, establish protocols and make decisions that had direct impact on their teaching

position. The end results of having a support program were less teacher isolation, less teacher burnout and less teacher dissatisfaction (Ax, Conderman, & Stephens).

Sclan (1993) surmised that the manner in which school leaders organized teachers' work had a clear and direct impact on teachers' decisions to leave or stay in the field. When teachers felt supported and had more opportunities for collaboration, more say in important educational decisions, greater flexibility in how they taught, and when they felt less isolated from their peers and more included as members of learning communities, they tended to be more committed to their jobs and more likely to stay in teaching.

### Role of the Principal

The principal's role as instructional leader and support person has proven to be a key component in retaining teachers. In a 2001-02 study conducted by the Charlotte Advocates for Education, teacher turnover was particularly high among new teachers – those most dependent upon principal leadership and support. In Charlotte, North Carolina Schools during 2001-02, of the 1329 teachers who left, 81.4% were non-tenured teachers with generally less than three years of experience (Charlotte, 2004). Ingersoll (2001) stated that the reason 42% of those teachers leaving the profession did so because of insufficient support from school administration. A Texas study conducted by Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin (2004) indicated that principal leadership might have been more of a factor than salary in retaining teachers.

Bolman and Deal (1997) claimed that no one occupies a more influential position from which to influence a school's culture than the principal. Bolman and Deal

consolidated key learnings from organizational theory into four practical perspectives or “frames”: structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. The structural frame shared the views on how managers could organize and structure groups and teams to get results. The human resource frame explained how to tailor organizations to satisfy human needs, improve human resource management, and build positive interpersonal and group dynamics. The political frame focused attention on how to cope with power and conflict, build coalitions, have political skills, and deal with internal and external politics. The fourth frame, symbolic, discussed how to shape a culture that gave purpose and meaning to work and build team spirit through ritual, ceremony, and story. Bolman and Deal stated that to create a positive culture and supportive working conditions, a successful leader had to address the four frames of the organization with effective strategies.

Charlotte Advocates for Education (2004) examined research completed by the West Mecklenburg Collaborating for Educational Reform Initiative (WM-CERI) Partnership. Their findings indicated that for teachers, the working conditions within a school were a major factor in determining whether a teacher stayed at a school. When teachers were asked what enticed them to remain teaching at their school, positive and supportive working conditions surfaced as a major factor and principal leadership rose as the key component in creating a positive working environment. Thus, working conditions appeared to be a large factor for retaining a teacher at a particular school, and there seemed to be a causal relationship between principal leadership and teacher retention.

## Teacher Attrition Factors

It was estimated that almost one-third of all teachers left the field within five years of beginning as a teacher, a rate that rose to one-half among teachers in high-poverty schools and schools with high proportions of students of color. Not only has teacher attrition been a serious problem, but it has also been on the rise; between 1988 and 1994, attrition grew from 5.6 percent of the entire teacher workforce to 6.6 percent annually. Beginning teachers, those teaching in high-poverty schools, and those teaching in a critical shortage area (math or science) tended to leave teaching first (NCES, 1997).

A phenomenon that has become far too common in public and private schools was the high turnover rate the teaching profession faced in recent years. It was important for school leaders to understand why teachers left the profession in such large numbers (Howard, 2003). Based upon his analysis of federal survey data for more than 50,000 teachers nationwide, Ingersoll (2001) indicated that 42 percent of all those leaving the teaching profession reported they did so because of job dissatisfaction. When asked why they were dissatisfied, lackluster support from school administration, low salaries, lack of teacher influence over decision-making, lack of discipline all factored into the decision. Ingersoll also found that poor working conditions and lack of significant on-the-job training and support were the major reasons why teachers left the profession within their first five years.

Ingersoll (2002) stated that the annual turnover rate across all non-teaching occupations was about 11 percent per year while the annual turnover rate of teachers was between 14 and 17 percent. Howard (2003) noted that many school districts were implementing teacher education programs and professional development programs for

new teachers to help reduce attrition. These induction programs were designed to help teachers cope with different aspects of the profession that often were causes for their departure. The purpose of these induction programs was to help teachers deal with stress, organizational conditions, lack of administrative support, discipline problems, cultural differences with students, and other social factors that teachers saw every day in their classrooms.

### Summary

Retention of teachers has been dependent upon practical factors such as salary, benefits, relationships, and being in a supportive environment. Retention of teachers was also dependent upon professional factors such as professional advancement, autonomy, recognition and the work itself. The retention of teachers has been found to be dependent upon both the practical and profession motivators of teaching, which led to job satisfaction (Brunetti, 2001; Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2005). Some teachers continue in the profession for intrinsic rewards from sharing knowledge, seeing young people grow and learn as well as the desire to work with children and make a contribution to society (Darling-Hammond, 1984).

According to Eggen (2002) key retention factors were administrative support programs and professional development opportunities for teachers. The elements of support and training provided by an administrative team decreased the amount of teacher isolation, which may have directly impacted a teacher's decision to stay in the profession (Ax, Conderman, & Stephens, 2001).

In order to keep teachers in the profession, the rewards need to outweigh the frustrations. One-fourth of all teachers who left the profession said they were dissatisfied with teaching and wanted a different career. Improving teachers' level of satisfaction was a key component of improving teacher retention (NCES, 1997). The way to improve a teacher's level of satisfaction is to improve the culture and working conditions of the school. The instructional leader, the principal, plays a major role in making this happen (Johnson, 2001).

A solution to the teacher shortage problem requires a comprehensive plan by districts to prepare, recruit, support, and retain quality teachers. Districts need to create conditions in which teachers can teach, and teach well. Not only do districts have to look at initiatives to attract and retain the best teachers, but they also need to provide an environment in which teachers can thrive (Chaika, 2005).



CHAPTER 3  
METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction

Chapter 3 contains the description of the procedures and methodology employed in this study. This chapter is organized into nine major sections: (a) setting; (b) subjects; (c) procedure; (d) research questions; (e) validity; (f) reliability; (g) data collection; (h) data analysis; and (i) summary.

This study was designed to describe selected self-reported practical and professional factors of the teaching profession that influenced self-reported job satisfaction and retention within the K-12 public education system. The study was also designed to present a profile of selected demographic characteristics of a K-12 teacher in Brevard County, Florida. The data came from a sample of 890 full-time teachers from a large school district in central Florida. Teacher participation in the study was voluntary.

The conceptual foundation of the survey instrument used in this study was based on the constructs of teaching known for motivating teachers to remain within the public school setting (Brunetti, 2001; Farkas, Johnson, & Folena, 2005). The researcher's survey was based on the studies of Perie & Baker (1997), Brunetti (2001), and Gary (2002) who developed survey instruments based on similar factors that influenced teachers' job satisfaction and their decisions to remain in the public school classroom settings. An associate professor at the University of Central Florida and a panel of teachers reviewed the survey for format and readability. The survey was then pilot tested for further refinement of the instrument prior to its use in the study.

## The Setting

This descriptive study using a survey questionnaire was conducted in Brevard County, a large school district in central Florida. In Florida, the school districts and the counties are one in the same. Although Brevard may not necessarily represent all districts, it is a district that is considered a desirable place to live and work. The Brevard County School District makes a good setting for this case study because attributes affecting satisfaction and retention that were identified in the literature review are evidenced here.

Brevard County has a geographic location that expands 72 miles along the east coast of central Florida. The population size in 2002 was approximately 514,000 with a projected growth to 550,000 in 2010. The race and ethnicity data indicated that the people in Brevard were 87% white, 8.0% black, 4.0% Hispanic. The county had a stable economy that was supported by its major industry employers: Harris Corporation, Patrick Air Force Base, United Space Alliance, Health First, and the School Board of Brevard County. The median family income for families in Brevard was about \$48,000. Less than 10% of the individuals in the county fell below the poverty level of \$9,000 yearly income. According to the census study conducted in 2000, 86.3% of the general population had a high school diploma or higher degree (Brevard, 2002).

