Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational School Climate and Communication Satisfaction

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Dedication Page

I would like to dedicate my dissertation to my family. My husband, Art who always encouraged me to pursue my lifelong dream of getting a doctorate and continually supported me through the arduous process. To my children Taylor, Weston, and Carly, I hope this inspires you to follow your dreams and never give up.

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Abstract

This quantitative correlational study examined the relationship between elementary teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory was at the core of this research study design. Data was collected from 47 elementary classroom teachers from 11 elementary schools in an urban school district in Iowa. Two data collection tools were utilized to examine the three research questions. The first tool was the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary Schools (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp, 1991), and the second collection tool was the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics to determine teachers' scores on both questionnaires and a series of Pearson correlation coefficients to investigate the relationship between the scores on the two questionnaires. Results of the study suggest that teachers perceived collegial teacher behavior, supportive principal behavior, and intimate teacher behavior as occurring more frequently than the other three behaviors. Conversely teachers perceived restrictive principal behavior, directive principal behavior, and disengaged teacher behavior as occurring less frequently. Additionally, results of the study indicated that the teachers were satisfied with overall communication. The three types of communication that indicated the highest levels of satisfaction were media quality, horizontal and informal communication, and organizational integration. Results of the Pearson correlation coefficients found significant statistical relationships between: supportive principal behavior and teacher communication satisfaction, restrictive principal behavior and teacher communication satisfaction, collegial teacher behavior and teacher communication satisfaction, and disengaged teacher behavior and teacher communication satisfaction.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Every school is unique. Each has a certain atmosphere, or personality, that is known as the organizational school climate (Halpin & Croft, 1963). School climate has been defined as "the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school's members" (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 185). It is the feelings that students and staff develop over time about the school's environment (DuFour, 2000). Whereas, the organizational school climate is created by just the perceptions of the teachers and the administrators in the school (Hoy & Miskel, 2008). After working as a classroom teacher for over two decades, the researcher has had the opportunity to observe and participate in different organizational school climates. This past experience included working with a variety of staff from first year teachers to veteran principals. Additionally, the student demographics encompassed different levels of free and reduced lunch participants and socioeconomic status. Thus, the researcher concludes that organizational school climates are diverse, but more important is the possible effects of organizational school climates. Research supports what most teachers intuitively know, that organizational school climate affects the success of a school (Dorathi, 2011; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2012; McCarley, Peters, & Decman, 2016; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Tubbs & Garner, 2008). It has been suggested that the type of adult relationships in a school impact the quality of a school more than any other factor (Barth, 1990b). More specifically, school climate affects teachers' levels of commitment (Cohen & Geier, 2010; Singh & Billingsley, 1998), and is a significant factor contributing to teacher retention (Cohen & Geir, 2010; Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Johnson et al., 2012; Ladd, 2011; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999). For a school to be successful, it needs to be able to retain new, inexperienced teachers long enough for them to

become successful, master teachers. Given these points, it becomes apparent that organizational school climate affects the success of a school.

Another critical element related to the success of a school is effective communication, especially for teachers. It has been noted that teachers are the most important communicators in the entire district, because of the high level of messages they are giving and receiving (Gonzales, 2014). This is, in part due, to the fact that teachers spend the majority of their day communicating with students. At the same time, a significant amount of teacher communication takes place outside of the classroom. It happens in other contexts such as interactions with fellow teachers, administrators, parents, and outside agencies. For the most part, teachers are in constant communication with other people throughout their entire workday (Creswell & Fisher, 1996). In particular, the interaction patterns between the teachers and administrators can impact the effectiveness of a school (Barth, 1990a). For example, if principals create a supportive communication climate, teachers will feel respected and supported. This type of climate would undoubtedly have a positive impact on a school's effectiveness. Accordingly, research has shown that an open communication climate plays a crucial role in school improvement success (Gonzales, 2014; Halawah, 2005). In fact, it is the interactions, or communication between teacher and administrator, and teacher to teacher, that help to create the overall school climate.

Background

School climate. The importance of school climate was first recognized over 100 years ago (Cohen & Geier, 2010; Wang & Degol, 2016). Since then, a majority of the school climate studies have focused on the relationship between school climate and students (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Lee & Smith, 1999; Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016). While the relationship between school climate and students is

indeed a valuable endeavor, it is equally important that the relationship between school climate and teachers is explored, because a positive school climate has benefits for teachers as well as students (Freiburg, 1998; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Tubbs & Garner, 2008).

Since a positive school climate has benefits for teachers as well as students (Freiburg, 1998; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Tubbs & Garner, 2008), there is a need for more research on the relationship of school climate on teachers (Wang & Degol, 2016). As a matter of fact, research has shown that the job satisfaction of teachers increases as the school climate improves (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995). Similarly, as Johnson et al. (2012) point out, it is not the physical conditions of the school that predict teachers' job satisfaction, it is the relationship among teachers that predict job satisfaction. With this in mind, it comes as no surprise that school climate has been found to be a significant factor that can influence teacher retention (Cohen & Geir, 2010; Fulton et al., 2005; Johnson et al., 2012; Miller et al., 1999). In addition, school climate data can spearhead the direction of school reform and improvement efforts (Duff, 2013; Freiburg, 1998; Gonzales, 2014; McCarley et al., 2016). Learning more about the specific elements of school climate will help guide and sustain necessary improvements in learning and teaching (Strahan, 2003). In view of this, it is important to assess the school climate because the school climate affects the success of the school (Cohen, 2006; Dorathi, 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). For these reasons, the relationship between school climate and teachers warrants further examination.

Communication. A school, like any other organization, depends on the effective communication of its employees (Sharma, 2015). Organizational communication has been defined as both the communications and interactions among the employees in an organization (Berger, 2008). An organization's very survival hinges on the employee's ability to

communicate effectively (Downs & Adrian, 2004; Orpen, 1997). In terms of schools, a healthy communication environment "contributes to the overall success of the district, with positive impacts to employees, students, achievement and community collaboration" (Gonzales, 2014, p. 122). Consequently then, since teachers constitute the majority of the work force in schools, it follows that their communication and perceptions of school communication would have a significant impact on school effectiveness. In particular, because school communication influences a teacher's attitude and their behavior, communication can directly impact school effectiveness (Rafferty, 2003). Horizontal communication occurs between teacher to teacher and helps to shape collegial relationships among teachers. In fact, positive collegial working relationships with peers have been frequently cited by teachers as a reason to stay in the profession (Loeb et al., 2005). Yet, even though the value of effective communication in schools is apparent, studies focusing on teachers' perceptions in this area are limited (Gonzales, 2014; Rafferty, 2003). Reyes and Hoyle (1992) have quantified the lack of research on teachers' communication satisfaction in elementary and secondary schools as "sparse." As shown above, learning more about teachers' perceptions of communication satisfaction would be a valuable contribution to the field of education.

Rationale

Despite the apparent relevance of climate and communication to the field of education, research that examines the relationship of both these two constructs in the school setting has not been widely studied. Halawah (2005) has mentioned that not much is known about the effect principal-teacher communication has on school climate. The results of Halawah's study indicated that school climate is positively associated with the principal's communication effectiveness. Conversely, other fields have researched the relationship of both climate and

communication in business organizations. In particular, the field of organizational communication has provided evidence of a relationship between organizational climate and communication.

According to Rafferty (2003):

> Research in the field of organizational communication has flourished for several decades and findings are conclusive: there is substantial evidence that indicates a direct and positive correlation between overall organizational climate and communication as perceived by organization members in their workplace. There has been, however, little research dedicated to the study of communication patterns as they relate to organizational climate in schools. (p. 67)

Therefore, in an attempt to expand the limited amount of research in this area, this study focused on examining both variables, organizational climate and communication satisfaction, in the school setting.

Theoretical Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a well-known motivational theory (Figure 1). He contended that, in order for individuals to reach their full potential, they must satisfy a series of needs. According to Hartzell (n.d.), "Needs are psychological or physiological insufficiencies that provoke some type of behavioral response" (para. 2). The five needs were physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943).

Physiological needs. These are the basic needs an individual requires to survive such as food, water, air, rest, and shelter.

Safety needs. These are also basic needs such as protection from the elements, stability, and freedom from fear.

Love and belongingness needs. These are psychological needs such as friendship, trust, family, and being part of a group.

Esteem needs. These are also psychological needs such as the desire for respect, appreciation, and personal worth.

Self-actualization needs. This is the need for an individual to seek personal growth and reach their full potential.

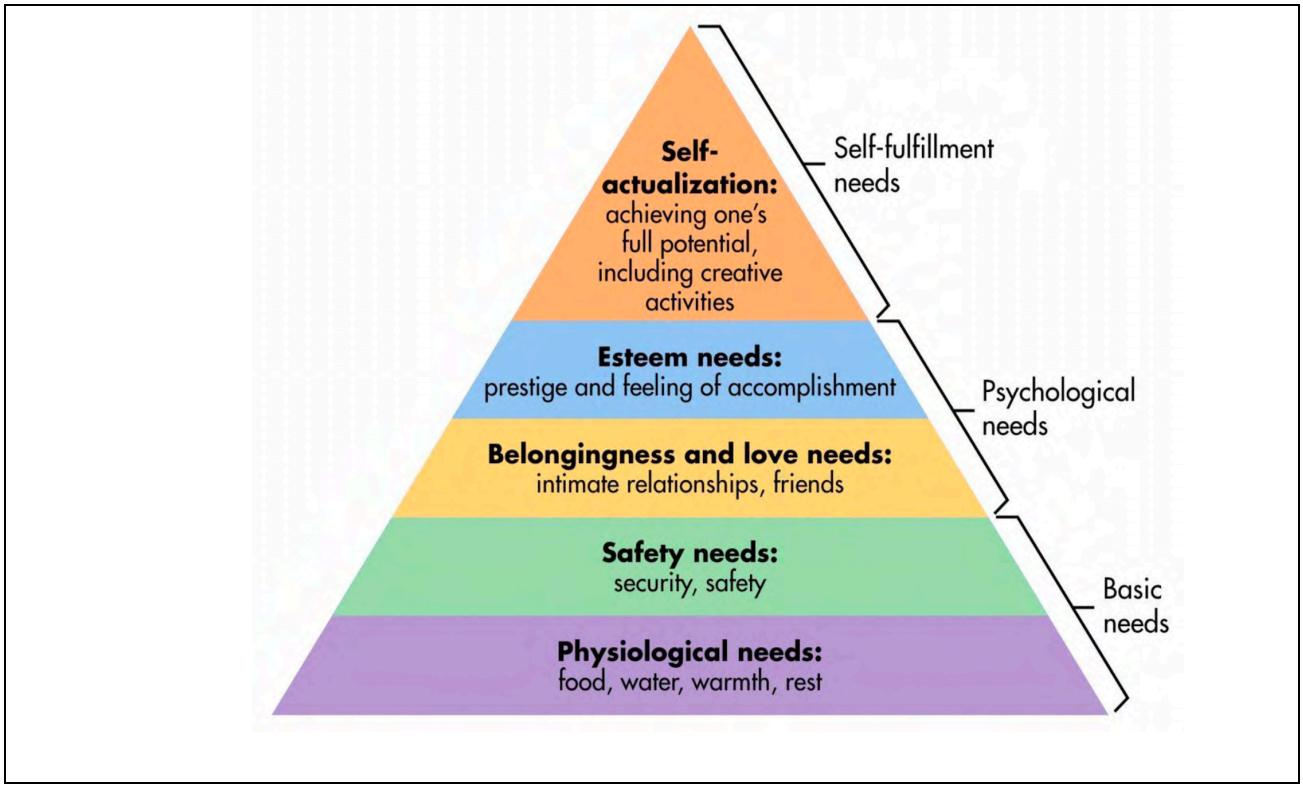

Figure 1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Reprinted from *Simply Psychology*, by S. A. McLeod, 2017. Retrieved from www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html

Originally, Maslow (1943) posited that individuals needed to satisfy lower-level needs before being able to move on to attain higher level needs. Later, Maslow (1987) acknowledged

that a need did not have to be 100% satisfied in order for an individual to begin working toward satisfying a higher-level need. This theory has been utilized in a variety of contexts and is applicable to the field of education (Duff, 2013). Often it has been used as a framework for motivating students in the classroom. For example, a student with unfulfilled basic needs, like being hungry or tired, will find it challenging to focus on learning (McLeod, 2017). This idea is substantiated by research that has shown that students who eat school breakfast have improved attendance and standardized test scores (Murphy, 2007). It is for these reasons that the federal government saw the need to create the School Breakfast Program (SBP) in 1966 (U. S. Department of Agriculture, 2017). The SBP has been steadily growing with approximately 14 million students who participated in the program in 2016 (U. S. Department of Agriculture, 2017). Given these points, "Applications of Maslow's hierarchy theory to the work of the classroom teacher are obvious. Before a student's cognitive needs can be met, they must first fulfill their basic physiological needs" (McLeod, 2017, p. 7).

Maslow's hierarchy has also been applied to organizations. Most notably, it has been utilized in the workplace (Miller, 2015) and is still relevant in today's business organizations (Jerome, 2013). The theory has been associated with employee performance (Gordon, 1965) and employee motivation (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). In regard to an organization (Drafke, 2009; Jerome, 2013) and to a school, the five hierarchical needs could be typified by the following examples.

Physiological needs. This includes an adequate salary that allows employees to be able to buy items to fulfill their basic needs.

Safety needs. This includes physical safety needs such as a safe working environment. For example, firemen are provided helmets and other protective clothing to keep them safe at

their job. In a school these needs are addressed by formulating and practicing emergency procedures for fire, tornado, and active shooter scenarios. Additionally, most schools provide basic first aid training that often includes CPR and using an EpiPen. This type of training is essential because not all schools have a full-time nurse and even if they do the teacher is most likely to be the first person at the scene of a student's health crisis. It also encompasses psychological safety needs such as health insurance and retirement plans.

Belongingness needs. This would include making employees feel like they are part of the group. Organizations try to accomplish this by encouraging social interactions such as luncheons and company parties. Schools often have a designated individual or group in charge of planning social functions. Many times the social functions involve food such as potluck lunches or morning donuts. It is not uncommon for teachers to plan and host events such as baby showers, retirement teas, and holiday parties at their schools.

Esteem needs. Employees need to feel they are valued and important to different parts of the organization. Specifically, employees need to be recognized for their achievements in formal ways such as titles, awards, promotions, or informally by praise. Many states and most school districts, have some type of formal structure for recognizing and awarding a specific number of teachers, the title of "Teacher of the Year". Additionally, teachers can become tenured after completing a probationary period. For teachers, informal praise can come from their colleagues, the principal, and even the parents.

Self-actualization needs. Often employees have a level of achievement they are striving toward. This need can be satisfied by providing employees opportunities for growth, leadership, and responsibility. In order for teachers to maintain their teaching license, they need to complete a minimum amount of professional development hours every year. The minimum amount is

mandated by each state. Often professional development opportunities are provided by the school district. In addition, continuing education opportunities can be addressed by conferences and colleges. Furthermore, 88% of large school districts provide an increase in pay to teachers who earn a master's degree (Nittler, 2018) and many districts provide pay increases to teachers based on earned college credits and subject endorsements.

Clearly all five needs are related to a teacher's work environment, but only the top three needs are directly related to organizational school climate. The first two needs are basic needs that satisfy physiological and safety needs. The organizational school climate is not composed of physiological or safety needs. It is created by the interactions of teacher to teacher and teacher to principal (Marzano et al., 2005), which are more applicable to the psychological needs. Hence, a teacher's perceptions of their organizational climate are influenced by the satisfaction of Maslow's top three hierarchy needs: belongingness, esteem and self-actualization. For instance, school principals try to create more supportive school climates by paying attention to the social or belongingness needs of the staff. This is done in a variety of ways such as staff apparel with the school logo, covered dish luncheons, and friendly competitions. All these activities help to build relationships between staff members and satisfy belongingness needs, which in turn lead to a more supportive climate. Therefore, the theoretical framework for this study was Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory.

Statement of the Problem

Teacher retention is a national problem. It has been noted that about two-thirds of teachers who leave do so because of dissatisfaction with teaching (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016.) Retaining new teachers is especially problematic as demonstrated by national figures that found new teachers leave at rates between 19% and 30% during their first 5

years of teaching (Sutcher et al., 2016). Furthermore, each time a teacher leaves it can cost the school district as much as $18,000, which corresponds to a yearly national cost of more than $8 billion (Sutcher et al., 2016). The climate of a school can contribute to teacher burnout and has been found to be a significant factor that can influence teacher retention (Cohen & Geir, 2010; Fulton et al., 2005; Miller et al., 1999). Since a majority of the school climate studies have already focused on the relationship between school climate and students (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001; Lee & Smith, 1999; Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016) there is a need to consider the teachers' perceptions of climate.

Communication has also been found to contribute to the success of an organization (Downs & Adrian, 2004; Orpen, 1997), but unfortunately, research examining the effectiveness of communication in the school setting is lacking (Halawah, 2005; Rafferty, 2003; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). Even more sparse is research that focuses on the relationship of both variables, climate and communication, in a school context (Rafferty, 2003).

Though research has clearly shown that a positive school climate has benefits for teachers as well as students (O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Tubbs & Garner, 2008), there is still a lack of research that focuses on teachers' perceptions of climate and communication satisfaction. A more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between climate and communication satisfaction would allow school leaders to make more informed decisions about how their schools operate.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this correlational study was to examine the relationship of certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary Schools (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy, Tarter, & Kottkamp,

1991) and their perceptions of communication satisfaction as measured by the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) (Downs & Hazen, 1977) in a Midwestern urban elementary school.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What were certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991)?
2. What were certified teachers' levels of communication satisfaction as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?
3. What was the relationship between the certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and communication satisfaction levels as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?

