

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION AND TEAMING
STRUCTURE AT THE MIDDLE SCHOOL LEVEL

By

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ABSTRACT

This study compared the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding the characteristics of teams in their school and their job satisfaction levels. The study used two instruments to collect data. The Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument was used to identify the extent to which teachers perceive the characteristics of highly effective teams in their schools; the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales were used to measure teacher intrinsic, extrinsic, and overall job satisfaction; and a researcher-created questionnaire was used to collect ancillary data. Statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of the characteristics of the teams in their schools and their expressed job satisfaction. The results of the study indicate that maintenance of a collaborative culture in which educators engage in focused and purposeful activities dealing with instruction, assessment and professional development is essential in motivating teachers to perform above and beyond their current level. The study concluded that the attributes of teaming can impact teachers' attitudes toward their jobs and their motivation to improve performance.

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DEDICATIONS

When I began the University of Kansas doctoral program, I had one goal in mind; to get my degree. Having already obtained central office certification, I believed that completion of the program was primarily for the purpose of putting “Dr.” in front of my name. This was my first mistake of many along the journey to completion. I got much more than a title – I truly received an education. To my professors who believed in me and pushed me toward excellence, I say thank you.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Teachers unsatisfied with their positions may not perform to the best of their capabilities, stifling the continuous learning process for the learners in their school community. Shonk (1992) identified three underlying factors that affect how organizations successfully promote employee satisfaction and continuous growth in the workplace. The first factor is the organization's willingness to empower employees to participate in problem solving activities that are directly related to their work. The second factor is the organization's commitment to employee participation in goal setting, planning, and decision making. The third factor is the organization's ability to accomplish tasks by coordinating employees through smaller units often referred to as *teams*.

The building of personal working relationships through teams could have a particularly positive effect on teachers who often work in stressful and frustrating situations (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). Teaming could increase the likelihood of knowledge sharing for the improvement of all learners. Garner (1995) maintained that teamwork among professional educators should no longer be just an ideal but rather a practice. For the sake of the teaching profession, and the achievement of students, teamwork has become a necessity in education.

The teamwork concept promises higher quality services for children and families and higher morale and increased job satisfaction for teachers (Felner, Jackson, et al., 1997; Lipsitz, Jackson & Austin, 1997). When teachers are satisfied in their jobs, they are more energetic, innovative, and productive. Working collegially could create a web of support that helps teachers with stressful, frustrating, and dissatisfying tasks that hinder job satisfaction (Garner, 1995).

Background

Teacher Job Satisfaction

The classic definition of job satisfaction is any combination of psychological, physiological, and environmental circumstances that lead a person to say, “I am satisfied with my job.” Hoy and Miskel (1996) described other definitions, including (a) the extent to which employees like their work (Agho, Mueller, and Price, 1993), (b) the affective orientation of individuals toward the work roles that they presently occupy (Vroom, 1964), (c) an affective response of an individual to the job according to which job satisfaction results when on-the-job experiences relate to the individual’s values and needs (Muchinsky, 1987), and (d) a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences. (Locke, 1976) Cranny, Smith, and Stone (1992) added, “There is a general agreement that job satisfaction is an affective or emotional reaction to a job that results from the employee’s comparing actual outcomes to desired, expected, or deserved outcomes” (as cited in Hoy & Miskel, 1996, p. 252).

Organizational and management research often uses terms such as *organizational culture, climate, job satisfaction, financial incentives, achievement motives, competence motives, and management philosophy* (Bare-Oldham, 1999). Increasing job satisfaction has been the justification for much of this research. According to Blumberg (1975), the desire to investigate factors that influence job satisfaction probably originated from scientists experimenting with production and businesses concerned with increasing the efficiency of businesses in a competitive market.

The most basic category of needs centers on survival or physiological needs, such as food, water, and shelter. According to Maslow, the second need is economic security and the third need is social belonging, which involves interaction with others in the context of a lasting relationship. Designing jobs around groups or teams is a way for employees to satisfy belonging needs. The fourth need, self-esteem, includes the motivational drive of searching for the feeling of being worthwhile as an individual. Self-actualization, the highest level of human satisfaction, is a search for self development and professional growth. Maslow determined these needs to be hierarchal, and each was predicated upon the need below it.

Sergiovanni (1992) suggested the use of a two-factor theory in studying teacher job satisfaction. *Participation*, the first factor, involves only a minimal commitment to return, social acceptance, and reasonable supervision. For the most part, rewards associated with participation are extrinsic (Katz, 1964; Sergiovanni, 1992). The decision to perform goes beyond the terms of a teacher's contract based

on a fair day's work, and a fair day's pay. Because a school district can only require but not demand participation, performance is voluntarily. Therefore, the rewards for performance are intrinsic. These can include recognition, achievement, feelings of competence and empowerment; and the provision of exciting, challenging, interesting, and meaningful work (Sergiovanni, 1992). Schools can neither function adequately nor excel unless teachers invest in participation (Krug, 1989). Also, schools cannot excel unless the majority of teachers make this performance investment (Krug, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1992).

In the quest for the keys to effective working conditions, many behavioral scientists have progressed in the study of job satisfaction by examining worker needs and the workplace factors (Snyder & Anderson, 1986). When social scientists, including Lewin (1958) organized workers into groups and asked them to share their feelings and concerns about the work environments, it became clear that workers have more than just a specific job skill to contribute to the workplace. They have insights into productivity that have the potential to increase the organization's output, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Teams

Will a flawless grade configuration of schooling for young adolescents ever be developed? There has been Kindergarten through Grade 8, Grades five through Grade 8, and the general junior high school / middle school model of Grade 7 through Grade 9. There has been discussion about physical and emotional needs of the

children. Curriculum must then be matched to physical and emotional needs.

Combining all these components, educating the middle-school aged child is difficult.

When a school faculty is divided into smaller working units, the groupings of teachers are often referred to as *teams*. The definition of this term varies in the literature. Adair (1986) explained that the primary difference between the team and the group is that the contributions of individuals in a team are complementary, whereas they are interchangeable in a group. Larson and LaFasto (1989) adopted a very broad idea of a team asserting, “A team has two or more people; it has specific performance objectives or recognizable goals to be attained; and coordination of activity among the members of the team is required for the attainment of the team goal or objective” (p. 19). Hayes (1997) stated that most organizations organize their work-force into groups of people who work together but assign each worker his or her own job. Many organizations refer to these groups as teams. Whatever its manifestation, the word team conjures the image of a group whose members assume different roles, yet all work together to contribute to the final outcome. “A true team consists of a group of people who are task-focused, coordinated, each contributing their own personal talents and abilities and energies to the job in hand.” (Hayes, 1997, p. 2)

The process of teaming, practiced in organizations from sports teams to corporations, is very much a part of American culture (Buchholz & Roth, 1987). However, teaming does not occur naturally; teams are consciously developed. Many teams progress through the following three entities:

1. *Collection of individuals*: Initial collections of people tend to be individually centered, have individual rather than group goals, do not share responsibility, avoid change, and do not deal with conflict.
2. *Groups*: Members develop a group identity, define their roles, clarify their purpose, and establish norms for working together. However, groups tend to be leader centered; the leader provides direction, assigns tasks, reviews performance, and is the primary focus of communication.
3. *Team*: A team forms when a group is able to focus energy, respond rapidly to opportunities, and share both responsibilities and rewards. Teams are purpose-centered; members understand the purpose, and are committed to it.