The Brevard County School District maintains a reputation of high performance and is able to attract professionals from other counties to work within the district because of the school district's close proximity to industry as well as the school district's excellent reputation. Brevard has been recognized by the state of Florida as one of the

top-performing districts in the state in numerous categories including testing, planning, budgeting and hiring (Brevard County, 2006).

In the 2003-2004 school year, the school district maintained 86 instructional facilities: 56 elementary schools, 16 middle schools, 11 high schools, and 2 alternative education centers. Of the 86 schools, 95% of the schools earned a school recognition grade of an A or B in the state's A+ recognition program. The student population for kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade totaled 72,704 students. The student population was 85.9% white, 9.0% black and 4.0% Hispanic. Approximately, 30% of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The number of teachers employed in the district was 7601. Teachers with a Master's Degree earned an average salary of \$45,023. The average number of years of teaching experience for teachers in Brevard County was 13.03 years. The percent of teachers with advanced degrees was 33.5% (Brevard County, 2006). These general descriptors of Brevard County were similar to other counties in the state of Florida with the approximate same number of students.

The researcher determined that utilizing the sampling of this teacher population would provide valuable insight into the public education teaching profession with multiple perspectives represented from beginning teachers to those at the end of their professional careers. The information collected was expected to provide valuable data to the school district for the selection, recruitment, and retention of new teachers to replace those teachers nearing retirement age in order to maintain the stability and quality of the school district.

## Subjects

The target population for this study was the full-time teachers in the Brevard County public school system. A total of 1321 teachers were selected from a total population of 7601 teachers in the district. The sample represented 17% of the total target population. To insure a representative sample of all demographics in the school district, the researcher divided the district into four separate quadrants. From each quadrant, a sample was taken proportionately to the number of secondary and elementary school teachers in the district. A sample of the target population was then taken from 24 selected schools. According to Krejcie & Morgan (1970) the minimum sample size for a target population of 8000 was 367. The researcher's sample size taken from the 7601 teachers in Brevard was 890. The schools selected from the four quadrants included four high schools, eight middle schools and twelve elementary schools. Only full-time certified public school teachers at each school were given opportunities to complete the survey questionnaires. Of the potential survey population of Brevard County schoolteachers, 55% were elementary school, 19% were middle school, and 26% were high school (Brevard County, 2006). In order to achieve a balance and an equal proportional representation of teachers in Brevard County, the researcher purposively selected the number of schools selected for the study. In Brevard, the number of secondary school teachers equaled 45% of the total teacher population while elementary school teachers equaled 55%. Utilizing a modified stratified cluster-sampling technique, the researcher selected four high schools, eight middle schools, and twelve elementary schools. The purpose was to maintain a balance of the number of secondary and elementary teachers

selected for the survey with the number of secondary and elementary school teachers in the district.

Following the clustering and stratification procedures, the selection of specific schools in each of the four quadrants was based on accessibility and expediency. All schools in the district were contacted initially. The first schools that responded back to the researcher, represented one of the four quadrants, and fit the desired characteristics were then selected for the study. Out of the 1321 surveys distributed, 890 surveys were used for a 67% return rate. Of the surveys collected, 482 (54.1%) were from secondary schools and 408 (45.8%) were from elementary schools. Of the surveys collected, three participants answered only the six items on the first page. These questionnaires were discarded and were not part of the analysis. Of the 890 surveys 848 were 100% completed. According to Little & Rubin (1987) when a variable has less than 5% missing responses in a large sample, it is common to drop these missing items from the analysis. In this case, no single items on the usable surveys had less than a 95% response rate.

### Procedure

The procedure for this study began by reviewing the characteristics of Brevard County's full-time teacher population. As described earlier, the researcher used a modified stratified cluster sampling technique to identify the teacher sample. The researcher then developed a survey questionnaire to address the research questions.

After obtaining permission from Brevard County's Director of Testing and Accountability (Appendix B) and the University of Central Florida's IRB (Appendix C),

the researcher made arrangements to conduct the survey. The process began by contacting all 84 school principals in the district. The first principals to respond back and meet the desired conditions of the study were then selected.

The researcher made arrangements with the selected schools to visit during scheduled faculty meetings. At the meetings, the researcher introduced the study and gave instructions on completing the questionnaire. The teachers were assured the information they gave would be kept confidential, and their willingness to participate was strictly voluntary. A survey and consent letter were distributed to each teacher. The researcher asked a staff member to collect the completed surveys, insert them into a labeled manila envelope and send them through the district courier system back to the researcher. The researcher then left the room. Additional surveys were left with each school principal to accommodate those teachers that were not present the day the data were collected at the faculty meetings.

### Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of a K-12 public school teacher from Brevard County, Florida in 2005?
2. What teacher perceived practical factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida K-12 public school teachers in the teaching profession?
3. What teacher perceived professional factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida public school teachers in the K-12 classroom?

## Validity

The American Education Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the National Council on Measurement in Education (1999) defined validity as “the degree to which accumulated evidence and theory support interpretations of test scores entailed by proposed uses of a test” (p.184). Evidence for the validity of survey results was gathered utilizing both the survey content and item construction. Content validity was defined as evidence based on the relationship between the survey content and its theoretical base from educational research. Gay (1996) stated that systematic or constant errors affect validity. If the survey did not meet the expectations of what the groups could answer, the survey would be considered invalid. The survey instrument created by the researcher was clear, readable, efficient, and relevant to the target audience.

The studies completed by Maslow (1954), McGregor (1960), and Herzberg (1968) indicated a direct relationship between motivation factors and job satisfaction factors to that of job retention. The studies completed by Hall, Pearson and Carroll (1992) and Eggen (2002) also confirmed there was a strong link between motivation and job satisfaction factors to job retention. The focus on the Hall, Pearson and Carroll study and the Eggen study was teacher retention. Teachers who were motivated and satisfied with their job assignments tended to stay in the profession.

A researcher-designed survey instrument based on the constructs of teacher job satisfaction and retention was developed by the researcher in order to accomplish the objectives of this study. The researcher began construction of the initial pool of items through review of three teacher retention surveys found within the body of educational

literature. Although certain background factors, such as age and years of experience, were related to teacher satisfaction, they were not nearly as significant explaining the different levels of satisfaction as were the workplace condition factors, such as administrative support, parental involvement, and teacher autonomy over classroom procedures (Perie & Baker, 1997).

Job satisfaction was shown to be a significant factor in keeping teachers in the profession. Highly satisfied teachers were less likely to change schools or leave the profession. Very few teachers stayed in the profession for external or practical rewards such as salary, benefits or prestige (Choy et al., 1993). However, professional factors such as autonomy over the classroom environment and the work itself may have motivated people to become teachers; practical factors influenced their satisfaction in this position and their desire to remain in teaching throughout their career (Perie & Baker, 1997). Specific questionnaire items were developed through an in-depth review of educational literature in order to determine the selected practical and professional factors influencing teacher job satisfaction and retention to this study (Brunetti, 2001; Gary, 2002; Perie & Baker, 1997).

In September 2004, a panel of six individuals consisting of two elementary school teachers, two middle school teachers, one high school teacher, and one school level administrator reviewed the instrument for its clarity and readability. Survey items were individualized then issued to the six panel members. They were asked to place the survey items into three categories: practical factors, professional factors, and demographic characteristics. The format and some items were revised based upon the input from this panel review and categorization procedure.



An associate professor at the University of Central Florida with expertise in measurement and research reviewed the instrument a second time during the month of October 2004 for readability and format. Several items were reworded, reformatted or removed following this second formative evaluation procedure.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher also utilized the content of three teacher retention questionnaires as models to generate survey items relative to the research questions of this study (Brunetti, 2001; Gary, 2002; Perie & Baker, 1997). Specific questionnaire items were replicated; new items were created while other items were omitted because they did not address one of the three research questions. Based on the studies of Brunetti, Gary and Perie and Baker, Table 1 shows the relationship between the three research questions and the survey items.