Significance of the Study

To date, there are very few studies that have described and analyzed the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. For the most part, past research has focused on just one of these constructs, organizational school climate or communication, at a time. In contrast, this study directly examined the relationship between the two constructs. While this study will help to expand the field of research in each of the separate areas of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction, it will also provide a better understanding of the relationship between the two areas.

A better understanding of organizational climate and communication is significant to all individuals who are interested in the success of a school. In particular, it has significance to researchers, district personnel, and building administration. Researchers who learn more about

the specific components of school climate are better able to translate this into meaningful changes in learning and teaching (Strahan, 2003). Along with researchers, district personnel can use the results of this study as a tool to contemplate the effect organizational climate and communication might have in their buildings. This information could be trickled down to the individual building administration, like principals. Since the principal does have some influence over organizational climate and communication, it would be advantageous for administrators to be able to better understand the relationship between both variables.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following are definitions for the key terms that are used throughout this research study.

Communication satisfaction. Communication satisfaction is the overall degree of satisfaction expressed with the total communication environment (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1994). It is the personal satisfaction gained as a result of successfully communicating to or with someone (Thayer, 1968).

Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ). The communication satisfaction questionnaire is a survey instrument used to measure organizational communication effectiveness (Downs & Hazen, 1977).

Organizational climate. The quality of the internal environment of an organization as perceived by the members (Rafferty, 2003).

Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ). The OCDQ is a survey instrument designed to measure the climate of a school (Halpin & Croft, 1963).

Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ-RE). The OCDQ-RE is a 42-item survey based on the OCDQ (Hoy et al., 1991). It is designed to measure elementary teachers' perceptions of school climate.

Organizational communication. Organizational communication is an internal and external exchange of information that helps an organization to plan, organize, coordinate and evaluate their tasks (Yildiz, 2013).

Organizational school climate. The organizational school climate is created by the perceptions of the teachers and the administrators in the school (Hoy & Miskel, 2008) and will be used for the purposes of this study.

School climate. The school climate is the feelings that students and staff have toward the school environment that occurs over a period of time (DuFour, 2000; Fullan, 1999).

Limitation, Delimitations, and Assumptions

Limitations. Limitations are outside the control of the researcher (Roberts, 2004). The study was limited to the voluntary responses of elementary teachers who completed and returned the surveys during one academic year, at a single point in time. The study was limited to the responses that were gathered in a specific 2-week timeframe. The surveys were emailed at the end of the school year in May. Teachers often face many time constraints during this final part of the school year. Besides their day to day teaching responsibilities, teachers are required to complete a variety of paperwork that addresses yearly progress for each student. Additionally, it is possible that teachers' perceptions of climate and communication satisfaction might fluctuate during the year and current positive or negative relationships between participants could skew their perceptions. Lastly, based on how this data was gathered and analyzed, the teachers'

responses were not linked to a specific principal. Therefore, for this study the principals are referred to as a group, rather than a specific principal.

Delimitations. To better focus on organizational school climate and communication satisfaction, the researcher placed some delimitations on the study. The first delimitation was on the population. The survey included all full-time certified elementary teachers from one Midwestern urban school district. Therefore, the results may not generalize to other schools that might have a different faculty composition due to demographic factors like teaching experience and age. Teachers who taught at more than one school were excluded to ensure that all participant responses were in reference to the same school.

Second, while there are a multitude of factors that might be associated with school climate, such as academic growth or teacher retention, those factors are outside the scope of this study. Accordingly, this study focused exclusively on organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. The findings of the study were limited to one school district and therefore might not be able to be generalized to other school districts. It was also limited to the teachers' perceptions of organizational climate and communication satisfaction in a specific geographical location; hence, its findings may not be generalizable to the larger population.

A third delimitation pertains to the type of methodological framework that was utilized. The researcher used a correlational research design to investigate if the two variables of climate and communication were related. Since correlational studies ascertain only if variables are related, not a cause-effect relationship (Creswell, 2012; Urdan, 2010), this study was not able to establish causality between organizational school climate and communication satisfaction.

Assumptions. It was assumed that all respondents who answered the surveys understood the instructions and questions and did not intentionally falsify responses, but gave unbiased and

honest answers to all survey questions. Another assumption in this study was that both survey measures presented an accurate evaluation of the constructs they quantified, the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) was an accurate measure of teachers' perceptions of organizational climate in an elementary school and the CSQ **(**Downs & Hazen, 1977) was an accurate measure of teachers' level of communication satisfaction.

Summary

The focus of Chapter I was to highlight the relevance of exploring the relationship between organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. While these two variables have been previously studied, there is a lack of research that considers both from a teacher's perspective. It was shown that the teacher's perspective is significant because it has been related to school effectiveness. Therefore, this research study focused on exploring the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate using the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and teachers' level of communication satisfaction as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Additionally, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow, 1943) was presented as the theoretical framework. The five needs were summarized and their application to the context of an organization was described. From this, it became apparent that the three needs of belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization could be utilized to explore the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of Chapter II was to present a comprehensive review of past and present literature related to school climate and communication satisfaction. Both school climate and communication satisfaction have built their foundations from organizational research; therefore, organizational climate and organizational communication are included in this chapter. Accordingly, this section covers five main areas: organizational climate, school climate, organizational communication, communication satisfaction, and communication in schools.

Organizational Climate

Initially, climate was defined as an experience of the employees that influences their behavior and can be described by specific environmental attributes (Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968). Similarly, Litwin and Stringer (1968) defined organizational climate as the sum of the perceptions of the employees in the organization. It includes the formal and informal shared perceptions of organizational policies, practices, and procedures (Schneider, 1975). Moreover, it is the properties of the work environment that are perceived directly or indirectly by the employees and can have a significant impact on their behavior (Ireland, Van Auken, & Lewis, 1978). A later definition (Rafferty, 2003) proposed that organizational climate is the quality of the internal environment that is perceived by the organizational workforce. In other words, organizational climate is the meanings employees connect to interrelated bundles of experiences they have at work (Schneider, Ehrhart, & Macey, 2013).

While there are a multitude of definitions, there are similarities among most of the definitions. Many definitions emphasis that organizational climate is based on the experience (Schneider et al., 2013; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968) or perceptions (Ireland et al., 1978; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Rafferty, 2003; Schneider, 1975) of an employee and influences their behavior

(Ireland et al., 1978; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968). Perhaps one of the clearest definitions is an analogy offered by Halpin and Croft (1963). Their analogy was that personality is to the individual as climate is to the organization. For this study, organizational climate is defined as the perceptions of employees about the internal environment that influences their behavior. Next, to help further clarify the concept of organizational climate, the climate dimensions are explored.

Dimensions of organizational climate. Researchers have pointed out that there is not one set of universal dimensions for organizational climate (Guion, 1973; Parker et al., 2003; Patterson et al., 2005; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968). According to Parker et al. (2003):

> Even a casual survey of the psychological climate literature reveals that a staggering number and variety of dimensions have been measured, easily demonstrating the difficulty in identifying the construct's perimeter. Employees' perceptions of virtually every aspect of their work environment, including the characteristics of their jobs, physical environment, supervision, top management, and co-workers, have been included in psychological climate research. (p. 392)

Several researchers have tried to generate a set of dimensions for organizational climate. Litwin and Stringer (1968) offered structure, responsibility, reward, warmth, support, identity, risk, standard, and conflict as organizational climate dimensions. Soon after, Schneider and Bartlett (1968) identified five dimensions of climate: (a) management support (b) management structure (c) concern for new employees (d) intra-agency conflict, and (e) general satisfaction. Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler and Weick (1970) offered the four dimensions of individual autonomy, amount of structure imposed, reward system, and support. Eventually, other researchers listed job characteristics, role characteristics, leadership characteristics, work group

and social environment characteristics, and organizational and subsystems, as the five dimensions of organizational climate (James & Sells, 1981; Jones & James, 1979). Later, research by James and McIntyre (1996) only utilized four of their dimensions; the organizational and subsystems dimensions were not included. Kopelman, Brief, and Guzzo (1990) reported five dimensions of climate: goal emphasis, means emphasis, reward orientation, task support, and socioemotional support. Hence, while there is not a consensus on the dimensions of organizational climate (Guion, 1973; Parker et al., 2003; Patterson et al., 2005; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968), most researchers agree that organizational climate is a multidimensional construct (Campbell et al., 1970; James & McIntyre, 1996; Kopelman et al., 1990; Litwin & Stringer, 1968) and researchers should focus on the dimensions that are relevant to their research (Schneider, 1990). Moreover, because the relationship between an employee and the organization is inherently multidimensional, utilizing a multidimensional construct is warranted (Glick, 1985). Accordingly, the dimension that is most relevant to this research is work group and social environment characteristics (James & Sells, 1981; Jones & James, 1979), because these two are the most relevant to climate and communication.

Background. Research about climate or a person's environment is a not a new topic of study for social scientists. In the late 1930s, Kurt Lewin, known as the seminal theorist for social psychology, was researching the impact environmental factors had on factory workers (Adelman, 1993). His research began in 1939 when Lewin was invited by the manager of Harwood Manufacturing to study their problems of low production, absenteeism, and turnover. Lewin's research demonstrated that productivity could be improved by changing the organizational climate by the use of a different style of leadership. For example, it was found that using a democratic management style encouraged the development of social relationships and

involvement in decision making. As a result, researchers began mentioning the term "social climates" in the context of organizations (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939). Lewin's (1951) theory that behavior is a product of the person and their psychological environment supports the belief that environment can be a determinant of behavior (Denison, 1996). Eventually, in the late 1950s, social scientists began researching different work environments (Hoy et al., 1991). Then, in 1968, two books were published that focused on climate in organizational contexts (Denison, 1996). The first book, *Organizational Climate: Explorations of a Concept,* (Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968), contained essays about climate from different perspectives. The second book, *Motivation and Organizational Climate,* (Litwin & Stringer, 1968), presented information about the consequences of organizational climate.

Effects of organizational climate. Ever since Mayo's (1933) seminal behavioral study at Western Electric, researchers have been studying how employees' perceptions of their work environment affects their productivity. Mayo conducted a series of experiments over nine years that investigated the effects of the physical working conditions on the employees' productivity. Mayo and his fellow researchers found that it was not the change in the physical conditions, such as lighting, that influenced workers' production. In reality, it was attributed to the social connection the workers felt by becoming part of a work group. Along with productivity, climate has been found to impact other variables. Parker et al. (2003) utilized a meta-analytic procedure to examine the relationship between an individual's perception of climate on their attitude, motivation, and performance. Their study used a total of 94 empirical research studies that were published between 1967 and 1999. The samples were from a variety of organizations such as manufacturing, health care, and government. By using a meta-analytic correlation matrix, significant relationships were found between perceptions of climate towards attitude, motivation,

and performance. A more recent study examined the effects organizational climate had on 419 managers and employees (Zhang & Liu, 2010). The results showed that when employees' perceptions of organizational climate positively increased, their job satisfaction increased, and turnover intention and stress levels decreased. This finding is consistent with other researchers who have determined that organizational climate has an effect on job satisfaction (James & Tetrick, 1986; Mathieu, Hoffman, & Farr, 1993; Schneider & Snyder, 1975).

School Climate

Currently, there is not one universal definition of school climate (Drago-Severson, 2012; Wang & Degol, 2016). It has been defined as the feelings that students and staff have toward the school environment that occurs over a period of time (DuFour, 2000; Fullan, 1999). Similarly, it is the pervasive quality of the school environment that is perceived by students and staff, which ultimately affects their behaviors (Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). The National School Climate Center (2007) contends that school climate is comprised of the norms, values, and expectations that contribute to members feeling socially, emotionally, and physically safe. In the same fashion, Hoy and Miskel (2008) defined school climate as "the set of internal characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviors of each school's members" (p. 185). Though the definitions of school climate are vast, most share some common aspects. Many definitions include the premise that school climate is the perception or feelings of students or staff about the school environment (DuFour, 2000; Fullan, 1999) and that influences their behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). When researchers focus on teachers' perceptions of their school environment, the climate construct is often referred to as organizational climate. In essence, school climate is organizational climate in a specific context (Rafferty, 2003). Both definitions, school climate and organizational school climate, mention

that climate is the perception of an individual about the internal environment, and it influences behavior.

Dimensions of school climate. School climate does not have a universally agreed upon set of core domains (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Wang & Degol, 2016), but researchers have agreed that it is multidimensional (Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016). Additionally, most researchers agree that there are at least four essential dimensions on which to focus (Cohen & Geier, 2010). For instance, four domains of school climate that have been presented are safety, teaching and learning, relationships, and environment (Cohen et al., 2009). Safety encompasses physical as well as social-emotional safety. Physical safety includes crisis plans, rules and norms, strategies to reduce physical violence, classroom management techniques, and security guards. The social-emotional safety pertains to bullying issues and conflict resolution. The teaching and learning area has to do with quality instruction, professional development, and leadership. The relationships element encompasses relationships between teacher-to-teacher, teacher to student, student to student, teacher to parent, and teacher to administrators. Environment consists of the school size, materials, and curricular and extracurricular programs (Cohen et al., 2009).

In a like manner, Wang and Degol (2016) conducted a review of the construct of school climate. First, the researchers combed through the literature to find the 50 articles that were the most recent and that had been highly cited. From this collection, three coders worked to categorize the domains and dimensions of the construct of school climate. Eventually, they were able to narrow down to four domains of school climate, which are safety, academic, community, and institutional environment.

There are similarities between Cohen et al. (2009) and Wang and Degol's (2016)

dimensions of school climate. Both list safety and environment as a dimension. Wang and Degol's academic dimension is the same as the teaching and learning dimension offered by Cohen et al. (2009). Moreover, Wang and Degol's community dimension is comparable to the relationships dimension proposed by Cohen et al. Based on this, it seems prudent to assume that most researchers consider school climate to have four dimensions, but there is still some variation in the exact names of those dimensions.

Background. Many researchers (Cohen & Geier, 2010; Wang& Degol, 2016) credit Perry with being the first educational leader to explicitly write about how school climate can affect students and the learning process (Perry, 1908). Perry was a principal in New York City. In his book, *The Management of a City School* (1908), Perry highlighted the importance of providing students with a quality learning environment (Wang & Degol, 2016). Although the importance of school climate had now been mentioned, it still grew out of organizational research studies (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Most of the very early research writings about school climate utilized a case studies method (Cohen et al., 2009).

Eventually, during the 1950s, educators began to systematically study school climate (Cohen et al., 2009; National School Climate Center, 2007; Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013), mainly due to the development of scientifically sound school climate assessment measures (National School Climate Center, 2007; Wang & Degol, 2016). Halpin and Croft (1963) are credited with being the first to begin the systematic study of the effect of organizational school climate on student learning (Cohen et al., 2009; Rafferty, 2003). Additionally, they are well known for the development of the OCDQ.

OCDQ. Halpin and Croft's (1963) seminal work was an exploratory study with three goals: (a) map the domain of organizational climate of schools, (b) identify and describe the

dimensions of organizational climate of schools, and (c) measure organizational climate of schools. The researchers created a 64 Likert-type questionnaire, the OCDQ. The OCDQ was administered to 71 elementary schools. Eventually, the profiles for the 71 schools were factor analyzed, which allowed the researchers to delineate six different climates.

1. The Open Climate describes an organization where the members and leaders display "authentic" or open behavior.
2. The Autonomous Climate is described as one in which the leader exerts little control over the members.
3. The Controlled Climate is characterized as impersonal and very task-oriented; there is not much satisfaction of social needs.
4. The Familiar Climate is high in regard to social needs satisfaction but low in respect to task accomplishment.
5. The Paternal Climate is characterized by a principal who does not delegate leadership responsibilities. There is a low level of satisfaction towards achievement or social needs.
6. The Closed Climate is characterized by high levels of apathy toward meeting satisfaction of social or achievement needs from all organizational members.

The creation of the OCDQ was significant because it helped to facilitate organizational climate research in schools and other organizations (Halpin & Croft, 1963). In particular, it provided researchers a quantitative measure that enabled them to assess and then categorize an organization's climate.

Effects of school climate. Even a quick review of the literature demonstrates that school climate has an effect on people within the school (Gray, Wilcox, & Nordstokke, 2017;Thapa et

al., 2013; Tubbs & Garner, 2008) and has been found to be one of the most influential factors affecting the success of a school (Duff, 2013; Hoyle, English, & Steffy,1985; Kotok, Ikoma, & Bodovski, 2016). Correspondingly, school climate has been noted as the single most important influence that determines if a school succeeds with its students (Gottfredson & Hollifield, 1988).

Effects of school climate on students. While past studies have found school climate to be a significant influence on a school's performance, the majority of the studies have focused on learning and academic achievement (Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016). For example, Kuperminc, Leadbeater, and Blatt (2001) reviewed 40 studies between 1964 and 1980 and found that over half of the studies analyzed the effects of school climate on academic achievement (Tubbs & Garner, 2008). In the same fashion, researchers collected data from 97 schools in Ohio and found that school climate did have an influence on student achievement (Smith, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2001). More specifically, they found that an academic-oriented environment positively influenced student achievement. Two more recent studies focused on the impact school administrators had on school climate and student learning (Gray et al., 2017; Ingersoll, Sirinides, & Dougherty, 2018). In the first study, researchers found that when school administrators created a supportive and collaborative school climate, it positively affected the well-being of teachers and student learning (Gray et al., 2017). In the second aforementioned study, survey data was analyzed from almost 900,000 teachers, in about 25,000 public schools in 16 states (Ingersoll et al., 2018). Results of the study suggested that actively involving teachers in decision making is related to higher student achievement (Ingersoll et al., 2018). These studies confirmed the findings of other researchers that have shown that a positive school climate impacts student achievement (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Lee & Smith, 1999; McEvoy & Welker, 2000; Stewart, 2008). The results of these studies are not surprising, as

Cohen et al. (2009) remarks, "that school climate promotes or complicates students' ability to learn and achieve academically, is on one hand, common sense. To the extent that students feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported and lovingly 'pushed' to learn, academic achievement should increase" (p. 186).