Interdisciplinary teaming, best defined by Clark and Clark (1990) as two or more instructors from across the curriculum areas working collaboratively to plan, teach, and assess groups of students in multiple classrooms, using a variety of instructional strategies and resources in a variety of educational settings. Through the teaming concept, teachers work together in order to provide effective education for young adolescents. The interdisciplinary teaming concept also extends to other units, and provides for the development of common team guidelines and rules student seminar programs.

Interdisciplinary teams of teachers sharing common students and planning time have been vital to the concept of middle school education from its beginning (Erb, 1997). The junior high model, which tends to create large and aloof schools, sometimes forced students to fall through the cracks and become another number

(Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 2000; Clark & Clark, 1994; Erb, 1997; Jackson & Davis, 2000).

In 1989, Larson and LaFasto reported the results of a 3-year study in which they attempted to identify the unique characteristics of effectively functioning teams. They interviewed the members of a wide variety of teams in diverse settings, from schools to hospitals to businesses to sports. Their research was undertaken to specifically construct a measurement and feedback system for improving the performance of project and management teams. They sought to develop an instrument that would allow team leaders and members to describe their teams according to the dimensions that Larson and LaFasto's research had indicated were characteristics of unusually successful teams. In this research they found eight consistent patterns and characteristics that distinguished successful teams from unsuccessful teams. These included:

1. *A clear, elevating goal.* There is a clearly defined need – a goal to be achieved or a purpose to be served. There are clear consequences connected with a team's success or failure in achieving a goal.
2. *A results driven structure.* The design of a team is determined by the results needed to achieve rather than by extraneous considerations.
3. *Competent members.* Team members possess the essential skills, and abilities to accomplish the team's objectives.

4. *Unified commitment.* Achieving a team goal is a higher priority than any individual objective. Team members are willing to devote whatever effort is necessary to achieve team success.
5. *A collaborative climate.* Team members trust each other sufficiently to accurately share information, perceptions, and feedback.
6. *Standards for excellence.* Team members require each other to perform according to the team's established standards of excellence.
7. *External support and recognition.* The team is given the resources it needs to get the job done.
8. *Principled leadership.* The leader does not dilute the team's efforts with too many priorities.

According to Garner (1995), these eight characteristics are significant to the understanding of teams, teamwork, and team climate in schools. The eight characteristics provide criteria that can be used in evaluating teamwork in schools. As previously noted, teamwork does not occur just because a group of adults is called a team instead of a committee, a task force or a department. Teamwork is a complex process of interactions among persons working together.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the nature of the teaming characteristics established in a middle school organization, and teacher job satisfaction. Specifically, this study will examine the perceptions of middle school teachers in middle schools with an Average Daily Attendance (ADA) of

between 400 and 800 students regarding the characteristics of highly effective teams in their school, and job satisfaction levels. This study was unique in its use of teacher perceptions to assess the characteristics of highly effective teams in schools, and their relationship to teacher job satisfaction.

Boiney (2001) suggested that human beings diversity in characteristics such as gender, experience in the field and organization, and task functions are linked to higher performance as well as increased conflict, communication difficulties and expressed satisfaction. In consideration of Boiney's suggestion, this study included the examination of the variables of gender, types of teams, and length of teacher service. Because of the multitude of variables being examined, the data collected were useful regardless of the relationship between the characteristics of highly effective teams and teacher job satisfaction.

Research Questions Guiding the Study

The following primary research question guided this study:

1. Is there a significant relationship between perceived characteristics of highly effective teams, as measured by the Team Excellence Feedback for Development, and perceived teacher job satisfaction as measured by the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales of middle school teachers.

Significance of the Study

The study of the characteristics of highly effective teams and their relationship to teacher job satisfaction can provide administrators and teachers with valuable data

for several purposes. Principals can gain valuable information about how teachers perceive the team environment and the work environment that can help them diagnose the needs of their school culture, and adjust their leadership behavior to meet those needs. The information can be used to reform the education of administrators and teachers could be adapted to train them more appropriately in the skills of teamwork, collaboration, and empowerment. By highlighting the importance of teacher job satisfaction in career decisions, this study can encourage administrators to improve job satisfaction through the use of systematic plans to improve collaboration and teaming. If teachers are satisfied with their jobs, and model appropriate teamwork, student achievement is likely to increase.

Operational Definitions

The study used the following operational definitions:

1. A *team* is a group of two or more people; with specific performance objectives or recognizable goals. Coordination of activity among the members of the team is required for the attainment of the team goals or objectives. Members of a team work together but each member has his or her own position (Larson & LaFasto, 1989; Curtis, 1994; Hayes, 1997).
2. *The eight characteristics of highly effective teams* were identified and defined thoroughly in the Larson and LaFasto's (1989) research. Their research used an extensive three-stage process that spanned over a 3-year period. Larson and LaFasto developed a instrument they termed the *Team Excellence Feedback for Development*, that was used to measure the degree to which the

schools participating in this study possessed the eight characteristics of effective teams.

3. *Teacher job satisfaction*, was determined by measuring the teacher expressed extrinsic and intrinsic rewards (Herzberg, 1966; Sergiovanni, 1992; Lawler, Mohrman, Ledford, 1995; Mohrman, Cooke, Mohrman, 1978). The Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales (MCMJSS) were used to assess teacher perceptions.

Limitations of the Research

This study was limited by the following conditions:

1. Teacher job satisfaction and teaming characteristics were measured as personal perceptions, whose accuracy may have been a limiting factor. (Kerlinger, 1986; Krug, 1989).
2. This study is limited by the use of only one measure of each variable. School teaming characteristics were measured by only the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument and teacher job satisfaction was measured only by MCMJSS.
3. This study only researched the impact of the characteristics of highly effective teams on job satisfaction levels. Other factors, such as compensation and accountabilities may influence job satisfaction levels.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Introduction

The review of literature considers the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and the characteristics of highly effective teams. The research resulted in the identification of several themes relevant in this investigation that were used to organize the review of literature. This review addresses: (a) an overview of current teacher conditions, (b) an overview of job satisfaction, (c) teacher job satisfaction, (d) an overview of teams, (e) teams in business and industry, (f) school reform and teams, (g) types of teams in schools, (h) characteristics of highly effective teams, and (i) member diversity, before providing a summary of information.