Table 1

Summary of Teacher Perceived Practical and Professional Factors

Perceived Practical Factors (Personal life influences and work environment) Salary, relationships, social prestige, age, gender, family and security	Survey Items: 5, 6, 9, 10a, 10c, 10e, 10f, 10g, 10h, 10j, 10l, 13, 14, 22, 23, 25, 26, 36, 37, 38
Perceived Professional Factors (Work conditions) Education, experience, administrative support, responsibility, advancement, recognition for achievement, and the work itself.	Survey Items: 10b, 10d, 10i, 10k, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35
Demographic Profile: Descriptives identified in the empirical studies that showed relationship to the teaching profession	Survey Items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26

The panel of teachers assigned several survey items into two categories. Items 6, 22, 23, 25, and 26 were considered both practical factors as well as demographic descriptors.

While it is reasonable for someone not knowledgeable of the literature on the topic to interpret these items as demographic in nature, the researcher determined these items were consistent with the perceived practical factors of job satisfaction and job retention.

The edited survey (see Appendix A) was pilot tested by 41 full-time teachers at one elementary school from one of the four school district quadrants. The teaching staff that participated in the pilot test was selected on a random basis. The researcher visited the selected teaching staff during one of their monthly faculty meetings. The participants

were encouraged to suggest appropriate alternatives to the wording of items where those items appeared confusing or unclear. Modifications were made to the survey items based upon comments provided by the respondents to improve readability, clarity and ease of response. The pilot group in turn was not part of the actual study.

The survey instrument consisted of 38 items that were concise, easy to mark responses. Selected items targeted specific demographic characteristics of teachers in Brevard County. Other selected items targeted two teacher retention factor groups: practical factors and professional factors. These profiling characteristics and retention factors were used in the process of analyzing the data related to the three research questions that guided the study. The validity of the results of the study was contingent upon the construction and implementation of the survey.

The survey instrument related to the constructs of the study because the items were selected based on each item's relationship to the literature related to teacher retention and for the estimated usefulness of the item in determining the relationship between the teacher perceived practical and professional factors that influence teacher job satisfaction and retention (Brunetti, 2001; Farkas, Johnson & Faleno, 2005; Herzberg, 1968). To promote a valid survey instrument for collecting teacher retention data, item construct design and placement of items within the survey instrument were based on educational research and an expert panel recommendation.

## Reliability

Gay (1996) stated, “reliability is the degree to which a test consistently measures whatever it measures” (p. 145). A reliable survey would be one that is expected to generate similar responses from similar test group members in similar circumstances. To help ensure reliability of results, the researcher administered the surveys of the study to teaching staffs during scheduled faculty meetings. Each group of teachers was given identical instructions for completing the survey. The procedure was followed in similar fashion in each school setting.

The internal consistency reliability for these results was calculated using Cronbach’s Alpha from the statistical program SPSS 11.0 Windows. Cronbach’s Alpha is a formula for measuring internal consistency that can be applied to non-dichotomous variables and measures the reliability of a test from a single administration of a single instrument. Survey items 27-38 met the criteria of being non-dichotomous in that these items were rated using a Likert scale. Participants responded to a series of statements by indicating whether they perceived a statement as being very important, important, somewhat important, little importance, or not important. Cronbach’s Alpha for the survey items that addressed teacher perceptions of job retention was .846. The alpha was likely inflated because of the large sample size used in this study. Although this calculation was not consistent with typical internal consistency, the results gave an empirical glimpse of reliability. While the data are not empirically determined to be interval level, this internal consistency reliability estimation provides at least a rough estimate of reliability of results for the Likert-style items. Likert scales are often used with interval procedures as long as the scale item has at least five categories (Data, 2006).

## Data Collection

In July 2005, permission was obtained to conduct research in The School District of Brevard County (Appendix B). In order to obtain permission, a letter explaining the objective of the research with a copy of the consent letter was sent to the Director of Testing and Accountability. The Director granted the researcher permission to conduct the research project through a written letter and instructed the researcher to coordinate all research related activities through his office. In July 2005, the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board (IRB) granted permission to the researcher to utilize the researcher developed teacher retention survey questionnaire (Appendix C). Once permission to conduct the research had been granted, the school district's Director of Testing and Accountability permitted the researcher to schedule the distribution of the questionnaires during regularly scheduled faculty meetings.

With the permission of school principals, the researcher distributed 1321 surveys (Appendix A) along with respondent informed consent letters and instructions for completing the survey (Appendix E) during faculty meetings in November 2005, December 2005, and January 2006. The administration of the surveys was contingent upon getting approval from the university and the IRB board. Administering the surveys during a different time of the school year, may effect the responses and return rate. The researcher scheduled a conference with each principal prior to each faculty meeting to explain the purpose of the study. At the beginning of each faculty meeting and prior to the distribution of the surveys, the researcher explained the survey process to each group of faculty members and provided an opportunity for questions about the study. After being introduced to the individual faculties, the researcher distributed the surveys and

assured the teachers that their participation was voluntary and that all respondents' survey data were confidential. Those teachers who agreed to participate in the study were asked to sign an informed consent letter and to complete the questionnaire. In addition, each participant was given an opportunity (if he or she chose) to submit his or her name and addresses on the consent letter if he or she wanted a copy of the results of the study. At this point, the researcher left the room and relied on a staff member to collect the surveys. The surveys were sealed in a manila envelope and then sent through the interoffice courier system back to the researcher.

Provisions were also made to include those faculty members who were absent during the faculty meetings through the school district's interoffice courier system. Consent letters describing the study and survey process along with copies of the survey questionnaire were left with each school's principal to distribute to each absent faculty member. The researcher asked a volunteer at each of the 24 school sites to collect the surveys and return them via the interoffice courier system. Each school's set of survey questionnaires were kept separate from one another in manila envelopes and labeled with school name and grade level. The survey results were then analyzed.

### Data Analysis

Data were collected from each usable returned survey. Responses to each survey item were tabulated using an SPSS 11.0 Windows version. Each survey item was tabulated and tabled.

## Summary

The research design and methodology utilized in this study have been presented in this chapter. The study was considered descriptive and employed a survey questionnaire. The researcher distributed 1321 survey questionnaires within one large central Florida school district. The survey instrument was designed to determine the extent to which teacher perceived practical and professional factors contributed to teacher job satisfaction and overall teacher retention within the K-12 public education system. Analyses were performed on the data obtained from 890 returned instruments including descriptive statistics and frequency and percentage analysis.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate and identify selected teacher perceived practical and professional factors of teaching that influenced teacher job satisfaction and retention within the K – 12 public school education system. This chapter provides a display of the data gathered in this research study. Each of the three research questions is addressed. The study's three research questions were analyzed through the collected survey data, and valid percentages were used for each item.

Responses to each item of the questionnaire were tabulated using an SPSS 11.0 Windows. A descriptive analysis was completed to report the demographic profile of K-12 public schoolteachers in Brevard County, Florida, and to identify the perceived practical and professional factors that contributed to keeping these teachers in the profession. Tables were used to display the data analysis.

#### Population and Demographic Characteristics

School principals assisted the researcher with the administration of the surveys during regularly scheduled faculty meeting from November 2005 through January 2006. Table 2 displays information on the distribution and the response rate for the study



population. One thousand three hundred and twenty-one certified public school teachers of this large district were included in the study population. None of the respondents' surveys failed to meet the membership criteria established for the study, and all but three returned surveys were considered usable.

A total of 890 surveys were used for a rate of 67.4% (Table 2). The percentage of surveys returned by grade level was 72.4% for elementary teachers, 58.7% for middle school teachers, and 68.9% for secondary teachers. The rate of return was considered to be satisfactory for this study.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Study Population Response Rate (N=1321)

Surveys by Group	Surveys Distributed N	Surveys Returned n	Surveys Used n	Response Rate %
Elementary (n=563)	563	411	408	72.4
Middle (n=400)	400	235	235	58.7
High School (n=358)	358	247	247	68.9
Non Respondents	431			32.6
Total Surveys Distributed	1321	893	890	67.4

#### Research Question 1

What is the demographic profile of a K-12 public school teacher from Brevard County, Florida in 2005?

Table 3 presents the information from the demographic profile survey items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 26 and produced a profile of respondents' number of years being a full-time

teacher, number of years teaching at their current school, the level at which they were currently teaching, the position they currently held in their school, and the size of the school in which they were currently teaching.