Even though the majority of the research has been targeted on the relationship of climate to student achievement (Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016), there are other crucial student effects. Research has shown that a positive school climate corresponds with significantly lower levels of absenteeism (Gottfredson, Gottfredson, Payne, & Gottfredson, 2005; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rumberger, 1987). Correspondingly, research has identified a positive correlation between school climate and student self-concept (Cairns, 1987; Heal, 1978; Hoge, Smit, & Hanson, 1990), fewer suspensions (Lee, Cornell, Gregory, & Fan, 2011), increased motivation to learn (Goodenow & Grady, 1993) and less discipline issues (Thapa et al., 2013).

Effects of school climate on teachers. A positive school climate has many benefits to students, but it also has benefits for teachers as well (Johnson et al., 2012; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Gray et al., 2017; Spicer, 2016; Tubbs & Garner, 2008). Research has shown that school climate does affect teachers' perceptions of being in school and it impacts how they teach (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Despite the importance of teacher quality on student achievement, the well-being of teachers is often overlooked until their job performance begins to decline, and burnout begins (O'Malley, Hanson, & Zheng, 2012). Teacher burnout is crucial because it can eventually lead to teacher turnover. As a result, school climate has been cited as a significant contributing factor to teacher retention (Cohen & Geir, 2010; Fulton et al., 2005; Miller et al., 1999).

As Johnson et al. (2012) pointed out, it is not the physical conditions of the school like

the technology, that predict teachers' job satisfaction; instead, it is the social conditions like relationships among teachers that predict teachers' job satisfaction. As a matter of fact, having a positive working relationship with peers is frequently cited as a reason teachers stay in the profession (Loeb et al., 2005). When teachers feel supported by their principal and their peers, teachers feel more committed (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Additionally, school climate was found to improve when the principal supported collegiality and focused on creating positive relationships with teachers (Spicer, 2016). Three recent studies (Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Marinell & Coca, 2013) have substantiated that the social conditions of school climate are related to teachers' intent to stay at their schools.

Boyd et al. (2011) administered a survey to all first-year teachers in New York City which was completed by 4,360 teachers. This survey contained 300 questions about four areas. The survey answers were used to develop six school contextual factors: teacher influence, administration, staff relations, students, facilities, and safety were created. This allowed the researchers to look at the relationship of each of these factors on intent to leave. The results indicated that administrative support accounted for a large difference in teacher attrition rates, whereby teachers with less positive perceptions of their administrators are more likely to transfer to another school or leave teaching (Boyd et al., 2011).

Correspondingly, Johnson et al. (2012) examined the effect teachers' work environment has on teachers' job satisfaction and intent to stay at their jobs. They used a sample of 25,135 classroom teachers from Massachusetts, from grades kindergarten to 12th grade. The researchers developed a set of nine elements to represent the teachers' work environment. Teachers were asked about each of the nine elements, along with questions about their job satisfaction and career intentions. Results presented strong evidence that the work environment does matter to

teachers and is related to their job satisfaction and intent to stay at their jobs. Furthermore, specific elements of the work environment were found to matter more than others. Most notably, the elements that related to collegial relationships and the perceptions about school leaders being supportive matter the most to teachers. Given these points, teachers who perceive their work environments as more positive are more satisfied and less likely to transfer or leave their jobs (Johnson et al., 2012).

A later study (Marinell & Coca, 2013) summarized the findings of the Research Alliance for New York City Schools and surveyed more than 4,000 middle school teachers. Turnover in New York middle schools was a major concern based on the Research Alliance's data that revealed that 27 % of middle school teachers left their school within one year of having entered, 55 % left within three years, and 66 % left within five years. This meant that, on average, teachers stayed in their schools for less than three years. The survey questions were aimed at specific elements of teachers' work environments and then assessed to see if turnover rates correlated with those elements (Marinell & Coca, 2013). Overall, it was found that turnover was lower in schools where teachers perceived the principal as being supportive. Additionally, the level of collegiality had a moderate effect on turnover; turnover was lower in schools where teachers reported average or high levels of support, rapport, and trust with their colleagues. It is worth mentioning that the researchers presented a valid point in terms of turnover and school climate. They speculated that turnover and school climate create a vicious cycle. That is to say that teacher turnover may be self-reinforcing, as high rates of turnover may lead to less effective schools and this may contribute to teachers leaving.

There are some similarities in these three studies (Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Marinell & Coca, 2013) worth noting. For example, two of the studies (Boyd et al., 2011;

Marinell & Coca, 2013) that examined turnover for new teachers found that perceptions of a supportive principal were related to less turnover or intent to leave. This finding intuitively makes sense because new teachers need more support than veteran teachers. Hence, if new teachers perceive low levels of administration support, this would undoubtedly affect their intent to stay. Another key point is perhaps new teachers have not had time to develop social relationships with their colleagues, thus this did not factor into their decision to stay. Whereas, in the third study (Johnson et al., 2012) data was gathered from new and veteran teachers, and both social relationships with colleagues and principal support were reported as important factors of climate that influenced teachers' decisions to leave.

Organizational Communication

At first glance one might think that organizational climate and organizational communication are the same referring to the same phenomena. This, however, is not the case. Organizational communication, or communication climate, is a separate dimension or concept from organizational climate (Guzley, 1992; Pace, 1983; Poole, 1985; Welsch & LaVan, 1981). The two are related because communication is the medium that allows the organization to achieve its goals (Guzley, 1992). Hence, researchers consider organizational climate and organizational communication to be separate concepts (Guzley, 1992; Pace, 1983; Poole, 1985; Welsch & LaVan, 1981), but the two concepts can be related (Guzley, 1992). To further clarify the two concepts, the following definitions of organizational communication are offered.

Definitions of organizational communication. Organizational communication has been defined as the communications and interactions among employees of an organization (Berger, 2008). Organizational communication, or as Berger (2008) refers to it, internal communication, plays a significant role in an organization:

> Internal communication provides employees with important information about their jobs, organization, environment and each other. Communication can help motivate, build trust, create shared identity and spur engagement; it provides a way for individuals to express emotions, share hopes and ambitions and celebrate and remember accomplishments. Communication is the basis for individuals and groups to make sense of their organization, what it is and what it means. (p. 3)

In short, organizational communication is comprised of any interaction that occurs between employees in an organization. Along with the definition, there are two fundamental terms that are often used to describe and analyze organizational communication. The two terms are communication networks and the directionality of communication flow (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004).

Communication networks. A communication network is simply how communication moves or flows in an organization (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004). There are two types of communication networks, formal and informal (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004).

Formal communication network. This network is comprised of messages that follow the designated channels or paths of the hierarchy of the organization (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004). Memos, policies, procedures, manuals, reports, and newsletters are examples of messages that use a formal communication network (Berger, 2008).

Informal communication network. In contrast, informal communication networks, commonly referred to as the grapevine, are interactions that are based on an employee's friendships or social relationships (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Informal communication does not have a prescribed path and can consist of rumors, opinions, and emotionally charged messages (Berger, 2008).

Directionality of communication flow. Both formal and informal communication can travel in any one of three directions. The three directions are vertical, horizontal, and diagonal (Berger, 2008). Vertical communication is communication that flows up or down the formal chain of command. Horizontal communication specifies communication that moves among employees who lack a hierarchical relationship (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004), and diagonal communication happens among employees from different levels who do not perform similar job duties (Berger, 2008).

As shown above, organizational communication is the interaction between employees. It can be described as formal or informal and can flow in a vertical, horizontal, or diagonal direction (Berger, 2008; Downs & Adrian, 2004). Organizational communication is an important focus for research because it can have a positive or negative effect on employees and the organization, especially in the key areas of employee job satisfaction and commitment.

Effects of organizational communication. One of the most significant areas organizational communication impacts is employee job satisfaction. Trombetta and Rogers (1988) examined the relationship between five variables: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, participation in decision making, communication openness, and information adequacy. Data was collected from 521 nurses from four different hospitals. The results of the study indicated that communication openness and information adequacy are clearly related to job satisfaction and are equally important predictors of job satisfaction. Additionally, communication was found to affect organizational commitment.

A later study (Pettit, Goris, &Vaught, 1997) examined the relationship of organizational communication on employee job satisfaction and performance. Their study included a total of 302 employees from two different manufacturing firms. The results of their study showed

employees who received detailed and unambiguous messages from their supervisors had higher levels of job satisfaction and work performance. The results of both of these studies (Petit et al., 1997; Trombetta & Rogers, 1988) substantiate other studies that have found a relationship between job satisfaction and organizational communication (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Muchinsky, 1977; Orpen, 1997; Pincus, 1986; Sharma, 2015; Trombetta & Rogers, 1988).

Furthermore, organizational communication has been shown to affect an individual's commitment to their organization. Employee commitment is important because it has been associated with many significant organizational consequences such as turnover and absenteeism (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Jablin, 1987; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Somers & Casal, 1994).

Some researchers (Foy, 1994; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997) have reported that communication should be considered as one of the antecedents for commitment. A meta-analysis of over 30 studies was conducted to examine the relationship between organizational communication and commitment (Postmes, Tanis, & De Wit, 2000). The results revealed that organizational communication and organizational commitment were positively related to each other, but the relationship was not equally strong for all types of communication. For example, employees expressed high levels of commitment if they received adequate information to accomplish a task and this information was transmitted through more formal versus informal channels.

Communication Satisfaction

Another key construct that has received attention from organizational researchers is communication satisfaction. The construct of communication satisfaction has been applied to a variety of contexts such as interpersonal, group, and organizations (Hecht, 1978). In organizational contexts, the communication satisfaction of employees is evaluated as a means to

improve the effectiveness of the organization (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004). Thayer (1968) defined communication satisfaction as the personal satisfaction gained as a result of successfully communicating to or with someone. According to Carrière and Bourque (2009), "the relationship is one of antecedent (communication practices) and consequent (communication satisfaction). Communication satisfaction is an employee's affective appraisal of the organization's communication practices and is a multidimensional construct" (p. 31). In other words, employee communication satisfaction is communication that satisfies the task and relational needs of employees (Steele & Plenty, 2015).

Dimensions. Previous studies that have investigated the dimensionality of communication satisfaction have found it to be a multidimensional construct (Clampitt & Downs, 1993; Downs & Hazen, 1977) and it is not synonymous with communication practices (Carrière & Bourque, 2009). Gray and Laidlaw (2004) examined the factor structure of the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977). The sample was selected from a retail organization and targeted store level employees. Results confirmed that the CSQ was a valid instrument for measuring communication satisfaction and substantiated that there were seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. The seven dimensions were: communication climate, horizontal communication, supervisory communication, media quality, organizational perspective, organizational integration, and personal feedback.

Effects of communication satisfaction. There have been a multitude of studies that have suggested a strong positive relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gregson, 1991; Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996; Sharma, 2015). Pincus (1986) used a modified version of the CSQ and explored the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. The questionnaire was administered to 327

nurses employed at a hospital. Results suggested that there was a strong positive relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. In particular, the dimensions of supervisory communication, work environment, and personal feedback were found to be significant influences on the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction (Pincus, 1986).

Ehlers (2003) conducted a study among 166 employees of several manufacturing firms. The employees were from different levels in the firms that included 110 hourly paid participants and 40 salaried participants. The study compared the different dimensions of communication satisfaction with job satisfaction. The job satisfaction factors that were used were the nature of the work, pay, promotion, supervision, and coworkers. Correlational analysis indicated there was a positive significant relationship between communication satisfaction with coworkers and communication satisfaction with immediate supervisors was positively correlated with job satisfaction.

A recent study explored the relationship between communication satisfaction levels and job satisfaction of staff members in higher education. The sample was composed of 463 staff members from nonteaching positions and from a wide range of departments (Sharma, 2015). Participants included clerical, secretarial, maintenance, and service workers. A modified version of the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977) was used to measure communication satisfaction. The results of the correlational analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction. Based on this finding, it can be suggested that the staff members who report being satisfied with the communication in their workplace are also satisfied with their jobs (Sharma, 2015).

Past studies researching the relationship between communication satisfaction and job

satisfaction have been performed in a variety of organizations including hospitals (Pincus, 1986), manufacturing firms (Ehlers, 2003; Goris, Vaught, & Pettit, 2000), and universities (Ahmad, 2006; Sharma, 2015). In each of these varied contexts, communication satisfaction has been shown to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction, which supports past research (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gregson, 1991; Miles et al., 1996).

Organizational Communication Research in Schools

The final section of this literature review presents research pertaining to organizational communication in the school context. Past researchers (Rafferty, 2003; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992) have commented on the lack of organizational communication research in schools and that still appears to be the case. In regard to the focus of school communication research, the majority of the studies concentrated on the dynamic of principal-teacher communication (Halawah, 2005; Rafferty, 2003; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). With this in mind, this section begins with principal communication, followed by studies that examine both communication and climate.

Principal communication. An earlier study (Reyes & Hoyle, 1992) examined teachers' satisfaction with their principals' communication, feedback, and teachers' perceived adequacy of their principals' instructions in relation to specific teacher demographic variables. The demographic variables included age, gender, and years of teaching. The survey measure was returned by 566 secondary teachers. Results indicated that teachers' ages were related to their communication satisfaction toward the principal. That is to say, as the ages of the teachers increased, their communication satisfaction tended to increase. This was true for both male and female teachers. Correspondingly, as years of teaching experience increased, communication satisfaction also increased. It is interesting to note that, for male teachers only, the data suggested that increasing their education negatively impacted their communication satisfaction.

Another study (Starnaman & Miller, 1992) examined the association of two variables of communication, principal support and participation in decision making, in relation to job burnout. A stratified random sample of 880 school district employees, comprised of 538 teachers was utilized. The teachers were from elementary and high schools. Results indicated that, for teachers, participation in decision making and principal support are strongly correlated. Hence, a teacher's perceived level of participation may have a significant influence on their assessment of the principal's support (Starnaman & Miller, 1992). Based on this finding, principals will be perceived as more supportive if they include teachers in school decision making (Starnaman & Miller, 1992).

A more recent study looked at the effect of principal-teacher communication on teacher job satisfaction (AI Hajar, 2016). The 196 participants were teachers from eight different schools in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Results revealed a significant relationship between principal-teacher communication and teachers' job satisfaction. In particular, job satisfaction was highly related to principals encouraging communication and providing clear and direct messages (AI Hajar, 2016). This finding is supported by a sizable number of studies from a variety of organizations that have found communication related to job satisfaction (Ahmad, 2006; Ehlers, 2003; Goris et al., 2000; Pincus, 1986; Sharma, 2015).

Communication and climate. Other researchers have examined the two variables of communication and climate in a school setting. One study examined the organizational climate of a school with the frequency of principal-teacher communication (Helwig, 1971). The researcher hypothesized that the frequency of principal-teacher communication would be increased in schools exhibiting less favorable climates. A total of 310 teachers from 37 elementary schools completed the surveys. The principals were asked to keep track of the

frequency of different types of communication they had with their teachers. The teachers completed the OCDQ (Halpin & Croft, 1963). The hypothesis was not supported; there were no significant correlational findings between the total frequency of principal-teacher interactions and type of climate. Perhaps it is the actual type or quality of communication, not the quantity which impacts climate. For example, Halawah (2005) studied the relationship between effective communication of high school principals and school climate. The participants in the study included 555 students and 208 teachers from 23 high schools. The students completed a climate survey and the teachers completed a communication effectiveness survey about the principal. Results indicated that school climate was positively related with the principal's communication effectiveness, as high values for school climate were associated with high values for principal's communication effectiveness (Halawah, 2005). Their results are consistent with the multitude of studies that show school climate affects students (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Lee & Smith, 1999; Smith et al., 2001; Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016). One limitation to this study is that it did not collect data on the teachers' perceptions of climate, only the students.

Conversely, Rafferty's study (2003) included teachers' perceptions of climate. Using a sample of 503 high school teachers, Rafferty examined the relationship between school climate and teacher attitudes toward upward communication with the principal. Upward communication refers to the teachers' willingness to communicate with the principal about school issues and concerns. The school climates were identified as "open" or "closed" depending on their standardized score from the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Secondary Schools, (OCDQ-RS) (Hoy et al., 1991). The findings of the study indicated that there was a positive relationship between school climate and upward communication patterns (Rafferty,

2003). For instance, teachers' perceptions in open climates were statistically different than teachers' perceptions in closed climates in regard to perceptions of upward communication being supportive.

A recent study used a mixed methods approach to investigate principal communication and school climate (Oswalt, 2011). The OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) was administered to 90 teachers and three principals. Additionally, interviews were conducted with the principals and five teachers from each of the three schools. Results were based on the responses to the survey and interview questions. The conclusions were that principals who rely on non-face-to-face communication channels or do not provide enough positive reinforcement may create a more closed school climate. Conversely, principals who use more face-to face communication channels or provide more positive reinforcement may create more open school climates (Oswalt, 2011).

As can be seen by the aforementioned studies, organizational communication researchers have focused on the elements of principal-teacher communication (Halawah, 2005; Helwig, 1971; Rafferty, 2003; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). In each of these studies, communication was examined from the teachers' perspective (AI Hajar, 2016; Halawah, 2005; Oswalt, 2011; Starnaman & Miller, 1992; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992) and the type or perceived quality of the communication impacted teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction (AI Hajar, 2016), principal support (Starnaman & Miller, 1992), and school climate (Oswalt, 2011; Rafferty, 2003).

Summary

The literature review covered five main areas: organizational climate, school climate, organizational communication, communication satisfaction, and communication in schools. Organizational climate is based on the experience (Schneider et al., 2013; Tagiuri & Litwin,

1968) or perceptions (Ireland et al., 1978; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Rafferty, 2003; Schneider, 1975) of an employee and influences on their behavior (Ireland et al., 1978; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968). While there is not a consensus on the dimensions of organizational climate (Guion, 1973; Parker et al., 2003; Patterson et al., 2005; Tagiuri & Litwin, 1968), most researchers agree that organizational climate is a multidimensional construct (Campbell et al., 1970; James & McIntyre, 1996; Kopelman et al., 1990; Litwin & Stringer, 1968) and researchers should focus on the dimensions that are relevant to their research (Schneider, 1990).