Overview of Current Teacher Conditions

According to the report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF; 1997), *Doing What Matters Most: Investing in Quality Teaching*, working conditions play important roles in determining who continues teaching. Teachers were highly sensitive to their working conditions. Between 1988 and 1994, teacher attrition rates climbed from 5.6% to 6.6 % and more than 30% of beginning teachers left the profession within the first 5 years. Only about 33% of all public school teachers reported they planned to remain in teaching as long as they were able to do so. The report predicted that two million teachers would need to be hired in the next decade. Thus, the nation's ability to put a highly qualified teacher in

every classroom depends on proactive policies and practices that increase the quantity and quality of teachers.

One NCTAF (1997) recommendation was to create schools organized for student and teacher success. Teachers need not only knowledge and skills, but also conditions in which they can teach well. These conditions include more time for teachers to work with other teachers in collegial groups and with students in shared groups and less time working in isolation. Many authors have argued that the culture of isolation is a great hindrance to improved practice and achievement (Louis, Kruse & Bryk, 1995; Little, 1982; Lortie, 1975, Rosenholtz, 1985). Most traditional teaching practices – learning by trial and error, through one’s own mistakes, experimenting with new approaches in private and meeting the needs of students are performed in isolation (Pounder, 1998). Arnold and Stevenson (1998) claimed teaching could be a lonely affair. In many conventional schools, teachers are isolated from meaningful and satisfying interactions with colleagues. Instead, “they generally plan, teach, evaluate, and provide for their students on their own” (p. 7).

Louis et al. (1995) maintained that teachers should no longer bear the sole responsibility for teaching students either at the elementary or secondary level. Teaming provides teachers with the opportunity to develop meaningful professional relationships with their colleagues, while growing professionally. When teachers work collaboratively by sharing useful information and exchanging insights about common students and planning strategies, expansion of knowledge and professionalism flourish (Arnold & Stevenson, 1998).

A number of collaborative arrangements have been used in schools, including site-based governance teams, curriculum teams, grade-level or department teams, interdisciplinary teams, and teams formed in response to particular problems in a school or school district (Garner, 1995). The teams provide teachers the authority to make important decisions about students and curriculum, gain greater control over their own scheduling and grouping, and obtain more collegial support. Arnold and Stevenson (1998), reported that teaming establishes a type of synergy in which the whole (the team) has become greater than the sum of its parts (the individual teachers).

Overview of Job Satisfaction

To help business managers begin to understand the needs of employees, many turned to research conducted by Maslow (1943). Maslow developed a theory of needs, that have been useful in identifying the wants, or desires that were important to employees. Maslow reasoned that human needs existed in a hierarchical sequence and employees' needs could only be satisfied within the sequence. The five basic categories of Maslow's theory of needs are the following:

1. *Physiological needs.* These were survival needs including the need for food, water, air, and shelter (Mayo, 1945; Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980).
2. *Safety and Security.* These were needs that centered on economic and personal security (Mayo, 1945; Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980).

3. *Social belonging*. These dealt with social interaction, group identity and the need for friendship and interpersonal contacts (Mayo, 1945; Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980).
4. *Self-Esteem*. These needs referred to the feeling that one was a worthwhile person (Mayo, 1945; Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980).
5. *Self-Actualization*. These needs involved the desire to fulfill through personal growth and development (Mayo, 1945; Sergiovanni & Carver, 1980).

In the quest for the keys to effective working conditions, many behavioral scientists went further in the study of job satisfaction by examining the worker's needs and the factors of the workplace (Snyder & Anderson, 1986). Social scientists such as Lewin (1958) organized workers into groups and asked them to share their feelings and concerns about the work environment. It became clear that workers had something besides a specific job skill to contribute to the workplace. They had insights about productivity, which if shared with management, had the potential to increase the organization's output—both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Early job satisfaction studies led to the understanding that two kinds of management assumptions about workers permeated the workplace, each stimulating a different kind of worker productivity. One assumption was that people basically dislike work and consequently need to be told what to do. He called this Theory X. Another view was that people seek pleasure in their work, and therefore should participate in making decisions about that work. This view was named Theory Y. It was soon learned that management increased the norms of worker productivity by

involving workers in decision-making and by organizing them into teams (Snyder & Anderson, 1986).

Teacher Job Satisfaction

The concept of Maslow's need hierarchy (1943) and the early studies on job satisfaction in the workplace provided the basis for studies on teacher job satisfaction. Expanding on their research, Herzberg, Maunser, and Snyderman (1959) identified *recognition* and *achievement* as the most powerful satisfiers for teachers. They found that teachers experienced a higher level of satisfaction when school leaders emphasized the positive, demonstrated a belief in their teachers' dignity and worth, and established teacher empowerment within the school.

Herzberg (1966) described a *two-factor* theory concerning teacher job satisfaction. Achievement, recognition, the work itself, and the intrinsic interest of the job were *motivators* which lead to increased job satisfaction. On the other hand, working conditions, pay, job security, policy, administration, and relationships with peers were *hygienes* which led to decreased job satisfaction. Herzberg referred to motivators as *intrinsic factors* and hygienes as *extrinsic factors*.

Sergiovanni (1992) suggested that teacher job satisfaction is related to *participation* and *performance*. Participation referred to the minimal commitment necessary. Although school leaders can require participation, performance is voluntary and personal. Therefore, the intrinsic rewards of recognition, empowerment, and meaningful work opportunities are critical to job satisfaction (Sergiovanni, 1992)

Herzberg (1982) developed an approach to work design called *job enrichment* whose purpose is to motivate employees to improve work performance by increasing psychological growth. For example, providing achievement and recognition creates opportunities to increase knowledge; providing responsibility creates opportunities to enhance understanding; and providing advancement creates opportunities to experience empowerment and decision-making. People use motivators efficiently, which increases individual growth, individual satisfaction and organizational productivity.

Ratsoy (1973) concluded that teacher job satisfaction is lower in schools where teachers perceive a high degree of bureaucracies, hierarchy of authority and centralization. Factors that clarify the job objectives and yield equal applications of school policy promoted high levels of satisfaction. Miskel, Defrain, and Wilcox (1980) stated that work motivation is also consistently correlated to teacher job satisfaction. Teachers who believe that they have the capability to do the job and experience positive consequences for their efforts generally have high levels of job satisfaction. Nicholson (1980) added that leadership, decision-making and communication processes impact teacher job satisfaction. Greater participation in decision-making and open communication concerning goals and objectives throughout the school are positively correlated with teacher job satisfaction.

Most teachers report greater job satisfaction when they are assigned to work on teams. Research has indicated that teachers from teamed schools feel a greater sense of professionalism as a result of having the opportunity to work together on

important professional concerns (Garner, 1995; Lipsitz, 1984). Larson and LaFasto (1989) concluded that when those with the technical skills and desire to contribute, work together in collaborative settings, “the observable outcome is an elevated sense of confidence among individual team members” (p. 71). This sense of confidence leads to increased feelings of belonging, self-esteem, and an increased in the level of their job satisfaction.