The data analysis showed that the majority of teachers in Brevard County have 10- 20+ years of teaching experience: (n=539; 60.4%) The data analysis showed that the majority of teachers in Brevard County have been at their respective schools 0-9 years: (n=625; 70.0%).

The certified teacher group surveyed was primarily regular classroom teachers (n=693; 77.9%) along with a percentage of special education teachers (n=121; 13.6%) and others assigned to different classroom settings (n=55; 6.2%). The teachers surveyed represented four levels of instruction with the largest group being elementary teachers: (n=391; 43.9%). Table 3 also displays the size of the school that each teacher was assigned with the school size of 501-1000 being identified by 494/55% of the respondents.

Table 3

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Profile Variables I (n=890)

Demographic Information (Item)	n	%
<b>Years as Full-Time Teacher (1)</b>		
0-2	98	11.0
3-6	157	17.6
7-9	93	10.4
10-19	290	32.5
20 and over	249	27.9
Total Responses	887	99.4
<b>Years at Current School (2)</b>		
0-3	347	38.9
4-6	182	20.4
7-9	96	10.7
10-19	175	19.7
20 and over	87	9.8
Total Responses	887	99.5
<b>Current Teaching Level (3)</b>		
Pre-kindergarten	12	1.3
Elementary	391	43.9
Middle	236	26.5
High School	247	27.8
Total Responses	886	99.5
<b>Current Position (4)</b>		
Regular Classroom	693	77.9
Special Education	121	13.6
Other (media, technology, guidance, activity, physical education)	55	6.2
Total Responses	869	97.7
<b>Size of School (26)</b>		
0-500	108	12.1
501-1000	494	55.5
1001-1500	71	8.0
1501-2000	123	13.8
2001-2500	85	9.6
2501- above	0	0
Total Responses	881	98.0

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 4 presents information from the demographic profile survey items 7 and 8. These items produce a personal profile of respondents' age when the respondent chose teaching as a career and at what age the respondent entered the teaching profession.

Table 4 also presents information from the demographic profile survey items 22, 23, 24 and 25. These items produce a personal profile of respondents' gender, marital status, race and age.

Table 4 indicates that the majority of respondents chose teaching as a career between the ages of 19 and 29, (n=397; 44.6%). Table 4 also indicates that most of the respondents entered the teaching profession about the same time they decided to become teachers: 20-29, (n=628; 70.6%).

Table 4 data describe the teachers in Brevard County as being predominately female, (n=693; 77.9%). The teacher marital status varies but 643 (72.2%) reported being married. The data show that the teacher population varies in ethnicity but 637 (71.6%) of the responding teachers indicated they were white, followed by 192 (21.6%) Hispanic respondents. Table 4 also shows that the majority of respondents' ages were reported in the 30-60 age range with almost equal numbers reported in the three subcategories of 30-39 (204; 22.9%), 40-49 (265; 29.7%), and 50-59; 247; 27.7%).

Table 4

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Profile Variables II (n=890)

Demographic Information (Item)	n	%
Age chose teaching as a career (7)		
13- under	134	15.1
14-18	165	18.5
19-29	397	44.6
30-39	130	14.6
40-49	46	5.1
50-over	12	1.3
Total Responses	884	99.2
Age entered teaching profession (8)		
20-29	628	70.6
30-39	77	8.7
40-49	160	18.0
50-over	19	2.1
Total Responses	884	99.4
Gender (22)		
Female	693	77.9
Male	188	21.1
Total Responses	881	99.0
Marital Status (23)		
Married	643	72.2
Divorced	105	11.8
Separated	18	2.0
Widowed	12	1.3
Never Married	100	11.2
Total Responses	881	98.5
Race (24)		
White	637	71.6
Black	40	4.5
Hispanic	192	21.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	6	0.7
Other	1	0.1
Total Responses	876	98.5
Age Group (25)		
Under 30	101	11.3
30-39	204	22.9
40-49	265	29.7
50-59	247	27.7
60-over	62	6.9
Total Responses	879	98.5

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 5 provides the frequency and percentage analysis of father's and mother's educational level using data collected in items 6, 13 and 14. The data indicate that most of the respondents (66.1%) did not come from a teaching background while (33.1%) did come from a family of teachers.

Many of the respondents' fathers did complete high school and obtain a high school diploma: 270 (30.3%). Of the fathers who attended college and earned a degree, 188 (21.1%) earned a bachelor's degree.

The respondents' reported that 362 (40.7%) of their mothers earned a high school diploma. Of the mothers who attended college and earned a degree, 176 (19.8%) earned a bachelor's degree.

Table 5

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Parents' Educational Level (n=890)

Parents Education Level (Item)	n	%
<b>Teacher in Family Background (6)</b>		
Yes	295	33.1
No	588	66.1
Total Responses	883	
<b>Highest Degree Father Earned (13)</b>		
Less than High School	105	11.8
High School	270	30.3
Some College	103	11.6
Associate Degree	42	4.7
Bachelor's Degree	188	21.1
Master's Degree	121	13.6
Educational Specialist	5	0.6
Doctorate	36	4.0
Total Responses	880	
<b>Highest Degree Mother Earned (14)</b>		
Less than High School	71	8.0
High School	362	40.7
Some College	118	13.3
Associate Degree	54	6.1
Bachelor's Degree	176	19.8
Master's Degree	75	8.4
Educational Specialist	9	1.0
Doctorate	9	1.0
Total Responses	874	

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

### Research Question 2

What teacher perceived practical factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida K-12 public schoolteachers in the teaching profession?

Table 6 contains the frequency and percentage analysis of the teacher perceived practical retention factors that influenced teachers to stay in the teaching profession.

Respondents were asked to identify specific practical factors that influenced their decision to stay in the teaching profession by responding to survey items 5, 9, 10a, 10c, 10e, 10f, 10g, 10h, 10j, and 10l.

Respondents indicated in survey item 5 various reasons for pursuing a teaching position in Brevard County. The greatest number selected the factor relating to being close to family (n=311; 34.9%).

Table 6 shows the percent of family that each respondent's salary represents: Over 300 respondents indicated 26%-50% of their family income was based on their teacher salary (n=328; 36.9%). Almost the same number of respondents indicated 76%-100% of their family income was based on their teacher salary (n=299; 33.6%).

From a list of practical factors in survey item 10, respondents indicated various practical factors that influenced their decisions to stay in the teaching profession. The greatest number of respondents indicated that the work schedule, the vacations and the time with family item was the greatest perceived practical factor for remaining in teaching (n=644; 72.4%). Other perceived practical factors that large numbers of the respondents selected as a reason to stay in the profession were job security, (n=431; 48.4%); satisfying work environment, (n=388; 43.6%); and working relationships, (n=328; 36.9%). Salary and fringe benefits, (n=134; 15.1%); parents and family, (n=121; 13.6%); student behavior, (n=88; 9.9%); and students' parent support and communication, (n=80; 9.0) were also selected but in smaller numbers.



Table 6

## Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Perceived Practical Factors (n=890)

Perceived Practical Factors (item)	n	%
<b>Reason for coming to Brevard School District (5)</b>		
District Reputation	22	2.5
Spouse Transferred	169	19.0
Geographic Location	293	32.9
Close to Family	311	34.9
Your Position	56	6.3
Salary	8	0.9
Total Responses	859	96.5
<b>Percent of family income teacher salary represents (9)</b>		
25% or less	95	10.7
26%-50%	328	36.9
51%-75%	151	17.0
76%-100%	299	33.6
Total Responses	873	98.2
<b>Practical Factors influencing retention in teaching profession (10)</b>		
Student Behavior	88	9.9
Satisfying Working Environment	388	43.6
Parents / Family	121	13.6
Work Schedule / Vacations / Time with Family	644	72.4
Job Security	431	48.4
Working Relationships	328	36.9
Salary / Fringe Benefits	134	15.1
Students' parent support and communication	80	9.0

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 7 (items 36, 37, and 38) presents a frequency and percentage analysis of the respondents' perspective of the influence and level of importance of perceived practical motivators on teacher retention and their decisions to remain in the teaching profession.