School climate is the perception or feelings of students or staff about the school environment (DuFour, 2000; Fullan, 1999), and influences their behavior (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Hoy & Sweetland, 2001). Researchers consider school climate to have four dimensions, but there is still some variation in the exact names of those dimensions. As early as the 1950s, educators began to systematically study school climate (Cohen et al., 2009; National School Climate Center, 2007; Thapa et al., 2013), mainly due to the development of scientifically sound school climate assessment measures (National School Climate Center, 2007; Wang & Degol, 2016). Halpin and Croft (1963) are credited with being the first to begin the systematic study of the effect of school climate on student learning (Cohen et al., 2009; Rafferty, 2003) and are well known for the development of the OCDQ. The majority of school climate studies has focused on learning and academic achievement (Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016) and has shown that a positive school climate impacts student achievement (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Gray et al., 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Lee & Smith, 1999; McEvoy & Welker, 2000; Smith et al., 2001; Stewart, 2008). Furthermore, school climate has benefits for teachers (Johnson et al., 2012; O'Brennan & Bradshaw, 2013; Spicer, 2016; Tubbs & Garner, 2008) and can influence teacher retention (Cohen & Geier, 2010; Fulton et al., 2005; Miller et al.,1999).

Two aspects of school climate that have been strongly linked to teachers' decisions to remain at their schools are principal support and collegial relationships (Boyd et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2012; Marinell & Coca, 2013).

Although organizational climate and organizational communication are related (Guzley, 1992), researchers consider organizational climate and organizational communication to be separate concepts (Guzley, 1992; Pace, 1983; Poole, 1985; Welsch & LaVan, 1981). Organizational communication has been defined as the communications and interactions among employees of an organization (Berger, 2008). It has been shown to affect employee job satisfaction (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Muchinsky, 1977; Orpen, 1997; Pettit et al., 1997; Pincus, 1986; Trombetta & Rogers, 1988) and organizational commitment (Postmes et al., 2000; Trombetta & Rogers, 1988). Most significant was that organizational climate has been found to have an effect on employee productivity (Lewin et al., 1939; Mayo,1933), and job satisfaction (James & Tetrick, 1986; Mathieu et al., 1993; Schneider & Snyder, 1975; Zhang & Liu, 2010).

Employee communication satisfaction is communication that satisfies the task and relational needs of employees (Steele & Plenty, 2015) and is a multidimensional construct (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Past studies examining the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction have been performed in a variety of organizations (Ehlers, 2003; Goris et al., 2000; Pincus, 1986). In each of these varied contexts communication satisfaction has been shown to have a positive relationship with job satisfaction, which supports past research (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gregson, 1991; Miles et al., 1996).

Research about organizational communication in schools has focused on the dynamics of principal-teacher communication (Halawah, 2005; Helwig, 1971; Rafferty, 2003; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). In each of these studies, communication was examined from the teachers'

perspective (AI Hajar, 2016; Halawah, 2005; Oswalt, 2011; Starnaman & Miller, 1992; Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). Teachers' perceptions of principal communication were found to be influenced by demographic factors (Reyes & Hoyle, 1992) and related to job satisfaction (AI Hajar, 2016). Correspondingly, many types of organizations have found communication related to job satisfaction (Ahmad, 2006; Ehlers, 2003; Goris et al., 2000; Pincus, 1986; Sharma, 2015).

Lastly, studies about organizational communication and climate were presented. Results indicated that students' perceptions of school climate were positively related with the principal's communication effectiveness, as high values for school climate were associated with high values for principal's communication effectiveness (Halawah, 2005). These results are consistent with several studies that have reported that school climate affects students (Brown & Medway, 2007; Carter, 2000; Lee & Smith, 1999; Smith et al., 2001; Tubbs & Garner, 2008; Wang & Degol, 2016). Similarly, other researchers have incorporated the teachers' perceptions of climate and found that there is a positive relationship between school climate and upward communication patterns (Oswalt, 2011; Rafferty, 2003).

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the methods and data collection procedures that were used to determine, what if any, relationship exists between classroom teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. This study was guided by quantitative research questions because research questions focus on the relationship among variables as opposed to research hypotheses which make predictions about the expected outcomes (Creswell, 2014; Patten, 2014). Research questions are often utilized in social science research, most notably in conjunction with survey studies (Creswell, 2014). The following research questions guided this study:

1. What were certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991)?
2. What were certified teachers' levels of communication satisfaction as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?
3. What was the relationship between the certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and communication satisfaction levels as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?

The first two research questions are descriptive questions and the third one is an inferential question. This model for writing questions is based on Creswell's (2014) approach for ordering questions for a quantitative proposal which suggests starting with descriptive questions that are then followed by the inferential questions.

Research Design

This study used a nonexperimental quantitative design. Nonexperimental research examines events that have already occurred and involves studying relationships among different

variables (McMillian & Schumacher, 2006). More specifically, a survey research design was implemented. The survey design was selected for this research study because it is an economic means of collecting data in a short amount of time (Creswell, 2014). The survey was cross-sectional, with the data being collected at one point in time, using online questionnaires. Survey research designs allow researchers to collect quantitative data and then analyze the data to describe the attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of the participants (Creswell, 2012). Since survey designs do not involve any treatment given to participants or any manipulation of conditions a cause and effect relationship cannot be derived from this type of design (Creswell, 2012). However, survey research can be used to describe trends or correlate variables (Creswell, 2012; Urdan, 2010). In correlational studies, researchers strive to determine if and how strongly different variables are related to each other (Urdan, 2010). Therefore, correlational studies only determine if the variables are related to each other, not a cause-effect relationship between the variables (Creswell, 2012; Urdan, 2010). This study used a survey to investigate the relationship between two variables: organizational school climate and communication satisfaction.

Participants and Setting

The purpose of this study was to research elementary teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and levels of communication satisfaction. Since the sample needed to be comprised of elementary teachers, a single-stage sampling procedure was used. The participants were comprised of elementary teachers from a large, urban school district in the Midwest. At the time of the study, the school district consisted of 11 elementary schools that served pre-kindergarten to fifth grade in each building. The district employed approximately 350 elementary teachers (official membership 2017-2018) and has over 9,000 students enrolled in grades pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade.

The inclusion criteria included all full-time certified teachers at the 11 elementary schools in the district. This encompassed classroom teachers for grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade, and full-time teachers in the areas of art, library, computer lab, and music. Purposive sampling was employed because this method allows researchers to purposively select individuals who are deemed to be relevant sources of information (Patten, 2014). Exclusion criteria included para professional staff, administration, office personnel, substitute teachers, student teachers, cafeteria employees, and custodial staff. The entire population of elementary teachers, from 11 schools, who met the inclusion criteria was approximately 350. Emails were sent to the 350 teachers who met the inclusion criteria, and a total of 47 completed the demographic questions and both surveys.

Research Instruments

This study used two pre-existing instruments to collect data: (a) the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and (b) the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977). The OCDQ-RE (see Appendix A) was administered to elementary teachers to assess their perceptions of organizational school climate. Permission to use the OCDQ-RE was not warranted because in their book, *Open Schools, Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Climate,* Hoy et al., (1991) state: "We encourage the use of the instruments. Simply reproduce them and use them. Share your results with us so that we can refine the measures and develop comprehensive norms" (p. 173). The second instrument, the CSQ (see Appendix B), was used with permission to measure the teachers' level of communication satisfaction (Appendix C).

OCDQ-RE. The OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) was based on Halpin and Croft's (1963) school climate measure, the OCDQ. The OCDQ is the most well-known measurement of school climate (Hoy et al., 1991; Rafferty, 2003). This Likert-type instrument contains 64 short

descriptive statements that measure eight dimensions. Four subtests are about the principal and four are about the teachers (Halpin & Croft, 1963). The responses from the questionnaire place schools on a continuum from open to closed climates. While the OCDQ has been used in numerous studies over the last three decades, it has not been revised, and the reliability and validity of some of the subtests have been a concern (Hoy & Miskel, 2008; Hoy et al., 1991). It is for these reasons the OCDQ-RE was created. The development of the OCDQ-RE began with an evaluation of the original items of the OCDQ (Hoy et al., 1991). The factor loadings for all items on the OCDQ were analyzed; 24 of the original 64 items were discarded, and new items were generated. The revised OCDQ had 131 items, many of which were untested items. Next, a pilot study (Hoy & Clover, 1986) of 38 elementary schools was conducted to test the revised OCDQ. After exploratory factor analysis was performed, only 42 items remained. These 42 items became the OCDQ-RE. Another pilot study of 70 elementary schools was used to confirm the validity and reliability of the OCDQ-RE.

The OCDQ-RE is now a 42-item instrument with six subtests. The reliability scores for the scales of the OCDQ-RE were relatively high: Supportive (.94), Directive (.88), Restrictive (.81), Collegial (.87), Intimate (.83), and Disengaged (.78). (Hoy, 2005). The factor analysis supports the construct validity of organizational climate (Hoy et al.,1991). The OCDQ-RE has six dimensions that measure two different categories of behavior: principal behavior and teacher behavior. Three of the dimensions describe principal behavior and the other three dimensions describe teacher behavior (Hoy et al., 1991). The principal dimensions are supportive, directive, and restrictive; whereas, the teacher dimensions are collegial, intimate, and disengaged.

Supportive principal behavior. The principal demonstrates a personal and professional interest in teachers. In particular, the principal listens openly to teacher suggestions, gives

frequent, genuine praise, and respects the competence of the faculty.

Directive principal behavior. The principal maintains close and constant monitoring and control over teachers.

Restrictive principal behavior. Occurs when the principal assigns teachers extra responsibilities that detract from their teaching responsibilities such as paper work and committee obligations.

Collegial teacher behavior. This is evidenced by open and professional interactions among teachers. Teachers value working with their colleagues and respect one another.

Intimate teacher behavior. This takes place when teachers have formed close, personal friendships with each other. For instance, teachers provide strong social support for each other and often socialize together.

Disengaged teacher behavior. This occurs when teachers do not seem to have any common goals. Often, their behavior can be negative and even critical of their colleagues and the school (Hoy et al., 1991).

The six dimensions of the OCDQ-RE can be used to classify school climates into one of four climate types: open, engaged, disengaged and closed as illustrated in Table 1.

The four classifications of climate types are (Hoy et al., 1991):

1. Open climate is typified by high supportive principal behavior and low for directive and restrictive principal behavior, whereas teacher behavior is high for collegial and intimate and low for disengaged.
2. Engaged climate is characterized by low supportive principal behavior and high directive and restrictive principal behavior, whereas teacher behavior is high collegial and intimate and low disengaged.

Table 1

Profiles of Climate Types

	Climate Type			
Climate Dimension	Open	Engaged	Disengaged	Closed
Supportive	High	Low	High	Low
Directive	Low	High	Low	High
Restrictive	Low	High	Low	High
Collegial	High	High	Low	Low
Intimate	High	High	Low	Low
Disengaged	Low	Low	High	High

Note. Reprinted with permission from *Open Schools, Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Climate,*(33), by W. K. Hoy, C. J. Tarter, and R. B. Kottkamp, 1991, Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

3. Disengaged climate is represented by high supportive principal behavior and low directive and restrictive principal behavior, with low collegial and intimate teacher behavior and high disengaged teacher behavior
4. Closed climate is demonstrated by low supportive principal behavior and high directive and restrictive principal behavior, with low collegial and intimate teacher behavior and high disengaged teacher behavior.

CSQ. The second instrument that was employed was the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977). The CSQ is one of the most widely used scales to measure communication satisfaction (Downs & Adrian, 2004; Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gülnar, 2007; Zwijze-Koning & Jong, 2007). This instrument contains 40 items and uses a 7-point Likert-type scale, with 7 being *very satisfied* (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004).

The CSQ has been found to be internally consistent and reliable across all organizations (Greenbaum, Clampitt, & Willihnganz, 1988). The CSQ has a test-retest reliability of .94 (Downs & Hazen, 1977) and was found to have criterion validity and be internally reliable

(Zwijze-Koning & de Jong, 2007). Other researchers (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004) found that the CSQ had content validity which "substantiates the CSQ as a valid instrument for measuring communication satisfaction and supports the distinct nature of the seven dimensions investigated" (p. 442).

Downs and Hazen (1977) suggested that communication satisfaction has eight dimensions: communication climate, communication with supervisors, organizational integration, media quality, horizontal and informal communication, organizational perspective, personal feedback, and subordinate communication. This study did not use the last dimension, subordinate communication because only employees in a supervisory capacity respond to these items. The participants in this study, being teachers do not serve in a supervisory capacity. Therefore, the following seven dimensions of communication satisfaction (Downs & Hazen, 1977) were used in this study.

Communication climate. This dimension measures communication at the organizational and personal level. It considers if organizational communication motivates employees to meet organizational goals and identify with the organization. Also, it ascertains if employees' attitudes toward communication in the organization are healthy.

Supervisory communication. This refers to the upward and downward flow of communication with superiors. More specifically, it encompasses the extent to which a supervisor is open to ideas, actively listens, and offers guidance with job-related problems.

Organizational integration. This relates to the extent in which an employee receives information about their immediate work environment such as the job requirements and personnel information.

Media quality. This is the extent to which meetings and written communications are organized, clear, and comprehensive.

Co-worker communication. This focuses on the degree to which horizontal and informal communication is accurate and unobstructed.

Corporate information. This is information about the overall policies and goals of the whole organization.

Personal feedback. This is based on the employees' need to know how they are being evaluated and judged.

The CSQ was created in three stages (Downs & Hazen, 1977). In Stage 1, a questionnaire was created, administered, and completed by 181 employees from a variety of organizations including the Army, hospitals, universities, businesses, and government agencies. The results of Stage 1 were used to conduct a factor analysis and item validity analysis.

In Stage 2, the results of the factor analysis were used to refine the original questionnaire and create a questionnaire that would measure each of the eight factors gleaned from the factor analysis in stage one. The eight factors were used to construct an improved questionnaire that was then administered to four different organizations in four different states (California, Illinois, Florida, and Minnesota). The employees included management personnel and manufacturing plant workers. Factor analysis was performed on all of the data and the results supported the results found in Stage 1, whereas the questionnaire items formed clusters around eight main factors. The third stage examined the correlations from the data in Stage 1 and it was determined that eight stable dimensions or factors of communication satisfaction could be identified (Downs & Adrian, 2004; Downs & Hazen, 1977).

Demographics

Demographics are the participant's background characteristics and help to provide a clearer picture of the participants (Patten, 2014). This allows the reader to determine if the results of the study might be generalizable to other individuals (Patten, 2014). For this study, a demographic questionnaire was sent via email at the same time as the two research measures. Demographic information pertaining to the highest level of education (undergraduate, master's, doctorate), grade level currently being taught (Pre-K or K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more than one grade level), years teaching (0-3, 4-8, 9-15, 16 or over), years teaching at other schools (none, 1-3,4-8, 9-15, 16 or more), gender (male or female), and age (20-33, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 60 or over) was collected (Appendix D).

Data Gathering Procedures

Prior to beginning a study, permission for access to sites and/or participants must be obtained from the appropriate individuals (Creswell, 2014). The researcher completed the "Request for Permission to Conduct Research/Gather Data Form" and received permission from the district to proceed with the research (Appendix E). A letter (Appendix F) was emailed to each of the 11 elementary principals in the district notifying them about the study. Next, each elementary teacher was sent an email letter via their school/work email address. The researcher obtained the email addresses from each school's staff directory that was listed on the school's homepage. The email contained the online informed consent letter (Appendix G), the rights of participants (Appendix H), and a link to the two surveys (the OCDQ-RE and the CSQ). Each elementary school was sent a different email link to use to in order to access the surveys through SurveyMonkey. This enabled the researcher to separate the data from each school. The survey asked for some general demographic information that would not jeopardize the anonymity of the

participants. Also, each elementary school was identified by a letter, not by name, to ensure that participants' answers could not be linked back to a specific school. The survey was available to participants for two weeks, during which time they were able to take it at their convenience.

Data Analysis Plan

All data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used for research questions one and two. Descriptive statistics were used for both questions because descriptive statistics help to summarize the data (Leedy & Omrod, 2013; Patten, 2014) and should include the means, standard deviations, and range of scores (Creswell, 2014). Inferential statistics were used for research question three and analyzed also using IBM SPSS V.24.

Research Question 1. What were certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991)? For Research Question 1, this study calculated the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation for each of the six climate dimensions.

Research Question 2. What were certified teachers' levels of communication satisfaction as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)? Similar to Research Question 1, descriptive statistics were used for this question. The minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction and overall communication satisfaction was computed. The eighth dimension, downward communication, was not used as it encompasses communication with subordinates and the participants in this study do not have subordinates.

Research Question 3. What was the relationship between the certified teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and

communication satisfaction levels as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)? This study used a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient for Research Question 3. It is the most widely used statistic for determining correlation (Leedy & Omrod, 2013; Patten, 2014; Urdan, 2010). Specifically, correlations were run between each of the six dimensions of organizational school climate and the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. For the purposes of this study, correlation coefficients between -.20 and +.20 indicated a weak relationship between two variables, correlation coefficients between -.20 and -.50 or +.50 indicated a moderate relationship, and values larger than positive or negative .50 indicated a strong relationship (Urdan, 2010).

Ethical Considerations

Prior to beginning research, the researcher obtained the certificate of completion from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research training course for "Protecting Human Research Participants" (Appendix I). Before beginning the study, the researcher obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (Appendix J) from the College of Saint Mary. The researcher requested and received approval from the District's Assessment and Data Management Department to conduct the study before research was conducted (Appendix E). Permission to use the OCDQ-RE was not warranted because in their book, *Open Schools, Healthy Schools: Measuring Organizational Climate,* Hoy et al., (1991) state: "We encourage the use of the instruments. Simply reproduce them and use them. Share your results with us so that we can refine the measures and develop comprehensive norms" (p. 173). Permission to use the CSQ was obtained from Dr. Hazen (see Appendix C).