Hackman and Oldham (1980) created a job-characteristic model that identified seven critical teacher job characteristics that influenced job satisfaction levels. The job characteristics were:

1. *Dealing with others.* The degree to which the job required one to interact and deal with multiple others.
2. *Skill variety.* The need for many different skills to accomplish job tasks.
3. *Task identity.* The completion of a whole task or piece of work.
4. *Task significance.* The degree to which a job affected others or their work in the organization or work interdependence.
5. *Work discretion or autonomy.* The freedom, independence, and discretion in scheduling or carrying out work assignments.
6. *Feedback for the work itself.* (about one’s work performance).
7. *Feedback from others* about one’s work performance.

Specifically, Hackman and Oldham (1980) concluded that enhancement and enrichment of these job characteristics, favorably influence teachers’ critical psychological states, including the meaningfulness of work, responsibility for work,

and knowledge of work results. These critical psychological states influence work outcomes, including internal work motivation, growth satisfaction, general satisfaction, and work effectiveness. Research has suggested that teaming in schools enhances these work related outcomes. More specifically, teaming teachers experience greater work satisfaction, sense of professionalism and professional efficacy than do non-teaming teachers (Lipsitz, 1984; Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Curtis (1994) derived job satisfaction from belonging to a team with real responsibilities that gives all members new challenges and a reason to feel proud of themselves and their team. This pride fills a critical need in an attempt for the teachers to feel a sense of belonging and ownership in their work.

Overview of Teams

A team has been defined as a group of two or more people who coordinate activities between/among themselves for the attainment of a specific performance objective or recognizable goal. Members of a team work together but each individual member also works autonomously. (Curtis, 1994; Hayes, 1997; Larson & LaFasto, 1989;).

Hutchins (1992) described three kinds of teams: *tactical*, *creative*, and *problem-solution*. Tactical teams are those with complex tasks executed with a high degree of precision, such as a surgical or military team. Creative teams always seek new possibilities and approaches to problems. Problem-solution teams are composed of members with practical knowledge who know how to get to the crux of the problem while remaining aware of the needs of the other team members.

West and Wallace (1991) identified three variables in establishing effective teams; the *climate*, the *degree of commitment*, and *collaboration*. A team's level of collaboration depends upon whether its members enjoy open communication and mutual trust, share information willingly and resolve conflict by discussing issues openly and reaching consensus.

Robbins and Finley (1995) stated that no matter what type of team was established all teams go through four stages of development in order to achieve success:

1. *Forming*: When a group was learning to deal with one another; time in which minimal work gets accomplished.
2. *Storming*: A time of stressful negotiation of the terms under which the team worked together.
3. *Norming*: A time in which roles were accepted, team feeling was developed and information was freely shared.
4. *Performing*: Optimal levels were finally realized with regard to productivity, quality, decision-making, allocation of resources, and personal interdependence. (p.62)

According to Garner (1995), simply calling a group of people a team does not automatically lead them to work together successfully or achieve real teamwork. In order for a team to be successful, it must contain the essential components of effectively functioning teams. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) identified *themes and identity, enthusiasm and energy, event driven histories, personal commitment, and*

performance results as the five distinctive signs that indicate that a group is functioning as a team.

According to Larson and LaFasto (1989), a real team is a small group of people jointly committed to a common purpose who share goals and consider each member equally accountable. *Pseudo* teams consist of people who call themselves a team, but do not actually coordinate what they are doing or establish collective responsibility. The potential team is a group that recognizes and is working for improvement but is held back by a lack of shared goals and the presence of working practices that emphasize individual responsibilities. The *high-performance team*, the realization of the ultimate in team potential, consists of members deeply committed not only to the team's success, but also to each other's personal growth and development.

Carr (1992) stated that there are many different types of teams that an organization could use, including *quality teams*, *quality circles*, and *project-based teams*. Quality teams have a clear purpose—to improve the quality of an organization's product, service, and/or work environment. Quality circles, also called *process action teams*, solve problems by working on specific processes. Project-based teams focus on a specific objective that once attained leads to disassembly of the team to create a new team to work on a new project.

A primary benefit that teams offer is an added amount of information. By sheer number, teams obviously generate more ideas than do individuals working alone. In addition, groups of people tended to improve creativity. Teams consist of

several minds from different backgrounds focused on a single topic who, due to their varied perspectives, tend to be more objective than an individual alone (Positive Personnel Practices, 1982).

Robbins and Finley (1995) reported the following advantages and benefits to members of teams working together compared to individuals working alone:

1. Teams increase productivity.
2. Teams improve communication.
3. Teams do work that ordinary groups could not do.
4. Teams make better use of resources.
5. Teams are more creative and more efficient in solving problems.
6. Teams produce higher-quality decisions.
7. Teams produce higher quality goods and services.
8. Teams mean improved processes.
9. Teams integrate people while complementing individual differences.

Although teams have provided many benefits and that were associated with greater job satisfaction, many teachers and administrators remain resistant to their formation (Hayes, 1997). One reason is been the lack of belief that teams make true differences in professional growth, student achievement, and job satisfaction. School leaders often believe that individuals working alone perform better and are less troublesome to manage. In addition, some leaders believe that empowered, decision-making teams might lead to poor decisions that ultimately hinder their success.

Sometimes resistance is fomented by individuals who are threatened by sharing control with others and becoming dependant on others to achieve goals.

Larson and LaFasto (1989) stated that to solve the enormous problems that society faces, we must learn how to collaborate more effectively. In accordance with this need, personal agendas should be set aside so that a common understanding of a problem has an opportunity to develop. More specifically, “Activities of people can be coordinated and efforts brought together within the structure that integrates and focuses rather than diffuses” (p. 15). The trust established and sharing of knowledge resulting from this synergy led to the best decisions for the organization, and growth for individuals (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

Teams in Business and Industry

The emphasis on quality in contemporary organizational literature can be traced to the popularity of W. Edwards Deming (1982) theory of Total Quality Management (TQM). Deming's approach can be summarized as a set of 14 principles for improving an organization. In summary, the 14 points create an organization that is constantly improving the quality of the service and products through continuous evaluation and improvement of each part of the system. One of the 14 points is the teamwork concept. Deming believed that breaking down the barriers between departments is essential for the establishment of collaboration and problem solving within the organization. Organizations should avoid artificial barriers that inhibit cooperation and teamwork. Structural features that foster isolation and extreme specialization are counterproductive to quality work. In addition, TQM encourages teams to openly share information, particularly performance data, in order to improve quality (Lawler, et al., 1995).

Teamwork requires each member to complement other members strengths and weaknesses and sharpen his or her skills with other members' intellects (Deming, 1982). Deming explained,

Everyone can take part in a team. Everyone on a team has a chance to contribute ideas, plans, and figures; but anyone may expect to find some of his best ideas submerged by consensus of the team. A good team has a social memory. (p. 90)

Everyone, regardless of his or her job, needs a chance to learn and develop. In a fragmented and individualized culture, people tend to go off in different directions,

unaware of what other people are doing. In addition, in a culture in which individuals were isolated and fragmented, people had little chance to work for the best advantage of the organization and develop individually to their full potential.