Each statement described a practical motivator of teaching retention. Survey participants

responded to statements using a five-point Likert type scale of: Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, Little Importance, and Not Important. The highest ranked statement was item 38; teaching provides a work schedule that is compatible with my lifestyle (n=510; 57%). This item was also considered important (n=240; 27%). Only a small number considered this item not important (n=7; 0.8%).

Over half the respondents considered item 36, salary and fringe benefits, and item 37, school safety, as very important. The statements in ascending order were item 36, teaching in a position where salary and fringe benefits are adequate, (n=446; 50%) and item 37, teaching with a sense of safety in the school environment, (n=497; 55.8%). Neither statement generated a Not Important response by more than 1.3% of the respondents.

Table 7

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Perceived Practical Factors of Teacher Retention Level of Importance (n=890)

Perceived Practical Factors (item)	Not Important		Little Importance		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Being in a teaching position where salary and fringe benefits are adequate (36)	7	0.8	34	3.8	120	13.5	255	28.7	446	50.1
Total Responses									862	
Having a sense of safety in the school environment (37)	12	1.3	32	3.6	109	12.2	220	24.7	497	55.8
Total Responses									870	
Having a work schedule that is compatible with my lifestyle (38)	7	0.8	15	1.7	98	11.0	240	27.0	510	57.3
Total Responses									870	

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 8 presents a frequency and percentage analysis of respondents' highest education level achieved and the major subject area for each college degree. This practical factor could effect job assignment, salary and work environment. The largest group of respondents 289 (32.5%) earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education. The remainder of the respondents earned bachelor degrees in a variety of majors.

Of the respondents that earned a master's degree, 45 (5.1%) earned a master's degree in elementary education and 43 (4.8%) in educational leadership. The remainder of the respondents earned masters degrees in a variety of majors.

Table 8

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: College Degrees: Bachelor's &amp; Master's (n=890)

College Major Subject Area (item)	n	%
<b>Bachelor's Degree (15)</b>		
Elementary Education	289	32.5
Education	86	9.7
English	76	8.5
Exceptional Education	62	7.0
Science	60	6.7
Social Studies	57	6.4
Business	42	4.7
Physical Education	42	4.7
Mathematics	32	3.6
Psychology	29	3.3
Art	19	2.1
Music	15	1.7
Foreign Language	15	1.7
Liberal Arts	10	1.1
Vocational Education	9	1.0
Engineering	4	0.4
Technology	2	0.2
Religion	1	0.1
Educational Leadership	1	0.1
Guidance	1	0.1
<b>Master's Degree (16)</b>		
Elementary Education	45	5.1
Educational Leadership	43	4.8
Exceptional Education	35	3.9
Education	34	3.8
Reading	25	2.8
Guidance	23	2.6
English	16	1.8
Science	15	1.7
Business	13	1.5
Technology	12	1.3
Media	11	1.2
Social Studies	10	1.1
Foreign Language	9	1.0
Mathematics	9	1.0
Physical Education	7	0.8
Art	6	0.7
Music	6	0.7
Psychology	2	0.2
Vocational Education	2	0.2
Engineering	1	0.1

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 9 indicates that the 16 educational specialist degrees earned by the respondents were in a variety of majors.

The five Doctorate degrees earned by the respondents were two in education and one each in psychology, religion and technology.

Table 9

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: College Degrees: Specialist & Doctoral (n=890)

College Major Subject Area (item)	n	%
<b>Specialist Degree (17)</b>		
Educational Leadership	7	0.8
Exceptional Education	3	0.3
Psychology	2	0.2
Elementary Education	1	0.1
English	1	0.1
Reading	1	0.1
Media	1	0.1
<b>Doctoral Degree (18)</b>		
Education	2	0.2
Psychology	1	0.1
Religion	1	0.1
Technology	1	0.1

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

### Research Question 3

What teacher perceived professional factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida public schoolteachers in the K-12 classroom?

Table 10 provides a frequency and percentage analysis of three professional factors. Respondents were asked to report if they were teaching in the field in which they were most qualified (item 19), if their teaching assignment was satisfying (item 20), and if they participated in a teacher induction program (item 21). The vast majority of

respondents (n=837; 94%) indicated that they were teaching within field, while only 45 (5.1%) indicated that they were not teaching within field. Almost 90% of the respondents rated their current teaching assignment as either very satisfying (n=346; 38.9%) or satisfying (n=454; 51%). Only 61 (6.9%) rated their current teaching assignment as dissatisfying while fewer, 15 (1.7) rated their current teaching assignment as very dissatisfying. Table 10 also shows that 504 (56.6%) of the respondents participated in a teacher induction program while 375 (42.1%) did not.

Table 10

Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Perceived Professional Factors (n=890)

Perceived Professional Factors (item)	N	%
<b>Teaching in Field (19)</b>		
Yes	837	94.0
No	45	5.1
Total Responses	882	
<b>Current Teaching Assignment (20)</b>		
Very Satisfying	346	38.9
Satisfying	454	51.0
Dissatisfying	61	6.9
Very Dissatisfying	15	1.7
Total Responses	876	
<b>Participation in an Induction Program (21)</b>		
Yes	504	56.6
No	375	42.1
Total Responses	879	

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Table 11 (items 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33) contains a frequency and percentage analysis of the respondents' perspective of the influence and level of

importance of professional factors on teacher retention and their decision to remain in the teaching profession. Each statement described a perceived professional factor of teaching found in the literature related to job satisfaction and retention. Survey participants responded to statements using a five-point Likert type scale of Very Important, Important, Somewhat Important, Little Importance, and Not Important. The highest ranked item (n= 639; 71.8%) was item 27: teaching allows me the ability to help children develop their talents and skills. This item was only considered unimportant by 4 (0.4%) of the survey participants.

Survey items 29 and 32 each had over half the respondents consider them Very Important: administrative support, (n=559; 62.8%) and a chance to make decisions about professional practices and instruction, (n=462; 51.9%). Over 50% of the respondents ranked each of the survey items (30, 31, and 33) either Important or Very Important: chance for professional and personal growth, (n=662; 74.4%); recognition, (n=492; 55.3%); and chance to create and use curriculum products, (n=668; 75.1%). Only one survey item (28) was ranked by less than 50% of the respondents as being Important or Very Important: chance to take on additional roles, (n=362; 40.6%). No statement generated a Not Important response by more than 12% of the respondents. Conversely, the chance to take on additional leadership roles, (n=106; 11.9%) had the greatest response in the Not Important scale, followed by recognition, (n=58; 6.5%). Other items also were identified in lesser amounts in the not important scale.

Table 11

## Frequency and Percentage Analysis: Perceived Professional Factors Retention Level of Importance

Perceived Professional Factors (item)	Not Important		Little Importance		Somewhat Important		Important		Very Important	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Ability to help children develop their talents and skills (27)	4	0.4	1	0.1	25	2.8	203	22.8	639	71.8
Total Responses									872	
Chance to take on additional leadership roles (28)	106	11.9	161	18.1	238	26.7	245	27.5	117	13.1
Total Responses									867	
Administrative Support (29)	7	0.8	24	2.7	72	8.1	209	23.5	559	62.8
Total Responses									871	
Chance for professional and personal growth (30)	16	1.8	36	4.0	154	17.3	313	35.2	349	39.2
Total Responses									868	
Recognition (31)	58	6.5	99	11.1	219	24.6	248	27.9	244	27.4
Total Responses									868	
Chance to make decisions about professional practices / instruction (32)	9	1.0	25	2.8	100	11.2	271	30.4	462	51.9
Total Responses									867	
Chance to create and use curriculum products (33)	15	1.7	40	4.5	144	16.2	313	35.2	355	39.9
Total Responses									867	
Chance to discuss educational issues with staff (34)	24	2.7	55	6.2	218	24.5	319	35.8	250	28.1
Total Responses									866	
Having a collaborative environment (35)	17	1.9	38	4.3	132	14.8	317	35.6	362	40.7
Total Responses									866	

Note. Not all respondents completed every survey item.