Letters were emailed to all the elementary principals in the district, explaining the purpose of the study, process for collecting surveys, and a copy of the two surveys (Appendix F).

All certified, full-time elementary teachers from the selected school district received an email letter explaining the study's purpose with online consent (Appendix G), the rights of participants (Appendix H), and a copy of both surveys. The data was collected on a password-protected website and only the researcher had access to the information.

Participants were not asked their names or any other identifying demographic information. Each school was assigned a code identifier letter to be used in the reporting of data. All data gathered from the study will be stored for a minimum of 7 years after publication of the study as recommended by Shamoo and Resnik (2015). Data storage helps to ensure accountability in research, creates a paper trail for management, and makes it possible for other researchers to replicate the study (Shamoo & Resnik, 2015). Data was stored in a password protected laptop.

Summary

This chapter described the methods and data collection procedures that were used to determine what, if any, relationship exists between elementary classroom teachers' perceptions of school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. The study was identified as a nonexperimental quantitative design with three research questions. Detailed information was given about the participants, the two survey measures, data gathering procedures, data analysis plan, and ethical considerations.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore elementary teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. This study was also designed to investigate the relationship between organizational school climate and communication satisfaction by analyzing the significance of the different dimensions of each variable with each other. In other words, the six dimensions of organizational school climate were compared to the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. Because of this study's design, the results from individual schools were not grouped together and reported. This study used an online survey to collect quantitative data. Chapter IV presents the three research questions, the demographic characteristics of the sample, and the results of the descriptive and inferential data analysis. All results are presented in tabular form followed by a brief narrative related to the research question.

Research Questions

1. What were certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary Schools (OCDQ-RE) (Hoy et al., 1991)?
2. What were certified teachers' levels of communication satisfaction as measured by the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?
3. What was the relationship between the certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and communication satisfaction levels as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)?

The first two research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics and were used to determine the teachers' perceptions of each of the six dimensions of organizational school

climate, their overall communication satisfaction score, and their levels on the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. After examining the mean scores of the two variables independently, the relationships between the dimensions of organizational school climate and the dimensions of communication satisfaction were explored.

Demographic Data of Participants

Demographics were given to provide a clearer picture of the participants and allow the reader to determine if the results of the study might be generalizable to other individuals (Patten, 2014). Additionally, certain demographic factors might be utilized in future studies. For this study demographic data for the highest level of education (undergraduate, masters, doctorate), grade level currently being taught (Pre-K or K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, more than one grade level), years teaching (0-3, 4-8, 9-15, 16 or over), years teaching at other schools (none,1-3,4-8, 9-15, 16 or more), gender (male or female), and age (20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 60 or over) were collected (Appendix D).

From a total of 350 surveys that were sent to 11 elementary schools, 66 elementary teachers responded to the survey. Table 2 presents the demographic data for all the participants. There were 23 (34.8%) participants with a bachelor's degree, 42 (63.6%) participants holding a master's degree, and 1 (1.5%) participant holding a doctorate degree. At the time of the survey 21 (31.8%) participants taught Pre-K or kindergarten, 3 (4.5%) participants taught first grade, 8 (12.1%) participants taught second grade, 5 (7.6%) participants taught third grade, 6 (9.1%) participants taught fourth grade, 8 (12.1%) participants taught fifth grade, and 15 (22.7%) participants taught more than one grade level. Twenty-four (36.4%) participants had taught for 3 or less years, 14 (21.2%) participants had taught 4- 8 years, 20 (30.3%) participants had taught for 9-15 years, and 8 (12.1%) participants had taught for 16 or more years at their present school.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Teachers

	n	%
Highest Degree Earned		
Bachelor's Degree	23	34.8
Master's Degree	42	63.6
Doctorate	1	1.5
Grade Currently Taught		
Pre-K-K	21	31.8
1	3	4.5
2	8	12.1
3	5	7.6
4	6	9.1
5	8	12.1
6	15	22.7
Years Teaching at Present School		
0-3	24	36.4
4-8	14	21.2
9-15	20	30.0
16+	8	12.1
Years Teaching at Other Schools		
0	19	28.8
1-3	17	25.8
4-8	17	25.8
9-15	9	13.6
16+	4	6.1
Sex		
Female	64	97.0
Male	2	3.0
Age		
20-30	17	25.8
31-40	24	36.4
41-50	16	24.2
51-60	8	12.1
61+	1	1.5

Note. Not all percentages sum to 100% due to rounding

Nineteen (28.8%) participants had never taught at another school, 17 (25.8%) participants had 1-3 years teaching at another school, 17 (25.8%) participants had 4-8 years teaching at another

school, 9 (13.6%) participants had 9-15 years teaching at another school, and 4 (6.1%) had 16 or more years teaching at another school. Sixty-four (97.0%) of participants were female and 2 (3.0%) were males. Seventeen (25.8%) participants were 20-30 years of age, 24 (36.4%) participants were 31-40 years of age, 16 (24.2%) participants were 41-50 years of age, 4(12.1%) participants were 51-60 years of age, and 1(1.5%) was 60 years or older.

Results

Question 1. This question explored the teachers' perceptions of their organizational school climate. Not all of the 66 participants, who completed the demographic questionnaire, completed the OCDQ-RE. Accordingly, 60 out of 66 participants completed the OCDQ-RE and were used for this descriptive analysis. For each of the 42 questions on the OCDQ-RE, participants responded by choosing an answer along a 4-point scale: 1 = *rarely occurs*, 2 = *sometimes occurs*, 3 = *often occurs*, and 4 = *very frequently occurs*. The mean, standard deviation, and the minimum and maximum were computed for each of the six dimensions of organizational climate and are presented in Table 3. The first three dimensions (supportive, directive, and restrictive) have to do with the teachers' perceptions of the principal's behavior. The next three dimensions (collegial, intimate, and disengaged) reflect the teachers' perceptions of teacher behavior.

Analysis of the descriptive data suggested that teachers perceived disengaged teacher behavior occurring less often (M = 1.65, SD = .50, n = 60) than the other five dimensions. Additionally, the standard deviation indicates that most teachers' responses were distributed around the "rarely" and "sometimes" options. Disengaged teacher behavior occurs when teachers view professional activities as meaningless and unproductive. Often this results in teacher behavior that is negative and critical of their peers (Hoy et al., 1991). The teachers'

responses indicated they "rarely" or "sometimes" perceived their colleagues as displaying disengaged behavior.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Organizational School Climate

Dimension	*N*	Minimum	Maximum	*M*	*SD*
Supportive Behavior	60	1.11	4.00	2.56	.80
Directive Behavior	60	1.13	2.89	2.01	.45
Restrictive Behavior	60	1.00	3.80	2.28	.64
Collegial Behavior	60	1.88	3.75	2.94	.44
Intimate Behavior	60	1.29	3.86	2.51	.58
Disengaged Behavior	60	1.00	3.00	1.65	.50

Correspondingly, teacher collegial behavior was ranked as occurring most often and had the smallest standard deviation ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .44$, $n = 60$). Teacher collegial behavior is demonstrated by teachers who help, support, and respect one another. These results suggest that the teachers in the study perceived collegial behavior as "often occurring". Given that collegial teacher behavior is basically the opposite of disengaged teacher behavior, it makes sense that the two dimensions were not perceived as occurring at identical frequencies. The second highest mean score was for the dimension of principal supportive behavior ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .80$, $n = 60$), which also has the highest maximum score (4.00). This indicates that while responses to this dimension were not as similar as the responses within the other dimensions, the mean score suggests that overall the principal's behavior is viewed as supportive. In other words, the principal is perceived as a person who uses constructive criticism, listens to teachers, and treats

teachers as equals. The third highest mean score was for the dimension of intimate teacher behavior ($M = 2.51$, $SD = .58$, $n = 60$). Intimate teacher behavior refers to the social networks teachers have created among the faculty. The data indicates that the teachers perceived intimate teacher behavior as occurring between "sometimes" and "often". It is interesting to note that the demographics revealed that 36% of the teachers had been at their current school for three or less years. Perhaps, the newer teachers have not been at their jobs long enough to form social networks or close friendships.

Question 2. This question explored teachers' levels of communication satisfaction using the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ). The CSQ measures an individual's satisfaction with the different types of communication in the organization (Downs & Hazen, 1977). The different types of organizational communication create the eight dimensions of the CSQ. This study utilized seven of the eight dimensions: organizational integration, supervisory communication, personal feedback, corporate information, communication climate, horizontal and informal communication, and media quality. The 35-question survey used a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *very dissatisfied*, 2 = *dissatisfied*, 3 = *somewhat dissatisfied*, 4 = *indifferent*, 5 = *somewhat satisfied*, 6 = *satisfied*, 7 = *very satisfied*, for each of the seven dimensions. Forty-seven out of the 66 participants completed the CSQ and were used for the descriptive analysis. Table 4 presents the mean, standard deviation, and the minimum and maximum for overall communication satisfaction and each of its seven dimensions. Mean scores that fall well below the conceptual midpoint, that is 4 on a 1-7 scale, can be thought of as weaknesses (Downs & Adrian, 2004). None of the mean scores, including overall communication satisfaction and all seven dimensions, were below the conceptual midpoint of 4.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Communication Satisfaction

Dimension	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Overall Communication Satisfaction	47	2.86	6.77	4.73	1.05
Organizational Integration	47	2.60	7.00	4.93	1.05
Supervisory	47	2.00	7.00	4.60	1.16
Personal Feedback	47	1.80	7.00	4.46	1.22
Corporate Information	47	1.20	6.60	4.47	1.40
Communication Climate	47	1.80	6.40	4.65	1.08
Horizontal and Informal	47	2.60	7.00	4.99	1.15
Media Quality	47	2.60	7.00	5.04	1.15

According to the data, the mean scores for overall communication satisfaction ($M = 4.73$, $SD = 1.05$, $n = 47$), organizational integration ($M = 4.93$, $SD = 1.05$, $n = 47$), supervisory communication ($M = 4.60$, $SD = 1.16$, n = 47), communication climate ($M = 4.65$, $SD = 1.08$, $n = 47$), horizontal and informal communication ($M = 4.77$, SD = 1.15, $n = 47$), and media quality ($M = 5.04$, $SD = 1.15$, $n = 47$) indicate that teachers are mostly satisfied with the communication in these areas. Based on the mean scores, teachers had the highest level of communication satisfaction for media quality ($M = 5.04$). Media quality refers to meetings, written communication, and the extent to which the total amount of communication in the organization is adequate. Therefore, the results indicated that the teachers perceived meetings to be

organized, written communication to be clear and helpful, and the amount of communication in the school to be about right. The second highest level of communication satisfaction, reported by teachers, was for horizontal and informal communication ($M = 4.99$). This is the degree to which co-worker communication is active and accurate. Based on the teachers' responses, they are satisfied with the amount of informal communication and with the accuracy of that communication. The mean score for organizational integration ($M = 4.93$) was very close to the mean score for horizontal and informal communication ($M = 4.99$). Organizational integration is information employees receive about their immediate work environment such as benefits, pay and job requirements. The data indicates teachers are satisfied with the communication in these areas. Although the two lowest scoring dimensions were for corporate information ($M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.40$, $n = 47$) and personal feedback ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 1.22$, $n = 47$), both mean scores were not well below the conceptual midpoint of 4 on a 1-7 scale and therefore, might not be thought of as weaknesses.

Question 3. Research question 3 sought to explore if there was a relationship between teachers' perception of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between each of the six dimensions of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. A total of 47 out of 66 participants completed both questionnaires (OCDQ-RE and the CSQ) and were used in the inferential data analysis. In order to simplify the results, one dimension of organizational school climate is presented at a time. Table 5 presents the correlations between the supportive principal behavior dimension of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction.

Table 5

Correlations Between Supportive Principal Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Supportive Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	.820**
Supportive Behavior/ Supervisory Communication	.713**
Supportive Behavior/ Personal Feedback	.628**
Supportive Behavior/ Corporate Information	.845**
Supportive Behavior/ Communication Climate	.803**
Supportive Behavior/ Horizontal and Informal Communication	.805**
Supportive Behavior/ Media Quality	.713**
Supportive Behavior/ Organizational Integration	.629**

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$ **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

According to the results of the analysis, supportive principal behavior significantly and positively correlated to overall communication satisfaction and all of its dimensions. Perception of supportive principal behavior was positively correlated to overall teacher communication satisfaction, $r(45) = .820$, $p < .001$. That is, higher frequencies of supportive principal behavior were associated with greater levels of overall communication satisfaction. Likewise, there was a strong positive correlation between supportive principal behavior and all seven communication satisfaction domains: supervisory communication, $r(45) = .713$, $p < .001$, personal feedback, $r(45) = .628$, $p < .001$, corporate information, $r(45) = .845$, $p < .001$, communication climate,

$r(45) = .803$, $p < .001$, horizontal and informal, $r(45) = .805$, $p < .001$, media quality, $r(45) = .7.13$, $p < .001$, and organizational integration, $r(45) = .629$, $p < .001$. This data analysis implies that supportive principal behavior is statistically associated with higher levels of communication satisfaction for each of its seven dimensions.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between the directive behavior dimension of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. Table 6 presents the correlations between the directive principal behavior dimension of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction.

Table 6

Correlations Between Directive Principal Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Directive Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	-.071
Directive Behavior/ Supervisory Communication	-.018
Directive Behavior/ Personal Feedback	-.091
Directive Behavior/ Corporate Information	-.039
Directive Behavior/ Communication Climate	-.134
Directive Behavior/ Horizontal and Informal Communication	-.140
Directive Behavior/ Media Quality	-.043
Directive Behavior/ Organizational Integration	-.020

Note. N=47. $*p < .05$ $**p < .01$ (2- tailed).

Based on this analysis of data no significant relationship was found between the directive principal behavior and overall communication satisfaction $r(45) = -.071$, $p = .636$, supervisory communication, $r(45) = -.018$, $p = .902$, personal feedback, $r(45) = -.091$, $p = 544$, corporate information, $r(45) = -.039$, $p = .793$, communication climate, $r(45) = -.134$, $p = .370$, horizontal and informal, $r(45) = -.140$, $p = .347$, media quality, $r(45) = -.043$, $p = 772$, and organizational integration, $r(45) = .020$, $p = .894$.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between the restrictive principal behavior dimension of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. Table 7 presents the correlations between the restrictive principal behavior dimension of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. Based on this analysis of data there is a strong negative relationship between the restrictive principal behavior dimension of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, $r(45) = -.594$, $p = < .001$. This finding suggests that as restrictive principal behavior increases the teachers' overall communication satisfaction decreases.

Similarly higher levels of restrictive principal behavior were proven to be statistically associated with lower levels of satisfaction for all seven communication satisfaction dimensions: supervisory communication, $r(45) = -.519$, $p < .001$, personal feedback, $r(45) = -.565$, $p < .001$, corporate information, $r(45) = -.565$, $p < .001$, communication climate, $r(45) = -.618$, $p < .001$, horizontal and informal, $r(45) = -.517$, $p < .001$, media quality, $r(45) = -.489$, $p < .001$, and organizational integration, $r(45) = -.457$, $p < .001$. Therefore, there was evidence to conclude that there was a statistically significant relationship between two of the three principal behaviors and teachers' communication satisfaction.

Table 7

Correlations Between Restrictive Principal Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Restrictive Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	-.594**
Restrictive Behavior/ Supervisory Communication	-.519**
Restrictive Behavior/ Personal Feedback	-.565**
Restrictive Behavior/ Corporate Information	-.565**
Restrictive Behavior/ Communication Climate	-.618**
Restrictive Behavior/ Horizontal and Informal Communication	-.517**
Restrictive Behavior/ Media Quality	-.489**
Restrictive Behavior/ Organizational Integration	-.457**

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

The results indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between supportive principal behavior and teachers' communication satisfaction and a statistically significant negative relationship between restrictive principal behavior and teachers' communication satisfaction.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between each of the three teacher behavior dimensions of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction. The three dimensions (collegial, intimate, and disengaged) are presented one at a time and displayed on separate tables. Table 8 presents the correlations

between the collegial teacher behavior dimension of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction.

Table 8

Correlations Between Collegial Teacher Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Collegial Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	.566**
Collegial Behavior/ Supervisory Communication	.474**
Collegial Behavior/ Personal Feedback	.476**
Collegial Behavior/ Corporate Information	.503**
Collegial Behavior/ Communication Climate	.496**
Collegial Behavior/ Horizontal and Informal Communication	.585**
Collegial Behavior/ Media Quality	.505**
Collegial Behavior/ Organizational Integration	.528**

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

Based on the analysis of this data, a significant relationship exists between collegial behavior and overall communication satisfaction, $r(45) = .566$, $p < .001$. Likewise, significant relationships were noted between collegial teacher behavior and all seven communication satisfaction dimensions: supervisory communication, $r(45) = .474$, $p < .001$, personal feedback, $r(45)$, $= .476$, $p < .001$, corporate information, $r(45) = .503$, $p < .001$, communication climate, $r(45)$, $p < .001$, horizontal and informal, $r(45) = .585$, $p < .001$, media quality, $r(45) = .505$, $p <$

.001, and organizational integration, $r(45) = .528$, $p < .001$. This suggests that higher perceived levels of collegial teacher behavior are statistically associated with higher levels of teacher communication satisfaction.