Katzenbach and Smith (1993) argued that high-performing organizations depend on the creation of strong, semi-autonomous working teams. In industry, production and profit levels increase when businesses transform into team-based organizations. Therefore, some businesses go to unprecedented lengths to build team spirit (Hayes, 1997).

Maeroff (1993b) considered three assumptions made by experts who advocated teams for business. First, those closest to the work knew best how to perform and improve their jobs. Second, most employees want to feel that they own their jobs and were making meaningful contributions to the effectiveness of the organization. Third, teams provide possibilities for empowerment not available to individual employees. Maeroff reported that empowered teams bring significant advantages to the workplace. Empowered teams in the workplace create a synergism that produces more ideas than by people working alone.

Peters and Waterman (1982) reported a significant increase in the job satisfaction and profit in many of the Fortune 500 companies that utilized the teamwork concept. One attribute found in these companies is a sense of family and belonging within the organization. Many successful companies, such as Proctor and Gamble, Toyota, and Xerox have been built on the concept of small team organizations (Snyder & Anderson, 1986).

School Reform and Teams

Schools, like other American organizations, have traditionally been managed in a top-down fashion. School boards hired the superintendent, who hired and supervised the principal, who hired and supervised the teachers. The system worked effectively until the late 1950s and 1960s. Since then, schools have come under increasing attack from many stakeholders. In response to these criticisms, the schools, just like their business counterparts, have gone through numerous waves of reform (Garner, 1995).

Maeroff (1993a) reported that one of the waves of reform that has not been tried enough was change by means of a group or team. This reform involves creating a diverse group of people, including the principal, of true believers who assume ownership of new ideas and learn strategies for implementing them and for winning adherents among their colleagues in the school community. Maeroff added that teaming in schools increases the possibility of educational movement by the formation of a nucleus of committed people prepared to take risks inside and outside their classrooms.

Collaboration is a unique experience whereas professional isolation remains a curse familiar to most teachers. Teachers continue to have little time for professional literature reading and research. Joint planning and team teaching have not been encouraged. Due to the lack of collaboration, minimal professional improvement and growth has taken place in schools. The very thing asked of its students remains foreign to the adults in a school (Garner, 1995).

According to Maeroff (1993a), the collaborative approach to change in schools is similar to that implemented in business and industry, where self-managed teams were formed to give employees on those teams control over their work schedules and performance as well as hiring and firing. Those teams were created as vehicles to increase efficiency, effectiveness and employee motivation at the worksite. Over the last two decades, educational stakeholders have begun to realize the importance of teamwork. Inspired by the changes in the management of American businesses, they have increased public demand for school improvement. (Garner, 1995). As the Information Age emerged, the formation of interdisciplinary teams became more important. Traditional educational practices, such as the teachers being isolated in individual classrooms, were no longer adequate to the task of educating the next generation of young adolescents. Students have become too diversified to function in the departmentalized and isolated manner of the early 20th century (Garner).

Aldridge and Lewis (1997) found that teams could create the following hazards that hinder organizational productivity as well as individual growth and satisfaction:

1. Team meetings that are too time consuming.
2. Poor leadership that leads to ineffectiveness.
3. Members who lack team member skills.
4. Differences in commitment and effort that lead to conflicts.
5. Disciplinary differences that lead to communication difficulties.

6. Creation of such a high degree of cohesiveness that relevant information is screened out.

Past teaching practices have included teachers working alone and educating their own students within a school. These practices have caused teacher isolation, the suffocation of professional growth, and decreased job satisfaction. Teacher practices have been characterized by such roles as (a) instructing the youth, (b) planning the instruction, (c) evaluating the performance of students, (d) managing student behavior, (e) carrying out communications with parents, (f) keeping records, and (g) enforcing rules. On the other hand, the teamwork model engages teachers to plan collaboratively, deliver instruction jointly and evaluate students interactively (Dickinson & Erb, 1997).

According to Curtis (1994), teams are most effective in a knowledge or service-based organization. When transforming schools into more collaborative organizations, people are asked to share information, decision-making and work: in essence, they change the patterns of their relationships so that they are more interdependent. This process is in stark contrast to many traditional practices that tended to favor professional isolation, autonomy, or discretion (Pounder, 1998).

Garner (1995) maintained that the team model brought together people who assume both collective and individual responsibility for achieving common goals and objectives. Teams increase teacher participation and ownership in the achievement of their students as well as their own professional development. Implicit in the team approach is the conception of the continuous intellectual improvement of all learners

through the sharing of knowledge. The teamwork model fosters a school culture in which teachers are encouraged to collaborate and pursue professional growth together. Teams contribute to the establishment of a true learning community in which all members are constantly expanding themselves (Maeroff, 1993b).

The teamwork model in schools thrives on the principal being able to share power with teachers, a practice sometimes referred to as *transformational leadership* (Maeroff, 1993b). A transformational leader's power was manifested *through* people rather than *over* people. In a faculty with this type of leadership, teachers become leaders, an idea that requires principals to have confidence in teachers. Furthermore, principals must be involved in the teams in order to have an understanding of what is going on in the school, provide input, and possibly share in the team's convictions. In other words, a principal's participation is essential for the survival of teams (Maeroff, 1993b).

Pounder (1999) stated that school restructuring and collaborative initiatives are not likely to have a significant impact on the students or teachers unless schools are organized in ways that involve the teachers in decisions tied to the needs of all the learners in the school. Walsh and Shay (1993) added that teachers who work together on teams perceive their school climate as more participative in relation to goal commitment, decision-making processes, and cooperation. Teamed teachers also perceive themselves as significantly more supportive to their students and colleagues. The participative climate of team structure is associated with increased teacher job

satisfaction, and increased teacher and student sense of responsibility for meeting the school goals.

Considering that investments in teacher learning are lead to increases in student learning, Senge (1990) stated that developing a rich learning environment for teachers and students should be an essential element of any school-restructuring movement. Transforming the school into a learning organization requires the formation of teams of employees who learn together and take advantage of the collective strength.

Types of Teams in Schools

Maeroff (1993b) reported that *school culture* consists of a conscious pattern of values, actions, and artifacts that exist in the school. *Team building* is an attempt to alter the culture of a school by influencing the ways teachers perform their work and the quality of their interaction with each other. Collaboration and a sense of collegiality among teachers are essential to the success of team building.

Sergiovanni (1992) maintained that collegiality must be understood as a form of professional virtue. Team building is considered the beginning of that collegiality. Teams produce a sense of community and shared commitment that diminishes teacher isolation and uncertainty about effectiveness. Maeroff (1993b) explained that teacher empowerment, in conjunction with collegiality helps foster a climate of receptivity and openness. Empowerment cultivates collegiality among teachers, increases their knowledge, and gives them decision-making power. Empowerment does not mean

teachers assume the principal's role, but rather that teachers become more confident and knowledgeable members of effective teams.