Chapter 4 reported on the data analysis conducted in this study. This chapter contained a tabular display and discussion of the analysis of the data gathered using a



researcher-designed instrument. Descriptive-frequency and percentage statistics were used to respond to all 3 Research Questions. Descriptive statistics were employed to develop a personal profile of the respondents and to report perceptions on professional and practical factors of teacher retention.

Chapter 5 will present and discuss the summary, conclusions, and recommendations about this study.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus of this study was to develop a profile of what a K-12 public school teacher looked like in the Brevard County, Florida K-12 public school system and to determine what perceived practical and professional retention factors existed among elementary, middle and high school level teachers in Brevard County. This study sought to identify retention factors that were similar among elementary, middle, and high school level teachers, to develop an overall picture of perceived practical and professional factors that contributed to teacher retention in Brevard's K-12 public education system. This chapter is organized to include a summary of each of the three research questions. Conclusions, based on the findings, are presented. The chapter concludes with recommendations for educational leaders and recommendations for future research.

In order to establish the significance of the study, three research questions were created to guide the research. Those research questions were:

1. What is the demographic profile of a K-12 public school teacher from Brevard County, Florida in 2005?
2. What teacher perceived practical factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida K-12 public school teachers in the teaching profession?
3. What teacher perceived professional factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida public school teachers in the K-12 classroom?

The subjects for this study were 1321 certified teachers in 24 selected elementary, middle and high schools. Of these 1321 teachers, 890, or 67%, participated in the study

by completing the questionnaire. The study analyzed data gathered from the Teacher Retention Survey created by the researcher.

### Summary

The following is a summary of the findings for each of the three research questions, which were used to guide the study.

#### Research Question 1

What is the demographic profile of a K-12 public school teacher from Brevard County, Florida in 2005?

Data collected showed that the majority of teachers in Brevard County each had over ten years of teaching experience (60.4%) but most of them had been at their current school less than seven years (69.3%). Of the population surveyed, almost half were elementary school teachers (45.2%) and the remainder were secondary school teachers (54.3%). Most of the teachers (77.9%) surveyed were regular education classroom teachers.

The data also showed that 494 (55.5%) of the teachers worked in schools that were populated with 501-1000 students. Just 85 teachers (9.6%) worked in schools that had more than 2000 students.

Of the teachers surveyed in this study, 693 (77.9%) of them were female and 637 (71.6%) of them were white. These percentages were similar to the studies conducted by Chaddock (1998) and the National Center for Education Information (2005). Chaddock's study showed 66% of the nations teachers were white. The NCEI study showed eight out

of ten teachers were female in 2005 with 84% of the teachers who had five or fewer years of teaching experience being women. Most teachers surveyed 696 (78.2%) chose teaching as a career before age 30 while they were in high school, college or deciding on a career for the first time. Those that indicated teaching was their career choice 628 (70.6%) actually pursued a teaching position and became a teacher before age 30.

A large number of the teachers 778 (87.3%) surveyed were married while only a small percentage 100 (11.2%) never married. About 105 (12%) of the surveyed group were divorced.

A study completed by Darling-Hammond (2000) showed approximately 25% of the public school teachers were over age 50 and almost 33% of public school teachers were in the profession for more than 20 years. The survey results in Brevard County mirrored Darling-Hammond's findings in that 247 (27.7%) of the teachers surveyed were 50 years old or older and 249 (27.9%) of the teachers surveyed were in the profession for more than 20 years.

The family background of the teachers in Brevard County may have influenced the career choices that were made by the teachers surveyed. Of the 890 returned surveys, 295 (33.1%) of the respondents indicated that a teacher figure was in the family background. Overall, the parents of the teachers surveyed were formally educated. Less than 105 (12%) of the paternal parents had less than a high school education and only 71 (8.0%) of the maternal parents had less than a high school education.

Being aware of the demographic profile of the teachers in their schools, school based administrators may be more sensitive to the perceptions of schoolteachers regarding job satisfaction and retention. The data show that if administrators can find a

way to keep teachers in the profession longer than ten years, the likelihood of them staying even longer increases.

## Research Question 2

What teacher perceived practical factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida K-12 public schoolteachers in the teaching profession?

The data indicated the perceived practical factors that initiated individuals to take on a teaching career in Brevard County were geographic location 293 (32.9%), closeness to family 311 (34.9%), and transfer of spouse to the area 169 (19.%). Thus, 480 (53.9%) of the teachers survey stated that family relationships influenced their decisions to locate in their current teaching position. Less than 86 (10%) of the teachers surveyed gave district reputation, teaching assignment or salary as key factors for locating in the geographic area in which they taught. These findings supported the work of Ingersoll (1999) who indicated that teachers often chose their job locations because of the relationships they had with their families. Review of the data in survey item 10 showed that 765 (86%) of the teachers felt parents, family and work schedule were strong practical factors influencing their decisions to stay in the teaching profession.

Another perceived practical factor that plays a role in the retention of teachers in their careers is salary. Of the teachers surveyed, 778 (87.5%) of them responded by stating their salaries represented over 25% of their total family income. Although 821 (92.3%) of the teachers responded to survey item 36 by saying salary was important in making their decisions to stay in the teaching profession, only 134 (15.1%) responded to survey item 10 indicating salary was a key practical factor for them staying. These data

were similar to the findings of the National Center for Education Statistics (1997). NCES found that less than five percent of public school teachers actually left the profession because of money; however, the NCES study also indicated that less than half of all teachers say they were satisfied with their salaries.

The teacher responses to survey item 37 showed that 826 (92.7%) of them felt having a sense of safety in the school environment was either somewhat important 109 (12.2%), important 220 (24.7%) or very important 497 (55.8%). According to Farkas et al. (2005), teachers who felt safe in the classroom environment had a greater sense of job satisfaction, thus they were more apt to stay in their teaching position.

The studies completed by Maslow (1954), McGregor (1960), and Herzberg (1968) indicated a direct relationship between motivation factors and job satisfaction factors to that of job retention. The studies completed by Hall, Pearson and Carroll (1992) and Eggen (2002) also confirmed there was a strong link between motivation and job satisfaction factors to job retention. This study showed 848 (95.3%) of the teachers that responded to survey item 38 felt having a work schedule that was compatible with their lifestyle was an important factor in regards to job satisfaction.

Because teachers have a tendency to pursue teaching positions near family and enticing environments, it would be wise for districts to consider developing home-based programs of study to lure graduates back from college. An example of such a program based in schools would be the Future Educators of America Program. Districts could also focus on undergraduate teacher interns. If interns have positive experiences, the chances are the interns will want to stay in the district. It would be in the best interest of the district to hire these prospective teachers immediately after graduation. It is also

important to involve agencies in the community to maintain a safe and supportive environment. If the community supports the school district, the atmosphere of the work environment is more positive and satisfying to new teachers. Teachers who are content with their teaching environment tend to stay in the profession.

### Research Question 3

What teacher perceived professional factors contribute to keeping Brevard County, Florida public schoolteachers in the K-12 classroom?

The researcher only surveyed full-time certified teachers in this study. All teachers (100%) had at least a Bachelor's Degree. Of the teachers with Bachelor's Degrees, 289 (32.5%) were in elementary education. Of all the teachers, 324 (36.3%) had a Master's Degree in their field of study. Only 16 (1.7%) had Specialist's Degrees and 5 (0.5%) had Doctorate Degrees. Eight hundred and thirty-seven (94%) of the teachers were teaching in the field in which they earned their degree and 800 (89.9%) felt satisfied or very satisfied with their current teaching assignment. According to Eggen (2002), teachers who were satisfied with their job assignments tended to stay in the profession.

The data collected in survey item 21 showed that 504 (56.6%) of the teachers participated in an induction program while 375 (42.1%) did not. Ingersoll (2002) showed a strong relationship between teachers who go through formal induction programs and teachers who remain in the teaching profession.

In review of the frequency and percentage analysis of the perceived professional factors and their level of importance, the data showed the most important influence to teacher satisfaction was for teachers to have the opportunity to help children develop their talents and skills. Responses to survey item 27 showed that 867 (97.4%) of the teachers felt that helping children was an important factor for working in the teaching profession. Nearly 72%, 639, of the teachers indicated this factor was very important to them.