A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between the organizational school climate dimension of intimate teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction and the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. Table 9 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 9

Correlations Between Intimate Teacher Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Intimate Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	.210
Intimate Behavior / Supervisory Communication	.197
Intimate Behavior / Personal Feedback	.192
Intimate Behavior / Corporate Information	.203
Intimate Behavior / Communication Climate	.140
Intimate Behavior / Horizontal and Informal Communication	.315*
Intimate Behavior / Media Quality	.148
Intimate Behavior / Organizational Integration	.108

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

Based on this analysis of data, intimate teacher behavior was found to have a statistically small

association with only one variable of communication satisfaction, horizontal and informal communication, $r(45) = .315$, $p = .031$. Intimate teacher behavior was not found to be statistically associated with overall communication satisfaction, $r(45) = .156$, $p = .156$, supervisory communication, $r(45) = .197$, $p = .184$, personal feedback, $r(45) = .192$, $p = .195$, corporate information, $r(45) = .203$, $p = .171$, communication climate, $r(45) = .140$, $p = .349$, and media quality, $r(45) = .148$, $p = .321$.

A final Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to explore the relationship of disengaged teacher behavior with overall communication satisfaction and the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. Table 10 presents the results of the analysis. The analysis of this

Table 10

Correlations Between Disengaged Teacher Behavior and Communication Satisfaction

	Correlation
Disengaged Behavior/ Overall Communication Satisfaction	-.710**
Disengaged Behavior/ Supervisory Communication	-.655**
Disengaged Behavior/ Personal Feedback	-.606**
Disengaged Behavior/ Corporate Information	-.680**
Disengaged Behavior/ Communication Climate	-.683**
Disengaged Behavior/ Horizontal and Informal Communication	-.707**
Disengaged Behavior/ Media Quality	-.653**
Disengaged Behavior/ Organizational Integration	-.838**

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

data showed a strong negative correlation between disengaged teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction, $r(45) = -.710$, $p < .001$. Similarly, a negative correlation was shown between disengaged teacher behavior and all seven dimensions of communication satisfaction: supervisory communication, $r(45) = -.655$, $p < .001$, personal feedback, $r(45) = -.606$, $p < .001$, corporate information, $r(45) = -.680$, $p < .001$, horizontal and informal communication, $r(45) = -.707$, $p < .001$, media quality, $r(45) = -.653$, $p < .001$, and organizational integration, $r(45) = -.838$, $p = .001$. This suggests that with higher levels of disengaged teacher behavior, there are lower levels of communication satisfaction.

Summary

Research question 1 explored teachers' perceptions of their organizational school climate. Descriptive statistics revealed that for all of the six behaviors, teachers perceived collegial teacher behavior as *most frequently occurs*, and disengaged teacher behavior as most *rarely occurs*. Research question 2 examined teachers' levels of communication satisfaction. Analysis of the mean scores revealed that overall communication satisfaction and all seven dimensions, were not below the conceptual midpoint of 4. This finding suggests that the teachers are mostly satisfied with the overall communication at their schools and they are satisfied with each of the seven dimensions or types of communication.

Research question 3 examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. Pearson correlation coefficients were used to analyze the relationship between organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction. Both supportive principal behavior and collegial teacher behavior positively correlated with overall communication satisfaction. A significant negative correlation was found between overall communication satisfaction and two of the organizational

school climate dimensions, restrictive principal behavior and disengaged teacher behavior. Based on this analysis, directive principal behavior and intimate teacher behavior were not found to be associated with overall communication satisfaction. Pearson correlation coefficients were also used to analyze the relationship between organizational school climate and the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. Significant positive correlations were found between supportive principal behavior and all communication satisfaction dimensions. Likewise, significant positive correlations were found between collegial teacher behavior and all communication satisfaction dimensions. Significant negative correlations were noted between restrictive principal behavior and all communication satisfaction dimensions. Similarly, negative correlations were found between disengaged teacher behavior and all communication satisfaction dimensions. Analysis of this data did not find a significant relationship between directive principal behavior and the communication satisfaction dimensions. Correspondingly, intimate teacher behavior showed only a small correlation to horizontal and informal communication.

Chapter V: Discussion and Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to investigate certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. Once these two levels were ascertained, the relationship between the two variables was analyzed. Survey instruments were used for the three research questions. This chapter presents interpretation of results and relationships to the literature for each research question. This is followed by the relationship of the results to the theoretical framework. Finally, the limitations and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Research Questions and Interpretations

Question 1. What were certified teachers' perceptions of school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991)? The mean, standard deviation, and the minimum and the maximum were computed for each of the six dimensions of organizational school climate. Analysis of the descriptive data suggests that teachers perceived collegial teacher behavior, supportive principal behavior, and intimate teacher behavior as occurring more frequently than the other three behaviors. Conversely teachers perceived restrictive principal behavior, directive principal behavior, and disengaged teacher behavior as occurring less frequently.

The results of the ODCDQ-RE also provide a typology of school climates. The three dimensions of principal behavior determine the *openness in principal behavior,* while the three dimensions of teacher behavior determine the *openness in teacher behavior* (Hoy et al., 1991). Together the principal openness and teacher openness dimensions create the four classifications of school climate: open, engaged, disengaged, and closed. Open climate is typified by high supportive principal behavior and low for directive and restrictive principal behavior, whereas teacher behavior is high for collegial and intimate, and low for disengaged. To phrase it another

way, an open climate is indicated by high frequencies of supportive principal behavior, collegial teacher behavior, and intimate teacher behavior, and low frequencies of directive principal behavior, restrictive principal behavior, and disengaged teacher behavior. Since the results of this study followed that pattern, it is probable that the teachers perceived their schools as open climates. An open school climate is characterized by "teacher relations that are professional, collegial, friendly, and committed to the education of students. The principal is supportive and professional and does not restrict or direct teachers with orders" (Hoy & Miskel, 2013, slide 4).

In the current study, collegial teacher behavior was perceived as occurring more frequently than the other five dimensions. Collegial behavior is important because it has been found to have a strong, positive relationship with teachers' job satisfaction and their plans to stay at their school (Johnson et al., 2012). Having a positive working relationship with peers is frequently cited as a reason teachers stay in the profession (Loeb et al., 2005). Supportive principal behavior was perceived as occurring a little less than collegial teacher behavior, but more frequently than the other four dimensions. Past studies have found lower rates of teacher turnover in schools where principals were perceived as supportive (Boyd et al., 2011; Marinell & Coca, 2013).

Furthermore, it's been noted that when teachers feel supported they report higher levels of collegiality (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). That may have been what happened in this study because collegial teacher behavior and supportive principal behavior produced the two highest mean scores. Hence, it is possible the two dimensions had an impact on each other. Moreover, both social relationships with colleagues and principal support have been reported as important factors of climate that influenced teachers' decisions to stay in their schools (Johnson et al., 2012).

The lowest mean score was for the disengaged teacher behavior dimension. This implies that the teachers in this study perceived this behavior as occurring less frequently than the other five dimensions. Disengaged teacher behavior is exemplified by a lack of meaning or focus toward professional activities. Often their behavior is negative and critical of their colleagues and the school (Hoy et al., 1991). One probable explanation for the low disengaged teacher behavior score is that the teachers who truly felt disgruntled might have already left their jobs. Research has shown that school climate affects teachers' levels of commitment (Cohen & Geier, 2010; Singh & Billingsley, 1998), and is a significant factor contributing to teacher retention (Cohen & Geir, 2010; Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Johnson et al., 2012; Ladd, 2011; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999).

Question 2. What were certified teachers' levels of communication satisfaction as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)? The mean, standard deviation, and the minimum and the maximum were computed for overall communication satisfaction and each of its seven dimensions. As previously mentioned, mean scores that fall well below the conceptual midpoint, that is 4 on a 1-7 scale, can be thought of as weaknesses (Downs & Adrian, 2004). None of the mean scores were below the conceptual midpoint of 4; this suggests that the teachers did not perceive overall communication satisfaction or any of its dimensions as weaknesses. The highest mean score was for media quality. Satisfaction with media quality pertains to the helpfulness and clarity of meetings and written communication. It also includes the degree to which the quantity of communication in the organization is perceived as adequate (Downs & Hazen, 1977). For the most part, the principals are responsible for the meetings and for the majority of the written communication in a school. Given these points, the principals might not want to incorporate any major changes to meetings and written communication, because teachers

in this study reported being satisfied with these areas. The second highest mean score was for horizontal and informal communication. This dimension relates to the extent to which co-worker and informal communication is free-flowing and accurate (Downs & Adrian, 2004), which in terms of this study, was the communication between teachers. The results of the current study suggest that the teachers were satisfied with the amount of horizontal communication and with its accuracy. Since teachers spend the majority of their day working independently, apart from their colleagues, there are not large segments of time conducive to horizontal communication. Unfortunately, the organizational structure of many schools impedes teacher to teacher interaction (Starnaman & Miller, 1992). Nevertheless, the teachers in this study were satisfied with the amount of communication between teachers. This is an important finding because the belongingness need from Maslow's hierarchy relies on social interactions in order to build relationships. In a typical elementary school, social interactions often occur during the lunch times, plan periods, outdoor recesses, and before and after school. Since almost 60% of the teachers in this study have been at their present school for four or more years, they have had time to develop friendships with their colleagues. Therefore, it is a possibility that the teachers have been able to build relationships with their colleagues that might fulfill their belongingness need.

Organizational integration yielded the third highest mean. This dimension reflects the extent to which employees are satisfied with the information they receive related to their jobs such as policies, benefits, job requirements, and personnel news (Downs & Adrian, 2004). In an elementary school a large percentage of this type of information originates and is disseminated from the school district's central office, as is the case with this study. Given these points, the principals would be prudent to focus more on the dimensions in their immediate control.

As previously mentioned, the dimensions of media quality, horizontal and informal communication, and organizational integration indicated the highest mean scores. This finding is consistent with previous research that examined the relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction (Gülnar, 2007). Using a sample of research assistants, Gülnar's (2007) descriptive analysis determined that the three highest scoring dimensions were horizontal and informal communication, media quality, and organizational integrity. Although the current study did not include job satisfaction as a variable, it is interesting to note that Gülnar (2007) found these three dimensions significantly correlated to overall job satisfaction. This finding and past research that have found a relationship between communication satisfaction and job satisfaction (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Gregson, 1991; Gülnar, 2007; Miles, Patrick, & King, 1996; Pincus, 1986; Sharma, 2015) help to underscore the importance of probing into employee levels of communication satisfaction.

Another interesting finding was that two dimensions, communication climate ($M = 4.65$) and supervisory communication ($M = 4.60$), produced almost identical mean scores. This suggests that the teachers had about the same level of satisfaction in both areas. Communication climate reflects communication on both the organizational level and the personal level while supervisory communication concentrates on the upward and downward flow of communication with supervisors (Downs & Adrian, 2004). On the surface these two dimensions might not appear very similar, but upon closer examination of the actual survey statements it is possible to see some similarities. For example, two out of the five survey statements for the communication climate dimension begin with the words "extent to which the organization's communication." Teachers may have perceived this to be referring to the principal's communication and based

their responses on that perception. Under those circumstances, the responses for the two different dimensions could have resulted in nearly identical mean scores.

In particular, the results of the supervisory communication dimension merits closer examination because of its implications for principals. Moreover, all the elementary schools in this study were staffed solely by a principal and did not have a vice-principal. For this reason, the teachers' responses for supervisory communication would be exclusively about their perceptions of the principal. With this in mind, the analysis of this dimension becomes especially relevant to the principals in this study. The supervisory communication dimension includes both the upward and downward facets of communicating with supervisors (Downs & Adrian, 2004). Specifically, it is an indication of how satisfied subordinates are with the extent to which the supervisor is open to ideas, listens and pays attention, and offers guidance for solving job related problems. While the mean for this dimension is not well below the conceptual midpoint, 4 on a 1-7 scale, it is not well above it either. This suggests there might be some room for improvement in this area. In a previous study, it was found that support from the principal and participation in decision making helped to mediate teachers' perceptions of burnout (Starnaman & Miller, 1992). Further research on this topic has indicated that as years of teaching experience increased, teachers' satisfaction with principal communication also increased (Reyes & Hoyle, 1992). This suggests that newer teachers might not as satisfied with the principal's communication, possibly because new teachers need a higher amount of communication than veteran teachers. Accordingly, the demographics of this study revealed about 36% of the sample was comprised of new teachers. In light of this, it would be advantageous for principals to be sensitive to the unique communication needs of their new teachers. Additionally, other research found two specific communication practices that could be

beneficial to principals (Al Hajar, 2016). Analysis of the results showed, that principal's encouragement of teacher communication and principal's providing clear and direct messages, were highly related to teacher job satisfaction (AI Hajar, 2016).

The two lowest mean scores were obtained for the communication satisfaction dimensions of corporate information ($M = 4.47$) and personal feedback ($M = 4.46$). Corporate information pertains to the company's financial standing, polices, and goals. It is not clear from the results if the teachers are dissatisfied with the amount and/or the quality of corporate information. Since this type of information is not a crucial component of a teacher's job, it is surprising that the teachers' responses reflected dissatisfaction with this type of communication. Perhaps, the teachers are dissatisfied because they are receiving too much corporate information and they view this type of information as irrelevant and time consuming. Especially if teachers are inundated with emails about corporate information, it is plausible they would be dissatisfied with this dimension. On the other hand, maybe the teachers are not even reading the corporate information and therefore selected "indifferent" or "4" as a response to the survey statements for this dimension.

Personal feedback has to do with information about how an employee is being judged, evaluated, and recognized. In an elementary school, the principal is responsible for providing this type of feedback to teachers. Based on the results obtained in this study, the elementary teachers' perceptions were close to just "somewhat satisfied" about their principals' feedback. Inherently, teachers spend a substantial portion of their day providing constructive feedback to students and are well aware of the benefits it provides to learners. Therefore, it makes sense that teachers might have some high expectations for personal feedback. Previous research has found a relationship between principal communication and school climate (Oswalt, 2011). Most

notably, findings revealed that utilizing positive reinforcement as a principal may lead to a more open school climate (Oswalt, 2011). Also, it's important to realize that unlike other professions, teachers do not move up a corporate ladder. They do not move into a bigger, fancier office, and they do not get bonuses or an impressive title. In view of this, it becomes apparent why feedback is a highly regarded commodity to teachers. It is because feedback is one of the few ways teachers receive information about their job performance and are recognized for their achievements.

Question 3. What was the relationship between the certified teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate as measured by the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) and communication satisfaction levels as measured by the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977)? The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to examine the relationship between each of the seven dimensions of organizational school climate and overall communication satisfaction, and each of the seven dimensions of communication satisfaction. For the purposes of this study, correlation coefficients greater than 0.50 were considered strong relationships, which indicates that four of the six organizational climate behaviors were strongly correlated with teachers' levels of communication satisfaction. Of the four organizational climate behaviors, two were principal behaviors and two were teacher behaviors. Table 11 presents a summary of the organizational climate dimensions that were strongly correlated with overall communication satisfaction.

This data indicates that as teachers perceived higher frequencies of supportive principal behavior they reported higher levels of overall communication satisfaction. The results of this study are supported by previous research that found organizational school climate is associated with communication (Oswalt, 2011; Rafferty, 2003). In light of the fact that five of the nine

survey statements for the supportive principal dimension specifically address communication behaviors, it is not unrealistic that the two variables were associated. More importantly, the nine survey items for this dimension provide a specific list of supportive principal behaviors. This suggests that increases in teachers' overall communication satisfaction were correlated with higher perceived frequencies of the principal: using constructive criticism, listening and accepting teacher suggestions, explaining reasons for criticism, and complimenting teachers. These are key behaviors because as Rafferty (2003) states, "the presence of trust and open communication between teacher and the principal permits the ongoing and constructive questioning of existing assumptions and beliefs that serve as the foundation of day-to-day operations and instructional practices in schools" (p. 68). In particular, the findings suggest that school climate can be improved by increasing upward communication opportunities (Rafferty, 2003).

Table 11

Correlations Between Organizational Climate Dimensions and Overall Communication Satisfaction

Organizational Climate Dimension	Correlation
Supportive Principal Behavior	.820**
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	-.710**
Restrictive Principal Behavior	-.591**
Collegial Teacher Behavior	.566**

Note. N=47. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$ (2- tailed).

Disengaged teacher behavior was negatively correlated with overall communication satisfaction. This strong, negative relationship indicates that as perceptions of disengaged teacher behavior increase, overall communication satisfaction levels decrease. Disengaged

teacher behavior occurs when teachers are just putting in their time and is reflected in negative and critical behavior toward their colleagues and the school (Hoy et al., 1991). Given that negative and critical behavior would undoubtedly erode communication satisfaction levels, it is conceivable that these two variables would yield a negative relationship.

Another strong, negative relationship was between restrictive principal behavior and overall communication satisfaction. Restrictive principal behavior occurs when the teachers perceive they are responsible for too many tasks that interfere with teaching such as paperwork and committee duties (Hoy et al., 1991). Since it is the principal who assigns these tasks to the teacher, this is categorized as restrictive principal behavior. One explanation for this negative relationship might be that as restrictive principal behavior increases, the teacher might not have as much time to participate in other communication contexts thereby causing their overall communication satisfaction level to decrease. Therefore, principals need to look for ways to minimize teachers' perceptions of being overwhelmed by paperwork and committee requirements. Some possible options include allowing time at staff meetings to complete paperwork, extending deadlines for paperwork, and delegating some of the paperwork to the clerical staff.

The last strong, positive relationship was between collegial teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction. Teachers who are collegial enjoy working with their colleagues, are respectful and accepting of colleagues, and proud of their school (Hoy et al., 1991). The results of this study indicated that increases in perceptions of collegial teacher behavior were correlated with increases in overall teacher communication satisfaction levels. Interestingly, the data results indicated that collegial teacher behavior was perceived as occurring more frequently than the other five organizational climate behaviors. Correspondingly, the horizontal and informal

communication dimension produced the second highest mean score. This suggests that teachers in this study perceived collegial teacher behavior as happening more frequently than the other climate behaviors in their schools and they were satisfied with their co-worker's communication.