According to Maeroff (1993a), a team's role in a school is determined by the composition of the team. Teams use a variety of methods to perform their work in a school. For example, teams in secondary schools are usually organized within a single subject or discipline. Multidisciplinary teams are more common in middle schools and are the rule in elementary schools (Snyder & Anderson, 1986). Regardless of its role or function, the team is part of a systemic effort at change whose work ultimately affects every aspect of and everyone associated with the school. Although, a team may focus on one aspect of school function, that aspect affects the entire school (Snyder & Anderson, 1986).

Maeroff (1993b) described several types of formation that promote change in schools. Teams might be set up as, (a) *governance teams*, (b) *subject matter teams*, (c) *grade-level teams*, (d) *pedagogy teams*, (e) *interdisciplinary teams*, or (f) *multipurpose teams*.

Governance Teams

Governance teams, which function under either school- or site-based management, participate in shared decision-making activities with the administrative team of the school. Team building is a necessary step for this important group of people, who often had no formal training in problem solving. Team building helps enable them to deal with conflicts that arise in various aspects of school operation.

Team building for the purpose of governance can be achieved even at schools that were not operating under school-based management. Various team tasks and issues include; student transportation, lunch supervision, parent relations, and playground procedures. Although these tasks seem trivial to most, they are important issues for teachers. Consequently, team members become important leaders of the school (Maeroff, 1993b). *Organized-shared governance* involves creating patterned processes that transform schools into more collaborative organizations. Establishing shared governance changes the nature of the relationships and patterns of relating in a school (Pounder, 1998).

Subject Matter Teams

Organizing a team around subject matter or content allows teachers to rapidly focus on the crux of their work while helping overcome isolation and encouraging collegiality. The members of these teams become inclined to talk regularly about aspects of their subject or content. Such teams help strengthen the ability of teachers to teach subjects in which they lack confidence or are weak (Maeroff, 1993b). Most subject-matter teams in schools have a content leader, often referred to as a department head. As part of their yearlong commitment, content leaders facilitate meetings in which they lead discussions on classroom instruction. Information from the content meetings is then reported to the school-based decision making council or governance team (Pedigo, 2002).

Efficient content teams dissect student data and research best practices in order to improve student achievement. Using a variation of protocol when examining

student work helps in determining what is needed to increase student achievement. This system keeps the entire staff focused on all students and fosters discussions about what students actually know and are able to do, rather than what has been taught while enhancing teacher knowledge. It also has enhanced the knowledge of the teachers (Pedigo, 2002).

Grade-level Teams

Teachers in elementary and middle schools have naturally organized themselves according to grade levels. Students have generally attended exploratory classes for a certain amount of time, leaving the grade-level teachers with time outside of the classroom. Periods without their students enable grade-level teams to work individually and collectively on grade-level issues. Consequently, these teams not only enhanced student achievement, but also encourage collaboration and professional development (Maeroff, 1993b).

Grade level teams spend a great deal of time discussing their students and making teaching decisions. Certain organizational practices have proven useful in creating a sense of family, opportunities for social interaction, and team building. Empowering grade level teams to make teaching decisions has been shown to have a positive impact on the school work culture (Chance, Cummins, & Wood, 1996).

Pedagogy Teams

Pedagogy teams are groups of people in an elementary or secondary school organized around professional interests related to teaching and learning. Examples of these interests include cooperative education, technology, or alternative assessment. These teams have been called *study groups, mentor groups, or action research teams* (Maeroff, 1993b).

Interdisciplinary Teams

Interdisciplinary teaming was implemented in many schools as part of the middle school movement beginning in the 1960s. This concept has increasingly found its way into restructured elementary and secondary schools (Van Til, Vars & Lounsbury, 1967). Interdisciplinary team members who represent different contents or subjects often include music, art, and special education teachers. Because its members share daily preparation and planning, ongoing collaboration and communication is essential for the team's effectiveness (Maeroff, 1993b). Some middle schools establish support teams that consist of personnel not directly responsible for teaching students, but who directly support the work of teachers and administrators. Such teams are often composed of media specialists, counselors, and nurses. Another type of interdisciplinary team is the special education team (Maeroff, 1993b).

Multipurpose Teams

One type of team often assumes responsibilities associated with another type of team. For example, a grade-level team might also organize itself around the exploration of a particular issue or pedagogy. A governance team might be composed of members of an interdisciplinary team. Teams have often been structured along more than one dimension.

Garner (1995) maintained that many differences arise among schools when they are awarded the freedom and responsibility to design and implement their own structures and programs. However, many similarities are maintained among schools using the team concept. One of these similarities is the creation of two basic types of teams, the *leadership team* and the *action team*. The leadership team has been compared to the governance team described by Maeroff (1993b). Garner (1995) asserted that the leadership team is the most critical team in schools that use the team concept. This team is also called the *planning team* or *the school improvement team*. Team leader roles include developing clear goals and objectives for the school, building support for teachers, providing input in the decisions that affect the school, creating action teams to carry out the decisions, and monitoring and measuring the outcomes of all teams (Garner).

Characteristics of Highly Effective Teams

Larson and LaFasto (1989) maintained with certainty that society has the ability to satisfy all the basic needs of humanity. After conducting their research, they reported they could not identify any goal that an organized group of cooperating individuals could not achieve. However, they (1989) also maintained that society has demonstrated an inability to work together effectively to solve problems, which they describe as a “developmental disability in the area of social competence” (p. 13). This inability to collaborate and work together inspired their three-year study of effective teams, which allowed them to identify the characteristics, features, dimensions, and attributes of effectively functioning teams. Their research also prompted them to develop the following broad definition of team: “A team has two or more people; it has specific performance objectives or recognizable goals to be attained; and coordination of activity among members of the team is required for the attainment of the goal or objective” (p. 19).

Larson and LaFasto (1989) researched teams that had made noteworthy achievements to gain insight in to the nature of successful teamwork. They conducted interviews with the leaders and members of each team and identified distinguishing factors in effective team performance. They then operationalized the characteristics of high-performance teams into a set of measures that can be used to monitor and provide feedback to the management teams.

LaFasto and Larson’s (1990) took their study, which used theoretical sampling and interviewing through the three stages of *divergence*, *testing*, and

saturation. The divergence stage identified a widespread, divergent sample of teams that ranged from the American Leadership Forum to the U.S. Space Command to the 1966 Notre Dame Championship football team. The common characteristics or dimensions of effectively functioning teams seemed to emerge quickly, which led them to the second stage (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). The purpose of the testing stage the testing stage, which moved the sampling from divergence to homogeneity, was to determine whether the characteristics identified in the first phase could also be identified in a narrower sample of teams. The two types of teams chosen for analysis were executive management teams and project teams. Teams such as Baxter International, Emerson Electric, McDonald's Chicken Nugget Team, and the Boeing 747 Airplane Project were included in the divergence stage. Once again, the properties of successful teams were easily identifiable and highly consistent (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

In an attempt to avoid any missing characteristics, Larson and LaFasto (1989) moved into the third and final stage called saturation. The intent was to exhaust the theoretical dimensions of the phenomenon being studied. The teams chosen in this stage were of the unusual variety. Examples of teams in this stage were disaster teams, the U.S. Navy Strike Warfare Center, the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk, and the Presidential Cabinets (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

Clear, Elevating Goal

Larson and LaFasto (1989) discovered that successful teams have a clear understanding of the objectives of the organization and a belief that the goals of the

team are worthwhile. Unsuccessful teams function ineffectively because of unfocused goals, politics in the organization, or interference from individual goals that take priority over team goals. The most effective teams are developed around clearly defined goals, which are the heart of highly effective teams (Garner, 1995). Goals are a source of unity and teamwork for individuals with differing personalities, diverse points of view, and an array of talents (Carr, 1992). Despite differences, clearly defined goals concentrate the effort of the individuals in a single direction, allowing the team to function as a unit and with greater effectiveness (Hayes, 1997).