Survey item 29, which addressed administrative support, was considered almost as important as item 27: the ability to help children develop their talents and skills. Nearly 840 (95%) of the teachers felt administrative support was an important professional factor that influenced their decisions to remain in the profession. Of the teachers surveyed, 559 (62.8%) said administrative support was a “very important” factor. These percentages support the findings of a study done by the Charlotte Advocates for Education (2004). Teachers remained teaching at their schools if the principal helped provide supportive working conditions and if the principal created a positive working environment.

Other perceived professional factors that further influenced teachers’ job satisfaction and their decisions to stay in teaching were based on participation items. Teachers indicated that they wanted to be more involved with the instructional process. Survey item 32 showed 833 (93.5%) of the teachers felt it was important to have opportunities to make decisions about professional practices and instruction. Survey item 30 revealed 816 (91.7%) of the teachers felt it was important to have a chance for professional and personal growth. Responses to survey item 33 indicated that 812



(91.3%) of the teachers want be part of creating and using curriculum products. Finally, survey item 35 responses indicated 811 (91.1%) of the teachers felt it was important to work in a collaborative environment. According to Ax, Conderman, & Stephens (2001), the elements of support, training and collaboration in a school setting decreases the amount of teacher isolation which may directly impact a teacher's decision to stay in the profession.

Taking on additional leadership roles (survey item 28) was not a professional factor teachers felt as being overly important to them. Only 117 (13.1%) of the teachers surveyed marked this item as being "very important". Of all the perceived professional factors, this survey item scored the lowest. Also, only 250 (28.1%) of the teachers responded to survey item 34 that having the chance to discuss educational issues with staff was "very important" to them and a fewer number of teachers 244 (27.4%) felt being recognized for their work was "very important."

The majority of teachers surveyed enjoyed having the opportunity to teach students in a safe and supportive environment. It is important for school administrators to be aware that teachers want to be part of the decision-making process, but it is most important for them to work in an environment that has a positive atmosphere, has adequate resources, and has administrative support.

### Conclusions

This study gave a general profile of the teachers in Brevard County, Florida during the 2005-2006 school year. The study also investigated the perceived practical

and professional factors that influenced teacher job satisfaction and retention. The review of the literature focused on the teacher shortage crisis by describing who America's teachers were and why teachers leave the profession. It also focused on job satisfaction and dissatisfaction and how each influences teacher retention.

It was concluded that the teachers that participated in this study provided an overall perspective on teacher retention. The teachers that responded to the study represented a cross section of secondary and elementary schoolteachers from the four quadrants in the Brevard County School District.

The results of this study revealed that teachers want to work in a safe, collaborative and supportive environment. Teachers want to have a voice in the decisions affecting their curriculum. They want the resources available to deliver their curriculum, and they want administrators to be supportive in their efforts.

Teachers want a work schedule that is amenable to family and lifestyle. Teachers enjoy their time away from the classroom during holiday and summer breaks. Family time is as important to them as classroom time. More money for more time in the classroom was not as significant as more time with family.

Instead of being recognized for taking on additional leadership roles and responsibilities, teachers felt satisfied and motivated if they were given the opportunity to help children develop their talents and skills. Teachers indicated that taking on additional leadership in their schools was not as an important factor for them staying in the profession as helping children develop their talents and skills.

School districts and school-based administrators need to be aware of what teachers perceive as being factors in job satisfaction and job retention. If an

administrator acknowledges that teachers want to work in a positive atmosphere with the resources necessary to conduct classes in an enriched environment, the teachers are more likely to stay in that school and in that district. Teachers want to be recognized and supported by their principal. If the principal provides the necessary recognition and support, elements of loyalty, dedication, and hard work will lead to teachers prolonging their careers in teaching.

### Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, this section offers recommendations for addressing teacher retention factors and future research.

#### Recommendations for Teacher Retention

1. Schools and school districts should provide safe and supportive learning environments at the school level.
2. Schools and school districts should allow opportunities for teachers to share information through collaboration and involvement with instructional leaders at the building and district levels.
3. Schools and school districts should find ways to recognize as many teachers as possible for making a positive impact with students by providing financial rewards, scholarship opportunities, adequate resources, and administrative support.
4. School based administrators should find ways to show their support for the efforts of their teachers by allowing teachers to share their ideas in the decision-making process.

5. School based administrators must provide the necessary resources to help teachers make the tasks of classroom instruction successful.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

1. A study could be conducted in the 2007-2008 school year at different schools in the same district to compare results with those in this study concerning retention factors.

2. This study could be duplicated and conducted in other districts in Florida or in other parts of the United States.

3. A study could be conducted comparing elementary grade level teachers to secondary grade level teachers to determine if teacher retention factors remain constant or if they vary.

4. This study could be replicated using gender, race, and age as factors determining whether teachers stay in the profession or leave.

APPENDIX A  
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Teacher Retention in Brevard County, Florida K-12 Schools

(Date)

Dear Educator,

This research is undertaken for completion of my doctorate at the University of Central Florida. You are being asked to participate in the survey because you have been identified as a successful teacher. Your thoughts on teacher retention and the reasons why teachers remain in the public education teaching profession are needed to help develop strategies that will enable our school district and others to enhance teacher recruitment, selection and retention practices within the public education system. Filling out the survey constitutes your informed consent. If you so desire, you may discontinue participation at any time.

Your participation is voluntary. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant. Please be advised that you may choose not to participate in this research, and you may withdraw anytime without consequence. All responses are confidential using a color-coding system and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. If you desire a summary of the results of my study, please check here \_\_\_\_\_ and I will send them to you when completed. If you checked for results, please write your name and address on the lines provided below.

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If you have any questions, or comments about this research, please contact my faculty advisor, Dr. George Pawlas, (407) 384-2194 or me (321) 452-7293). Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UCFIRB Office, University of Central Florida Office of Research, Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 207, Orlando, Florida 32826. The phone number is (407) 823-2901.

Sincerely,

Kenneth J. Winn

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the procedures described above.

\_\_\_\_\_ I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure.

Teacher Retention Study Questionnaire  
University of Central Florida Study

**START HERE**

Place a check in the box next to your answers

**1. How many years have you been a full-time teacher?**

- 0-2
- 3-6
- 7-9
- 10-19
- 20 and over

**2. How many years have you taught at your current school?**

- 0-3
- 4-6
- 7-9
- 10-19
- 20 and over

**3. At which school level do you currently teach?**

- Pre-kindergarten
- Elementary
- Middle/junior high
- High school

**4. What is your current position?**

- a. Regular classroom
- b. Special education
- c. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What is the reason you came to the Brevard County School District?**

- a. District's reputation
- b. Spouse transferred
- c. Geographic location
- d. Close to family
- e. Your position
- f. Salary

**6. Do you come from a family of teachers (mother, father, aunt, uncle)?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

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CONTINUE HERE

**7. At which age did you choose teaching as a career?**

- a. 13 – younger
- b. 14-18
- c. 19-29
- d. 30-39
- e. 40-49
- f. 50 – over

**8. At which age did you enter the teaching profession?**

- a. 20-29
- c. 30-39
- d. 40-49
- d. 50-over

**9. What percent of your total family income does your teaching salary represent?**

- a. 25% or less
- b. 26% -- 50%
- c. 51% -- 75%
- d. 76% -- 100%

**10. Please check the factors listed below that influence your decision to stay in the teaching profession.**

- a. Student behavior
- b. Changing society / socially important
- c. Satisfying working environment
- d. Administrative and staff support
- e. Parents / family members
- f. Work schedule / vacations / time with family
- g. Job security
- h. working relationships
- i. Teaching assignment
- j. Salary / fringe benefits
- k. The challenge of the profession
- l. Students' parent support and communication

**11. Did you ever leave the teaching profession and then return?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**If yes, WHY did you reenter?**  
**(Choose one reason from the list in question 10)** \_\_\_\_\_

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CONTINUE HERE

Please use the following CODES for items 12-15.