This study did not find a significant correlation between two organizational dimensions, intimate teacher behavior and directive principal behavior, and overall communication satisfaction. Intimate teacher behavior refers to a strong social network, teachers know each other well, are good friends, and often socialize together (Hoy et al., 1919). According to the demographics in this study, around 60% of the teachers have been at their present school for 4 or more years; therefore, the teachers have had time to create social networks with their colleagues. In spite of the indication of social networks, the analysis of the data did not reveal a statistically significant relationship between intimate teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction. Perhaps, the teachers in this study have a strong network of close friends outside of school. Therefore, the teachers' overall communication satisfaction levels were not significantly impacted by the schools' organizational climate. Comparatively, the statistical analysis did not indicate a significant relationship between directive principal behavior and overall communication satisfaction. It is worth noting that directive principal behavior was perceived as "sometimes occurs." Since this type of behavior was perceived as not happening very frequently, it is not surprising it did not have a significant effect on the teachers' communication satisfaction levels. If higher frequencies of directive principal behavior had been perceived it might have impacted the teachers' overall communication satisfaction levels.

Relationship of Results to the Theoretical Framework

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is one of the best-known motivational theories (Maslow, 1943) and can be applied to workplace settings (Miller, 2015). It is relevant to this study

because it can be used to as a tool to better understand how the dimensions of organizational school climate impact teacher motivation . The three hierarchical needs that are most related to organizational climate are the belongingness needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Figure 2). In an organization, the belongingness needs are the social needs and relate to being part of a group. Therefore, the two organizational climate dimensions that address the social needs are collegial teacher behavior and intimate teacher behavior. Collegial teacher behavior occurs when teachers help and support each other. Due to the nature of the job, teachers interact more frequently with their colleagues than the principal. Depending on the school, it is not uncommon for a teacher to go for a day or longer without having any face to face communication with the principal. Even so, principals have some control over the frequency of

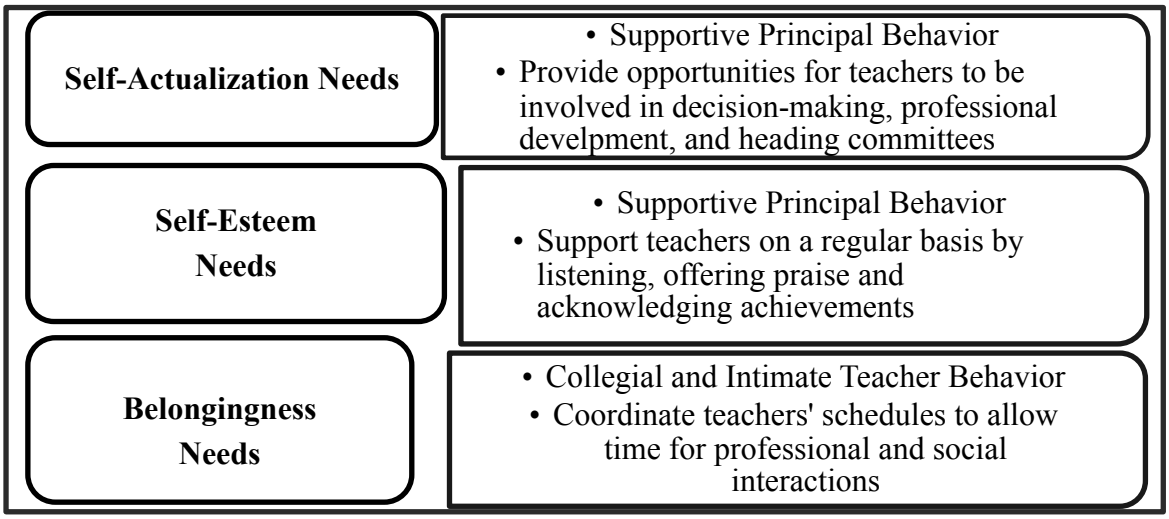

Figure 2. Jahn's relationship of hierarchical needs to organizational climate. Adapted from *Simply Psychology*, by J. S. McLeod, 2017.

teacher to teacher interactions because it is the principals who determine the teachers' daily schedule in terms of lunch and plan times. Since teacher to teacher interactions address the social needs of the teachers, principals need to schedule teachers, of the same grade level, with

identical times for lunch and plan periods. This would allow teachers opportunities to help and support each other which fulfills their belongingness needs. Similarly, intimate teacher behavior happens when teachers socialize and form friendships with each other, simultaneously satisfying belongingness needs.

Self-esteem needs have to with feelings of self-worth at a job and can be acknowledged by recognition, praise, and increased responsibility (Drafke, 2009). As the school leader, the principal would be the primary individual in charge of acknowledging the staff. For the most part, many supportive principal behaviors demonstrate ways to acknowledge teachers. This is evidenced by the following survey statements "The principal treats teachers as equals," "The principal compliments teachers," and "The principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers." Since the frequency of supportive principal behavior can have an impact on teachers' self-esteem needs, principals should try to be more supportive to teachers. One way to be more supportive is to compliment teachers on a regular basis. Often principals try to be visible in their buildings. As they circulate through the school, principals should make it a priority to compliment or at the very least, acknowledge the teachers' hard work. Principals could also use more formal methods of acknowledging teachers such as creating a "Teacher of the Month" award, allowing a teacher to park in the principal's spot, and using the school newsletter to point out a teacher's accomplishments. All of these informal and formal methods would make a teacher feel more appreciated and respected. Consequently, it would satisfy the teachers' self-esteem needs.

Self-actualization needs relates to an individual reaching one's highest potential (Drafke, 2009). In an organization, this relates to providing employees with challenging and meaningful tasks to better utilize an employee's abilities (Jerome, 2013). Giving employees opportunities

for learning, leadership, and advancement can fulfill self-actualization needs. In a school setting, the principal can provide opportunities for teachers to be involved in decision-making, attend professional development training, and oversee committees. While supportive principal behavior is conducive to providing challenging and meaningful tasks, the other two principal behaviors, directive and restrictive are not. A directive principal displays fairly autocratic behaviors as exemplified by the survey statements "The principal monitors everything teachers do," "The principal supervises teachers closely," and "The principal rules with an iron fist." Clearly, these behaviors would not help to foster a teacher's self-actualization. Correspondingly, restrictive principal behavior would not boost self-actualization needs either. A restrictive principal burdens teachers with paperwork and routine duties that interfere with the job of teaching. Understandably, a teacher would not perceive these mundane tasks as opportunities for growth and learning.

In this study, analysis of the descriptive data suggests that the teachers perceived collegial teacher behavior, supportive principal behavior, and intimate teacher behavior as occurring more frequently than the other three organizational school climate behaviors. As clarified above, all three of these behaviors can have a positive impact on an employee's needs. In the final analysis, it becomes evident that Maslow's hierarchy of needs has implications for organizational school climate and can be used to shed light on the possible positive or negative outcomes that might be associated with principals' and teachers' behavior.

Implications/Recommendations for Education

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate, teachers' level of communication satisfaction, and to explore the relationship

between the two variables. The findings have implications for all stakeholders in the education system, but especially for school leaders and teachers.

Implication for School Leaders. Organizational school climate and communication contribute to the effectiveness of a school. Before improvements can be made in either of these two areas, an assessment of the current state of both areas needs to be utilized. The OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991) is one tool administration can use, to measure how teachers perceive the organizational school climate. Data from this measure will give the principal an idea of the type of climate that is prevalent in their buildings. This will allow the principal to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses in their school climates and thereby develop an appropriate course of action. One major advantage to the OCDQ-RE is that each of its dimensions lists specific behaviors that influence organizational school climate. Therefore, if the results from the data indicate that the principal is perceived as overly restrictive, the principal can look at the specific survey statements in that dimension and focus on those referenced behaviors. In the same fashion, the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977) can be administered to teachers and the results can guide improvements to the types of communication in the school. In addition, there are implications to superintendents and other district personnel interested in school improvement. School districts can use both measures as a diagnostic tool to determine the specific areas that should be the focus of school improvement. This means that one or both of the surveys could be administered to principals and teachers. These variables can change from year to year, thus it makes sense that these variables should be assessed on an annual basis. Once the results have been analyzed, the areas for improvement can be identified. Next, professional development could be implemented to address the identified areas of concern. Ideally, the principals and the teachers should have separate professional development opportunities that are specifically

designed to meet their unique needs. If school districts administered these two measures annually, they would be able to track any significant changes in organizational school climate and/or communication that were occurring in each of their schools. Finally, the school district should try to ascertain what factors might be related to any of the changes in the organizational school climate and/or communication data. There are many factors such as teacher turnover or a new administrator that could be related to changes in one or both of these areas.

Implication for Teachers. This study has many implications for teachers. First, teachers need to be aware that their organizational school climate has an effect on their overall job satisfaction. With this in mind, a teacher should be sensitive to the different personalities a school might have and factor this into their job selection. Once at a school, the teacher should be sensitive to elements in the school climate that they perceive to be negative or positive. While the principal has a direct influence on many elements in school climate, the teacher can influence some elements too. For example, if a teacher feels isolated, they could make an effort to socialize more with colleagues. This could be as simple as eating lunch in the lounge versus alone in their classroom. Also, a teacher can try to increase the level of intimate teacher behavior at their school by planning social gatherings like potlucks and baby showers. Lastly, if a teacher feels that their self-actualization needs are not met at work, they might look for sources outside of their workplace to fulfill these needs. For example, they might take classes to increase their subject endorsements or pursue a graduate degree.

Limitations of this Study

The participants of this study were chosen on a voluntary basis from elementary schools in one school district. Therefore, the results of this study might not be generalizable to other schools in different districts. Additionally, the survey results are from one point in time

and might not have yielded the same results if the survey had been administered at a different time in the school year. The sample size should be noted as a limitation of the study, as a larger sample could have produced different results. This study was a correlational study. Since correlational studies ascertain only if variables are related, not a cause-effect relationship (Creswell, 2012; Urdan, 2010), this study was not able to establish causality between organizational school climate and communication satisfaction.

Future Research

Despite the apparent relevance of climate and communication to the field of education, research that examines the relationship of both these two constructs in the school setting is lacking (Oswalt, 2011; Halawah, 2005; Rafferty, 2003). While the results from this quantitative study begin to fill a gap in the research, future studies are still warranted. Future studies could replicate this study to determine the relationship of the two variables, using a larger sample of teachers, and from a variety of school districts. Additionally, further statistical analyses could be employed to determine if there is a cause/effect relationship between the dimensions of the two variables. Future research might explore and compare the perceptions of new teachers to veteran teachers, in regard to organizational school climate and communication. Similarly, it could be beneficial to examine teacher responses on the OCDQ-RE at different points in their career. Since the CSQ is predominantly a measure of verbal communication, future researchers might utilize an instrument that measures the teachers' perceptions of nonverbal communication. Then the relationship between organizational school climate and nonverbal communication could be explored. Finally, future qualitative research methods, or a mixed methods approach could be incorporated. These methods allow participants to provide greater detail about their responses.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of elementary teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their communication satisfaction levels. The first research question explored teachers' perceptions of their organizational school climate. Descriptive statistics revealed that teachers perceived collegial teacher behavior, supportive principal behavior, and intimate teacher behavior as occurring more frequently than the other three behaviors from the OCDQ-RE. Research question two examined teachers' levels of communication satisfaction. Analysis of the mean scores revealed that overall communication satisfaction and all seven dimensions were not below the conceptual midpoint of 4. This finding suggests that the teachers are mostly satisfied with the overall communication at their schools and they are satisfied with each of the seven dimensions or types of communication.

Research question three investigated if there was a relationship between teachers' perception of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. According to the results of the analysis, four of the six organizational climate dimensions significantly correlated to overall communication satisfaction and to each of its dimensions. The four organizational climate dimensions were supportive principal behavior, restrictive principal behavior, collegial teacher behavior, and disengaged teacher behavior. Teachers' perceptions of supportive principal behavior were positively correlated with overall communication satisfaction and to each of its dimensions. There was a strong, positive correlation between teachers' perceptions of collegial teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction and to each of its dimensions. Conversely, there was a strong, negative correlation between restrictive principal behavior and overall communication satisfaction and each of its dimensions. Lastly, there was a

strong, negative correlation between disengaged teacher behavior and overall communication satisfaction and each of its dimensions.

As can be seen from the results of this study, there was statistical support that teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate were correlated with levels of communication satisfaction. This is an important relationship because both variables impact teacher retention and overall school success (Figure 3). Additionally, both variables are related to three of the

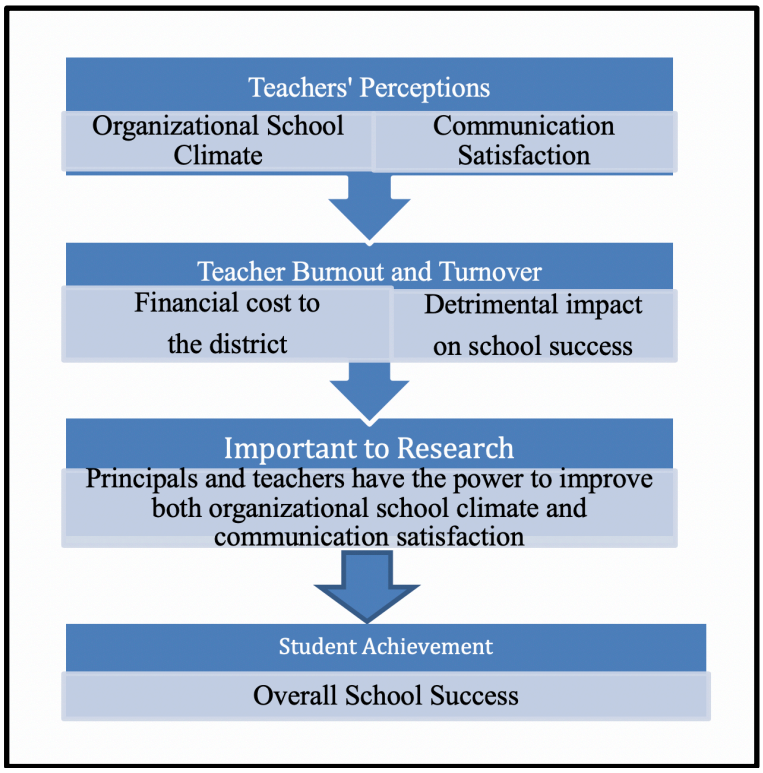

Figure 3. Jahn's Model of Organizational School Climate and Communication Satisfaction

teachers' hierarchical needs of belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. These three needs are significant to the workplace because they influence employee productivity and turnover. In a school, productivity translates to teachers effectively delivering quality instruction, which in turn leads to student achievement. Given these points, teachers'

perceptions of organizational school climate and communication satisfaction levels provide valuable insights that should serve as a focus for school improvement.

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Appendix A

Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary Schools (OCDQ-RE)

OCDQ-RE

Directions: The following are statements about your school, Please indicate the extent to which each statement characterizes your school.	Rarely Occurs	Sometimes Occurs	Often Occurs	Very Frequently Occurs
1. The teachers accomplish their work with vim, vigor, and pleasure.	1	2	3	4
2. Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school.	1	2	3	4
3. Faculty meetings are useless.	1	2	3	4
4. The principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers	1	2	3	4
5. The principal rules with an iron fist.	1	2	3	4
6. Teachers leave school immediately after school is over.	1	2	3	4
7. Teachers invite faculty members to visit them at home.	1	2	3	4
8. There is a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority.	1	2	3	4
9. The principal uses constructive criticism.	1	2	3	4
10. The principal checks the sign-in sheet every morning.	1	2	3	4
11. Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching.	1	2	3	4
12. Most of the teachers here accept the faults of their colleagues.	1	2	3	4
13. Teachers know the family background of other faculty members.	1	2	3	4
14. Teachers exert group pressure on non-conforming faculty members.	1	2	3	4
15. The principal explains his/her reasons for criticism to teachers.	1	2	3	4
16. The principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions.	1	2	3	4
17. The principal schedules the work for the teachers.	1	2	3	4
18. Teachers have too many committee requirements.	1	2	3	4
19. Teachers help and support each other.	1	2	3	4
20. Teachers have fun socializing together during school time.	1	2	3	4
21. Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings.	1	2	3	4
22. The principal looks out for the personal welfare of teachers.	1	2	3	4
23. The principal treats teachers as equals.	1	2	3	4
24. The principal corrects teachers' mistakes.	1	2	3	4
25. Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.	1	2	3	4
26. Teachers are proud of their school.	1	2	3	4
27. Teachers have parties for each other.	1	2	3	4
28. The principal compliments teachers.	1	2	3	4
29. The principal is easy to understand.	1	2	3	4
30. The principal closely checks classroom (teacher) activities.	1	2	3	4
31. Clerical support reduces teachers' paperwork.	1	2	3	4
32. New teachers are readily accepted by colleagues.	1	2	3	4
33. Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4
34. The principal supervises t3eachers closely.	1	2	3	4
35. The principal checks lesson plans.	1	2	3	4
36. Teachers are burdened with busy work.	1	2	3	4
37. Teachers socialize together in small, select groups.	1	2	3	4
38. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues.	1	2	3	4
39. The principal is autocratic.	1	2	3	4
40. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues.	1	2	3	4
41. The principal monitors everything teachers do.	1	2	3	4
42. The principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers.	1	2	3	4

Appendix B

Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)

Listed below are several types of information often associated with a person's job. Please indicate how satisfied you are with the amount and/or quality of each kind of information by circling the appropriate number at the right.
Very dissatisfied Very satisfied
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 N/A