Results-Driven Structure

The importance of structure is not in its presence or absence, nor in having structure for structure's sake. Rather, the significance of structure lies in identifying the appropriate structure for the achievement of a specific performance objective—a configuration that does not confuse effort with results and that makes sense to the team members involved. (Larson & LaFasto, 1989, p. 40)

In essence, by focusing on performance goals, as opposed to the process of becoming a team, most small groups can achieve performance goals (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). The hunger for performance is far more important to team success than are team building exercises that focus on personal feelings, interpersonal skills, and satisfaction. Those qualities develop naturally as the team works to achieve its goals (Curtis, 1994).

Competent Team Members

Carr (1992) maintained that for a team to succeed, its' members possess subject matter competence and perform their functions well. Larson and LaFasto's

(1989) research demonstrated overwhelmingly that in order for a team to be considered successful, the appropriate members must be selected, each of whom must be prepared to achieve the team's objective by obtaining the necessary technical and personal skills for successful performance. Team members will not fully exert themselves unless they believe that the team has the resources, support, and skills to achieve its objectives and goals. Personal accountability for task completion does not develop unless each member believes that the other members can complete their tasks. Confidence in other members is essential for a team to perform at a high level (Tjsovold & Tjsovold, 1991).

Unified Commitment

Larson and LaFasto (1989) asserted that unified commitment is difficult to understand unless one has experienced it. The team spirit of an organization is critical in determining the degree of unified commitment of the individual teams. Unified commitment is a sense of loyalty and dedication to the team that involves having an excitement and enthusiasm about the team. Curtis (1994) added that commitment was the "heartbeat of an effective team" (p. 73). Teamwork requires that members support the strengths and neutralize the weaknesses of other team members by criticizing in private and praising in public. Teams with a unified commitment continuously looked for more effective ways to work toward a goal and accomplish a task while becoming a more cohesive unit (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

Collaborative Climate

According to Larson and LaFasto (1989), the *climate* of an organization fosters collaboration and determines the culture of the organization. According to Hart (1998) climate refers to prevailing conditions that were enduring over time that can be used to distinguish one environment from another. Larson and LaFasto (1989) defined *collaboration* as people working well together. Hart defined collaboration as the cooperation of equals who voluntarily share decision-making and work toward common goals.

Carr (1992) contended that a high functioning team experiences effective interaction processes among its members. Team members communicate effectively with each other by establishing and maintaining positive relationships and resolving conflicts with problem solving. Over time, positive working relationships establish conditions that reflect a collaborative climate.

Standards of Excellence

According to Larson and LaFasto (1989) *standards* lead to pressure to achieve a required or expected level of performance. Standards address the two questions that every team must ask: What are the rewards of success and what are the consequences of failure? These standards came from four sources: (a) the individual, (b) the team, (c) the consequences of success and failure, and (d) sources outside the team.

Effective teams expect a lot of themselves and aspire to high standards that are difficult to attain. When team members are challenged, performance needs to improve and challenging goals tend to be achieved (Curtis, 1994). Whether they aim

for superior service, improved quality, or new product development, effective teams have high expectations; indeed, “A lofty goal will “light the fire” of each team member” (Drucker, 1990, p. 42).

External Support and Recognition

Garner (1995) explained that successful teams see themselves working in a manner compatible with the organization’s philosophy and values. They receive support from their supervisors and garner recognition and rewards when they achieve their goals. Larson and LaFasto (1989) recognized this external support and recognition is more an effect rather than a cause of team success. They detected that it happened more for its absence in poorly functioning teams as opposed to its presence in effective teams. Effective team leaders provide support and create a process for monitoring performance. After reviewing assessment results, the final step is to provide reward and recognition if the results are satisfactory or adjust team strategies and goals if the results are unsatisfactory. Rewards and incentives can take many forms, but whatever form they take, they must be comprehensible to all members and aligned with achievement of the team’s goal (LaFasto & Larson, 2001).

Principled Leadership

Robbins and Finley (1995) claimed that leadership is the most frequently used word in organizational literature. They stated that team leaders add value by leveraging their organizations’ assets and outcomes beyond expectations on highly functioning teams. The result of this value-adding leadership is enhanced performance in the dimensions of self and others, awareness and choice, focus and

integration and innovation and action. Leaders also added value by obtaining more than that required or expected out of their existing human and physical resources. By working cooperatively with others, effective team leaders guide problem-solving process and capture opportunities for team success.

Larson and LaFasto (1989) described leadership as one of the most critical elements for effective teams. Their research revealed that the right person in the leadership role can “add tremendous value to any collective effort, even to the point of sparking the outcome with an intangible kind of magic” (p. 118). As Garner (1995) stated in his summary of Larson and LaFasto’s research, “effective leaders establish a vision, create change and unleash talent” (p. 11).

Leadership of an effective team entails developing the capabilities and talents of the members and combining the strengths so each member can contribute to the team goal (Curtis, 1994). Blase and Kirby (1992) indicated that faculty involvement in decision-making is most extensive when formal team structures are in place. Effective principals tend to involve more people, and to concede more authority on a wider range of issues. For a school to become more responsive to student and teacher needs through teaming, the principal had to relinquish the traditional authoritarian role in favor of collaboration, facilitation, coordination, and synergy (Arnold & Stevenson, 1998).

Curtis (1994) maintained that the task of leadership is not one of motivating people, for they are already motivated. Rather, leaders are challenged with the task of unlocking and channeling the existing motives in individuals through one of many

approaches. First, the leader can convey to the team members that they have the necessary power to accomplish the goals and objectives. Second, the leader can demonstrate to the team members that their empowerment is more than just delegation of tasks. Third, the leader can provide the resources, information, recognition, meaningful tasks, autonomy, discretion, and input, that allows the team to accomplish its clearly defined goals and objectives.

Summary

Research has shown effective schools develop creative approaches for grouping teachers into working teams. Team members collaboratively set goals, specify a means of goal attainment, assign responsibilities, and determine evaluation criteria. In addition to becoming a part of a larger intelligence, other transformations occur when teams are formed in a school. The personal growth fostered by team development raises the self-esteem of teachers (Maeroff, 1993a). As their self-esteem increases so does their ability to deal with school conflicts. Consequently, teachers become collectively more prepared to introduce change processes into the school (Maeroff, 1993a).