- a. Less than High School
- b. High School
- c. Some College
- d. Associate Degree
- e. Bachelor's Degree
- f. Master's Degree
- g. Educational Specialist
- h. Doctorate

**12. What is the highest degree you earned?** \_\_\_\_\_

**13. What is the highest level of education your father earned?** \_\_\_\_\_

**14. What is the highest level of education your mother earned?** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your college major for each degree completed

**15. Bachelor's Degree** \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Master's Degree** \_\_\_\_\_

**17. Education Specialist** \_\_\_\_\_

**18. Doctorate Degree** \_\_\_\_\_

**19. Are you teaching in the field in which you are best qualified to teach?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**20. How would you describe your current teaching assignment?**

- a. Very satisfying
- b. Satisfying
- c. Dissatisfying
- d. Very dissatisfying

**21. Did you participate in a new teacher induction program?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

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CONTINUE HERE

**22. What is your Gender?**

- a. Male
- b. Female

**23. What is your current marital status?**

- a. Married
- b. Divorced
- c. Separated
- d. Widowed
- e. Never married

**24. What is your race?**

- a. Asian/Pacific Islander
- b. Black
- c. Hispanic
- d. White
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

**25. What is your age group?**

- a. Under 30
- b. 30 – 39
- c. 40 – 49
- d. 50 – 59
- e. 60 – over

**26. What is the size of the school in which you are currently teaching?**

- a. 0 – 500
- b. 501 – 1000
- c. 1001 – 1500
- d. 1501 – 2000
- e. 2001 – 2500
- f. 2501 – above

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

**CONTINUE HERE**

<b>For each item, please check the appropriate response that indicates the item's level of importance to you and whether it influenced you to remain in the teaching profession.</b>	Not Important	Little Importance	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
27. Having the ability to help children develop their talents and skills					
28. Having an avenue to take on additional leadership roles and responsibilities.					
29. Having administrative support at my school					
30. Having an opportunity for professional and personal growth.					
31. Being recognized for my efforts.					
32. Having opportunities to make decisions about professional practices and instructional content and processes in my classroom.					
33. Having opportunities to create as well as use innovative curriculum products and instructional materials in my school.					
34. Having opportunities to discuss educational issues and problems with other teachers and administrators in my school.					
35. Being in an environment that encourages collaborative projects where teachers share ideas, pool knowledge and resources.					
36. Being in a teaching position where salary and fringe benefits (health, retirement) are adequate.					
37. Having a sense of safety in the school environment					
38. Having a work schedule that is compatible with my lifestyle.					

APPENDIX B  
SCHOOL DISTRICT PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

**School Board of Brevard County**  
**2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way Viera, FL 32940-6699**  
**Richard A. DiPatri, Ed.D., Superintendent**



To: Mr. Ken Winn  
4001 Dundee Drive  
Merritt Island, FL 32953

From: James H. Hulse, Director  
Office of Accountability, Testing, & Evaluation  
Brevard Public Schools

Subject: Acceptance of Application to Conduct Research  
Research on Teacher Retention

Date: 7/15/2005

Dear Mr. Winn,

Thank you for your application to conduct research in the Brevard Public Schools. This letter is official verification that your application has been accepted and approved through the Office of Accountability, Testing, & Evaluation.

This is a reminder that you must contact the principals of the 24 schools listed on your application, present them with copies of your Application Form, and secure their signatures for approval. Approval of your study at the district level does not obligate principals to participate in the proposed research.

In the future if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Neyda Riley at 321/633-1000 extension 368. Good luck and please submit your research findings and summary to:

Office of Accountability, Testing, & Evaluation  
Research Results  
Brevard Public Schools  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, Florida 32940

Office of Accountability, Testing & Evaluation  
Phone: (321) 631-1911 FAX: (321) 633-3465

APPENDIX C  
UCF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY



June 20, 2006

Kenneth Winn  
4001 Dundee Drive  
Merritt Island, FL 32953

Dear Mr. Winn:

With reference to your protocol #06-3584 entitled, "**Teacher Retention in Brevard County, Florida K-12 Schools,**" I am enclosing for your records the approved, expedited document of the UCFIRB Form you had submitted to our office. **This study was approved on 6/16/06. The expiration date will be 6/15/07.** Should there be a need to extend this study, a Continuing Review form must be submitted to the IRB Office for review by the Chairman or full IRB at least one month prior to the expiration date. This is the responsibility of the investigator. **Please notify the IRB office when you have completed this research study.**

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year. Should there be any addendums or administrative changes to the already approved protocol, they must also be submitted to the Board through use of the Addendum/Modification Request form. Changes should not be initiated until written IRB approval is received. Adverse events should be reported to the IRB as they occur.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 407-823-2901.

Please accept our best wishes for the success of your endeavors.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanne Muratori".

Joanne Muratori  
UCF IRB Coordinator  
(FWA00000351 Exp. 5/13/07, IRB00001138)

Copies: IRB File  
George Pawlas, Ph.D.

JM: jm

APPENDIX D  
COVER LETTER TO PRINCIPALS



KENNETH J. WINN  
4001 Dundee Dr.  
Merritt Island, FL 32953  
321-452-7292

July 10, 2005

Dear Principal,

This letter is asking for your help to add information to the body of educational research literature in the area of teacher retention and the reasons why teachers remain in the public education teaching profession. **This note is asking you to support my efforts of surveying your teaching staff during a faculty meeting this fall. Your school has been chosen for this survey because your school has been identified as being successful. Your teachers' thoughts on teacher retention will help school districts develop policies that will enhance the selection, recruitment and retention of K-12 public school teachers.**

The survey process is as follows:

- (1) I will be present at a designated faculty meeting to distribute letters and surveys to the teachers. The teachers will receive one letter describing the study. I will then explain the process and answer any questions about the study and their involvement. I will leave the room and ask a teacher-volunteer to collect the surveys and result requests, place them separate envelopes, and send them to me via the district courier.
- (2) Teacher participation is voluntary.
- (3) Those teachers who agree to participate in the study will be given two copies of the informed consent letter and the survey questionnaire. Teachers will be asked to return one copy of the informed consent letter (if they want a copy of the results) and to complete the questionnaire. The consent letter and questionnaire will be placed in separate envelopes and returned to me. The second informed consent letter is for the teacher's records.
- (4) If teachers would like a copy of the survey results, they may enter their names and addresses in the space provided within the informed consent letter.
- (5) The results and data will be collected and analyzed by the principal investigator (Kenneth Winn).
- (6) The principal investigator will separate the informed consent letter from the survey questionnaire after the data has been collected. The informed consent letters will be placed in a separate file and location from the survey instruments. School identifiers will be replaced with color codes so the individuals participating in the study will have complete confidentiality.

If you have any additional questions, please call me at (321) 727 - 1611 or (321) 727 - 1612.

Sincerely,

Kenneth J. Winn  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Central Florida

APPENDIX E  
COVER LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

**KENNETH J. WINN**  
**4001 Dundee Dr.**  
**Merritt Island, FL 32953**  
**321-452-7293**  
**winnk@brevard.k12.fl.us**

July 10, 2005

Dear Educator,

This research is undertaken for completion of my doctorate at the University of Central Florida. You are being asked to participate in the survey because you have been identified as a successful teacher. Your thoughts on teacher retention and the reasons why teachers remain in the public education teaching profession are needed to help develop strategies that will enable our school district and others to enhance teacher recruitment, selection and retention practices within the public education system. Filling out the survey constitutes your informed consent. If you so desire, you may discontinue participation at any time.

Your participation is voluntary. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes to complete. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer. There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant. Please be advised that you may choose not to participate in this research, and you may withdraw anytime without consequence. All responses are confidential using a color-coding system and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript. If you desire a summary of the results of my study, please check here \_\_\_\_\_ and I will send them to you when completed. If you checked for results, please write your name and address on the lines provided below.

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If you have any questions, or comments about this research, please contact my faculty advisor, Dr. George Pawlas, (407) 384-2194 or me (321) 452-7293). Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the UCFIRB Office, University of Central Florida Office of Research, Tech Center, 12443 Research Parkway, Suite 207, Orlando, Florida 32826. The phone number is (407) 823-2901.

Sincerely,

Kenneth J. Winn

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the procedures described above.

\_\_\_\_\_ I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure.

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