Organizational Integration
1. Information about my progress in my job
2. Personnel news
3. Information about departmental policies and goals
4. Information about the requirements of my job
5. Information about benefits and pay
Supervisory Communication
6. Extent to which my supervisor listens and pays attention to me
7. Extent to which my supervisor offers guidance for solving job related problems
8. Extent to which my supervisor trusts me
9. Extent to which my supervisor is open to ideas
10. Extent to which the amount of supervision given to me is about right
Personal Feedback
11. Information about how my job compares with others
12. Information about how I am being judged
13. Recognition of my efforts
14. Reports on how problems in my job are handled
15. Extent to which superiors know and understand the problems faced by subordinates
Corporate Information
16. Information about company policies and goals
17. Information about government action affecting my company
18. Information about changes in our organization
19. Information about our organization's financial standing
20. Information about accomplishments and/or failures of the organization
Communication
21. Extent to which the organization's communication motivates and stimulates an enthusiasm for meeting its goals
22. Extent to which the people in my organization have great ability as communicators
23. Extent to which the organization's communication makes me identify with it or feel a vital part of it
24. Extent to which I receive in time the information needed to do my job
25. Extent to which conflicts are handled appropriately through proper communication channels
Horizontal and Informal Communication (Co-worker Communication)
26. Extent to which the grapevine is active in our organization
27. Extent to which horizontal communication with other employees is accurate and free flowing
28. Extent to which communication practices are adaptable to emergencies
29. Extent to which my work group is compatible
30. Extent to which informal communication is active and accurate
Media Quality
31. Extent to which my company's publications are interesting and helpful
32. Extent to which our meetings are well organized
33. Extent to which written directives and reports are clear and concise
34. Extent to which the attitudes toward communication in the organization are basically healthy
35. Extent to which the amount of communication in the organization is about right

Appendix C

Permission to Use the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ)

Cal W. Downs, PhD

Communication Management

Cal.downs@gmail.com

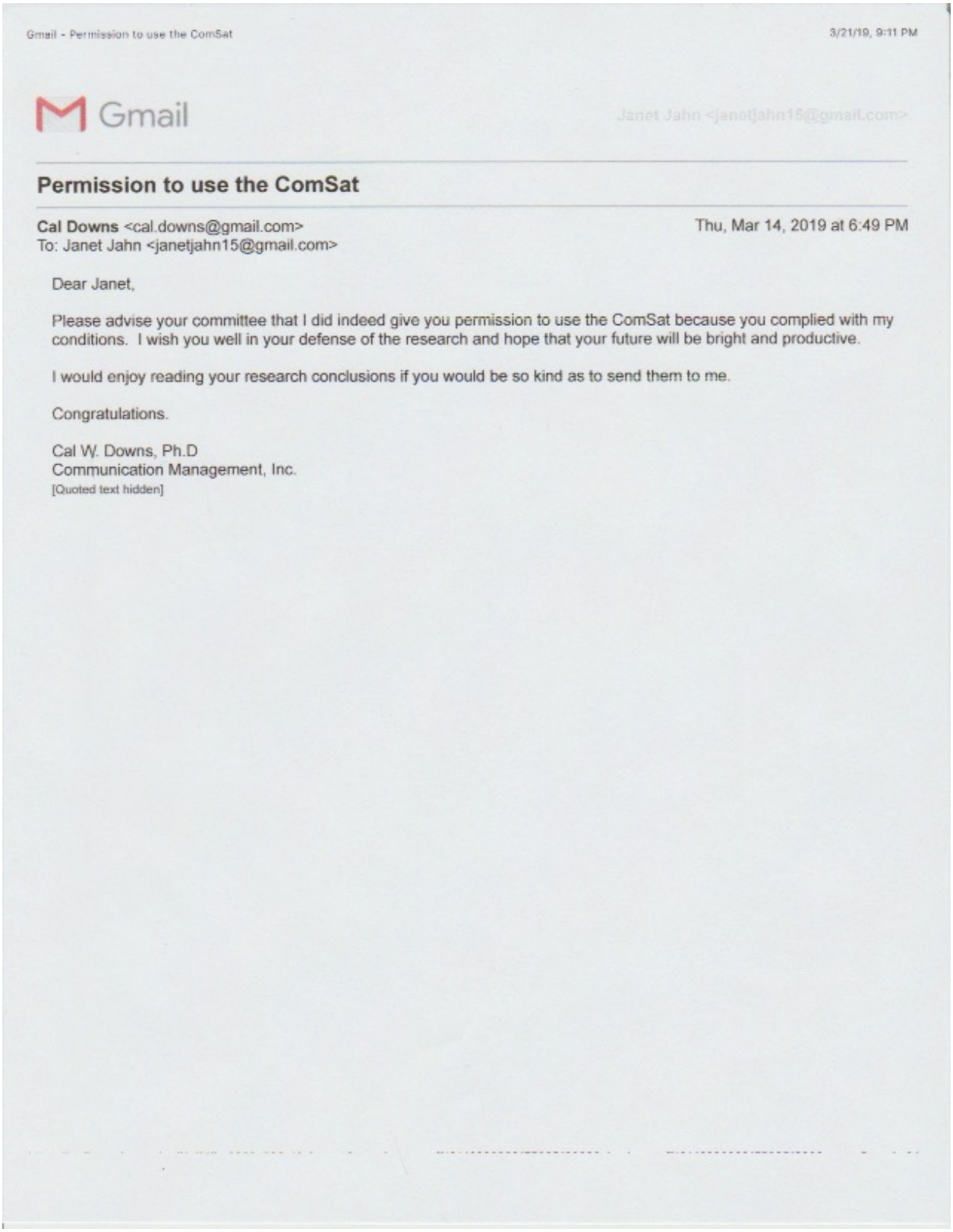
785-550-9080

Permission is granted solely for educational research if the researcher will agree to the following conditions, print this letter of agreement, sign it and return it to Communication Management, 1515 W. 21st, Lawrence, KS 66046

1. Permission is for this one time usage for an educational research project.
2. It cannot be used in any paid consulting arrangement.
3. The factor structure will NOT be published in any form (including the dissertation) or shared with anyone.
4. A copy of the completed study will be sent to the address 1515 W. 21st, Lawrence, KS 66046
5. If the ComSat is translated into a non-English language, a copy of the translation will be sent.
6. All references to the ComSat will include the copyright designation.

Signed:
Date: 10/01/2017
Address: 10705 Valley Omaha, NE 68124
Permanent Contact point: Janet Jahn 402-871-7028

Cal W. Downs, PhD



Gmail - Permission to use the ComSat 3/21/19, 9:11 PM

Gmail Janet Jahn <janetjahn15@gmail.com>

Permission to use the ComSat

Cal Downs <cal.downs@gmail.com> Thu, Mar 14, 2019 at 6:49 PM
To: Janet Jahn <janetjahn15@gmail.com>

Dear Janet,

Please advise your committee that I did indeed give you permission to use the ComSat because you complied with my conditions. I wish you well in your defense of the research and hope that your future will be bright and productive.

I would enjoy reading your research conclusions if you would be so kind as to send them to me.

Congratulations.

Cal W. Downs, Ph.D
Communication Management, Inc.
[Quoted text hidden]

Appendix D
Demographic Information

1. What is your highest level of education?
    - Undergraduate Degree
    - Master's Degree
    - Doctorate Degree

2. What grade do you currently teach?
    - Pre-K or K
    - First Grade
    - Second Grade
    - Third Grade
    - Fourth Grade
    - Fifth grade
    - More than one grade

3. How long have you been at your current job?
    - 0-3 years
    - 4-8 years
    - 9-15 years
    - 16 or more years

4. How many years of teaching have you had at other schools?
    - None
    - 1-3 years
    - 4-8 years
    - 9-15 years
    - More than 16 years

5. What is your gender?
    - Female
    - Male

6. What is your age?
    - 20-30 years old
    - 31-40 years old
    - 41-50 years old
    - 51-60 years old
    - 60 years or older

Appendix E

District Approval

Council Bluffs
Community School District

Council Bluffs Community Schools
300 West Broadway, Suite 1600
Council Bluffs, IA 51503

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH/GATHER DATA
IN THE COUNCIL BLUFFS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

DIRECTIONS: The applicant should complete this form, obtain the necessary approval and signatures, and return to: Marty Shudak, Director of Assessment and Data Management mshudak@cbcsd.org, (712) 328-6489 (option 3)

It may take up to three weeks for requests to be processed; please plan accordingly in order to meet deadlines.

1. Please describe concisely the basic concepts and goals of your proposed project, and how it is relevant to the field of education.

   The proposed research project will examine the relationship between elementary teachers' perceptions of school climate and their level of satisfaction with communication in their school building. Research has shown that school climate can directly affect teacher job satisfaction and ultimately teacher retention. Similarly, communication has been shown to be a key element in an organization's success, but there is a lack of research about teachers' level of satisfaction with the communication in their school.

   Despite the apparent relevance of climate and communication to the field of education, research that examines the relationship of both these two constructs, has been limited. The results of this study will help district personnel, especially administrators, to learn more about the specific components of school climate and communication and then translate this information into meaningful changes that impact the success of the school.

2. List the names of all data collection instruments you intend to use and enclose a copy of each with this application. Also, enclose a copy of each parent/student consent form, if needed. Please describe in detail the distribution, implementation, and collection methods you intend to use in your data collection as well as a description explaining how confidentiality and anonymity of students and staff will be ensured.

   The two data collection instruments that I intend to use to survey teachers are the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire for Elementary Schools, (OCDQ-RE) and the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, (CSQ). The OCDQ-RE (Hoy, Tarter, Kottkamp, 1991) has six dimensions that measure two different categories of behavior: principal behavior and teacher behavior.

Three of the dimensions describe principal behavior and the other three dimensions describe teacher behavior. The six dimensions of the OCDQ-RE can be used to classify school climates into one of four climate types open, engaged, disengaged and closed.

The second instrument, the CSQ (Downs & Hazen, 1977), is one of the most widely used scales to measure communication satisfaction. This study will use the seven dimensions of communication climate, communication with supervisors, organizational integration, media quality, horizontal and informal communication, organizational perspective, and personal feedback.

The two surveys could be distributed online using SurveyMonkey or by paper/pencil format, depending on the method your district prefers. Along with the two surveys, each prospective participant will receive a cover letter explaining the purpose of the research, voluntary participation in the study, confidentiality procedures, and an informed consent letter. The anonymity of teachers would be ensured because the survey will not ask for participant's names and will use a coding system to identify the specific school. The researcher is hoping to collect the data in April or May of 2018.

Downs, C. W., & Hazen, M. D. (1977). A factor analytic study of communication satisfaction. Journal of Business Communication, 14(3), 63-73. doi:10.1177/002194367701400306

Hoy, W. K., Tarter, C. J., & Kottkamp, R. B. (1991). Open schools, healthy schools: Measuring organizational climate. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

3. Give the names of the Council Bluffs School(s) you intend to involve to meet the project requirements. Are there certain demographics required for the project (i.e., specific grade level, gender, etc.)?

Since this is a quantitative study, I would like to survey as many full-time elementary teachers in the Council Bluffs Community Schools as possible. There are not certain demographics required for this study, other than the participants need to be full-time elementary teachers (grades Pre-K to 6th grade).

4. What amount of time would be required of staff or students in the schools in order to meet project requirements?

It should take teachers less than 20 minutes to complete both surveys.

5. Are there any other school records you would require (for example, achievement test scores or attendance)? No student identifiers will be made available including student names or ID numbers.

This study would not require any school records. Some general demographic information about the school will be presented.

6. Give the name of each person who will enter the schools. For non-district employees, please provide existing background checks for individuals or a plan to ensure background checks are in place prior to entry in schools.
   The only person that might enter the school would be the researcher, Janet Jahn. Janet is currently a teacher for Omaha Public Schools, thus a background check has been done.

7. What is the date you wish to begin? _Collection of data: April or May 2018

8. By what date do you anticipate being finished? May 2018

9. If this is a course requirement, please obtain the signature of your instructor responsible for this assignment and attach a copy of the assignment guidelines.

   Signature: *Dr. Jennifer Rose-Woodward* (electronic signature)

   Position: Assistant Director, Master of Arts in Teaching Program and Associate Professor of Education

   University/College/School/Department/Division: College of Saint Mary

10. Name of applicant (please print) Janet Jahn

Janet Jahn
Signature

10705 Valley Street
Omaha, NE 68124

Address

Position/Status	Email address
Doctoral Student	jjahn3262@CSM.edu

January 17, 2018 402-871-7028
Date Phone Number

Council Bluffs
Community School District

CRITERIA FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL

The approval or disapproval of requests will be made within the following general guidelines.

1. The only projects which will generally be approved are those which:
   a) contribute to the improvement of education in the Council Bluffs Community Schools;
   b) contribute to the improvement of education in general.

2. Even within the above categories, studies will generally be disapproved if they:
   a) appear to infringe on the privacy of pupils, parents, or staff members;
   b) present a burden to pupils or staff members;
   c) threaten school-community relations in any way;
   d) require an inordinate amount of time from classroom teaching/learning.

3. Research solely for a course requirement will be considered only for the Council Bluffs Community Schools staff.

4. At any point in the research process, Council Bluffs Community Schools staff can terminate the study if determined necessary for any reason.

5. Any results or product created as a result of this project which uses data from the district's students, staff, or facilities must be made available to the Council Bluffs Community Schools.

PARTICIPATION OF THE SCHOOLS

Generally, participation in any research study conducted by an outside agency or individual will be completely voluntary on the part of the principals, teachers, pupils and any other personnel involved.

Project Approval Signature Matty Thurdaz Date 1-19-18

Appendix F

Letter to Principals

TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION

IRB # 1804

Dear [official title and proper name of school principal]:

I am a doctoral student at the College of Saint Mary. My dissertation topic is elementary teachers' perceptions of organizational school climate and their levels of communication satisfaction. I am interested in researching this topic because I have been an elementary teacher for the last twenty years.

In January, I received permission from the district to email my two surveys, the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire and the Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire, to all the elementary teachers in your district. The surveys will be emailed this week and it should take around 15 minutes for teachers to complete both surveys.

I would appreciate any support you could offer that might encourage teacher participation. If you have any questions or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Janet Jahn
College of Saint Mary
7000 Mercy Road
Omaha, NE 68106
jjahn@CSM.edu3262

Dr. Rose-Woodward
Research Committee Chairperson
College of Saint Mary
Omaha, NE 68106
JRose-Woodward@CSM.edu

Appendix G

Participant Online Informed Consent

TEACHER'S PERCEPTIONS OF SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION

IRB # 1804

Dear Elementary Teacher,

You are invited to take part in a research study because you are an elementary teacher. The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' perceptions of school climate and levels of communication satisfaction. This research study is being conducted as part of the requirements of the doctoral degree program at College of Saint Mary.

You may receive no direct benefit from participating in this study but the information gained will be used to increase the knowledge in the areas of school climate and communication satisfaction.

Should you decide to participate you are being asked to complete the following on-line survey which should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is strictly voluntary. Furthermore, your response or decision not to respond will not affect your relationship with College of Saint Mary or any other entity. Please note that your responses will be used for research purposes only and will be strictly confidential. No one at College of Saint Mary will ever associate your individual responses with your name or email address. The information from this study may be published in journals and presented at professional meetings.

Your completion and submission of the questionnaire indicate your consent to participate in the study. You may withdraw at any time by exiting the survey. This study does not cost the participant in any way, except the time spent completing the survey. There is no compensation or known risk associated with participation.

Please read *The Rights of Research Participants* below. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the College of Saint Mary Institutional Review Board,

7000 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE 68144 (402-399-2400).

Thank you sincerely for participating in this important research study. If you have comments, problems or questions about the survey, please contact the researcher(s).

If you are 19 years of age or older and agree to the above please proceed to
and begin the survey.

Sincerely,

Janet Jahn

College of Saint Mary
7000 Mercy Road
Omaha, NE 68106
jjahn@CSM.edu3262

Dr. Rose-Woodward
College of Saint Mary
Omaha, NE 68106
JRose-Woodward@CSM.edu

Appendix H

AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT AT COLLEGE OF SAINT MARY YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:

1. TO BE TOLD EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH BEFORE YOU ARE ASKED TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH STUDY. The research will be explained to you in a way that assures you understand enough to decide whether or not to take part.

2. TO FREELY DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH.

3. TO DECIDE NOT TO BE IN THE RESEARCH, OR TO STOP PARTICIPATING IN THE RESEARCH AT ANY TIME. This will not affect your relationship with the investigator or College of Saint Mary.

4. TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESEARCH AT ANY TIME. The investigator will answer your questions honestly and completely.

5. TO KNOW THAT YOUR SAFETY AND WELFARE WILL ALWAYS COME FIRST. The investigator will display the highest possible degree of skill and care throughout this research. Any risks or discomforts will be minimized as much as possible.

6. TO PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY. The investigator will treat information about you carefully and will respect your privacy.

7. TO KEEP ALL THE LEGAL RIGHTS THAT YOU HAVE NOW. You are not giving up any of your legal rights by taking part in this research study.

8. TO BE TREATED WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT AT ALL TIMES.

THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSURING THAT YOUR RIGHTS AND WELFARE ARE PROTECTED. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS, CONTACT THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD CHAIR AT (402) 399-2400. *ADAPTED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA MEDICAL CENTER, IRB WITH PERMISSION. 36

Appendix I

"Protecting Human Research Participants" Certificate

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Janet Jahn** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 03/31/2016.

Certification Number: 2042993.

Appendix J

Institutional Review Board Approval

April 27, 2018

Dear Ms. Jahn,

Congratulations! The Institutional Review Board at College of Saint Mary has granted approval of your study titled *Teachers' Perceptions of School Climate and Communication Satisfaction.*

Your CSM research approval number is **CSM 1804**. It is important that you include this research number on all correspondence regarding your study. Approval for your study is effective through April 30, 2019. If your research extends beyond that date, please submit a "Change of Protocol/Extension" form which can be found in Appendix B at the end of the College of Saint Mary Application Guidelines posted on the IRB Community site.

Please submit a closing the study form (Appendix C of the IRB Guidebook) when you have completed your study.

Good luck with your research! If you have any questions or I can assist in any way, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Vicky Morgan

Dr. Vicky Morgan
Director of Teaching and Learning Center
Chair, Institutional Review Board

7000 Mercy Road • Omaha, NE 68106-2606 • 402.399.2400 • FAX 402.399.2341 • www.csm.ed