These conditions act as intrinsic rewards as teachers gain more satisfaction from their work. The teacher empowerment and leadership encouraged by the teamwork model are other conditions that reward teachers intrinsically. The opportunity to share in work decisions, become involved, and make a difference greatly enhances teacher satisfaction (Maeroff, 1993b).

The review of literature has indicates that characteristics of highly effective teams are indeed related to teacher job satisfaction. Fox (1986) summarized the requirement for teacher job satisfaction:

Teachers must see teaching as worthwhile and stimulating, and they must feel a sense of involvement in decision-making and also independence in their classroom. The teacher must have an affiliation with others. There must also be a sound reward system that offers not only extrinsic rewards but also a sense of success and recognition. Teachers need the opportunity for personal growth and require accurate and sensitive feedback from their principal. A feeling of physical and emotional safety in the organizational structure of the school is important to teachers. Teachers need the support and adequate supply of resources for instruction as well. (p. 1)

The formation of highly effective teams increases the likelihood that teacher needs will be satisfied. This chapter presented a review of the literature regarding teacher job satisfaction and the characteristics of highly effective teams. The next chapter provides a description of the research design and procedures that were used to conduct this investigation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between the degree of teaming characteristics established in a middle school organization, and teacher job satisfaction. Specifically, this study examined the perceptions of middle school teachers in middle schools with an ADA of between 400 and 800 students regarding the characteristics of highly effective teams in the school, and job satisfaction levels. This study was unique in its use of teacher perceptions to assess the characteristics of highly effective teams in schools and their relationship to teacher job satisfaction.

Boiney (2001) suggested that human diversity in such areas as gender, experience in the field and organization, and task functions is linked to higher performance as well as increased conflict, communication difficulties and expressed satisfaction. Therefore, this study included the examination of the variables of gender, types of teams, and length of teacher service. Because of the multitude of variables examined, the data collected were useful regardless of their application to the relationship between the characteristics of highly effective teams and teacher job satisfaction.

Variables

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study was teacher expressed job satisfaction. The Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales (MCMJSS) were used to

measure this variable. The MCMJSS were designed to measure self-perceived intrinsic, extrinsic, and general satisfaction. *Intrinsic satisfiers* or *motivators*, are those aspects of an individual's job that impart feelings of self-esteem, achievement, personal development, accomplishment, and fulfillment of expectations (Herzberg, 1966; Sergiovanni, 1992). *Extrinsic satisfiers* are those aspects of an individual's job such as degree of respect and fair treatment, the feeling of being informed, the amount of supervision received, and the opportunity for meaningful participation in the determination of methods, procedures, and goals at their work.

Independent Variable

The independent variables in this study were the teaming characteristics that teachers perceive are present within their teams at their schools. These variables were measured using the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument (Larson & La Fasto, 1989).

Population and Sample Description

All of the certified teachers from the 20 middle schools chosen for analysis were provided an opportunity to participate in this voluntary study. Of the 824 certified middle school teachers in the 20 middle schools, 552 responded to the survey instruments. Tables 1 to 5 describe the sample of middle school teachers who participated in this study. Information including years of service in the building, years of service in the district, gender, and team membership was used in the analysis, which is described later in this section.

Table 1.

School Response Rates

| <i>Middle School</i> | Number of Respondents | Total Number of Teachers | Response Rate |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 19 | 41 | 46% |
| 2 | 27 | 32 | 84% |
| 3 | 19 | 32 | 59% |
| 4 | 23 | 31 | 74% |
| 5 | 23 | 33 | 70% |
| 6 | 25 | 29 | 86% |
| 7 | 22 | 31 | 71% |
| 8 | 22 | 44 | 50% |
| 9 | 19 | 33 | 58% |
| 10 | 14 | 30 | 47% |
| 11 | 24 | 37 | 65% |
| 12 | 14 | 28 | 50% |
| 13 | 21 | 30 | 70% |
| 14 | 47 | 65 | 72% |
| 15 | 27 | 48 | 56% |
| 16 | 28 | 53 | 53% |
| 17 | 25 | 52 | 48% |
| 18 | 51 | 65 | 78% |
| 19 | 49 | 54 | 91% |
| 20 | 53 | 56 | 95% |
| TOTAL | 552 | 824 | 67% |

Table 2.

Gender Distribution Among Middle Schools

| | Male | Female |
|---------------|------|--------|
| Middle School | 105 | 447 |

Table 3.

Years of Service in the Building

| | 1 - 2 yrs | 3 - 5 yrs | 6 - 10 yrs | 11 - 15 yrs | 15 + yrs |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|----------|
| Middle School | 137 | 192 | 93 | 47 | 83 |

Table 4.

Years of Service in the District

| | 1 - 2 yrs | 3 - 5 yrs | 6 - 10 yrs | 11 - 15 yrs | 15 + yrs |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-------------|----------|
| Middle School | 82 | 136 | 104 | 77 | 153 |

Table 5.

Team Membership

| | Leadership or Governance | Subject, Content, or Department | Grade Level | Inter-disciplinary | Pedagogy |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|----------|
| Middle School | 57 | 191 | 222 | 77 | 5 |

Instrumentation

This study used two survey instruments to collect the data for analysis. The Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument was used to identify the degree to which the characteristics of highly effective teams that exist as perceived by classroom teachers. The MCMJSS were used to measure teacher job satisfaction. A researcher created questionnaire was used to collect ancillary data regarding the types of teams of which the teachers are members, their gender, and their length of service in a building and district. The ancillary information can be found in Appendix B.

Team Excellence Feedback for Development Instrument

The Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument is based on the results of Larson and LaFasto's (1989) 3-year investigation into the characteristics of successful teams. Their research was specifically conducted to construct a measurement and feedback system for improving the performance of project and management teams (Larson & Sweeney, 1994). Two separate measurements, one for leaders and one for members, were developed as means for all team members to describe their according to the dimensions that emerged from the research on highly effective teams.

Because the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument was developed primarily as a feedback instrument, its scaling strategy combines the use of criterion-referenced and norm-referenced assessment. Respondents answer each item based on a four-point Likert scale in which 1 = *true*, 2 = *more false than true*, 3 =

more false than true, and 4 = *false*. Eight characteristics were assessed by multiple items that required a response. The instrument can be found in the Appendices A.

Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scale (MCMJSS)

The MCMJSS were designed to measure self-perceived intrinsic, extrinsic, and general satisfaction (Mohrman, Cooke, Mohrman, Duncan, & Zaltman, 1977). The instrument is divided into 2 sections of 4 items each. Intrinsic and extrinsic perceptions of job satisfaction measured by the MCMJSS are related to Herzberg's (1966) two-factor motivation theory. Intrinsic satisfiers or motivators, are those aspects of an individual's job that impart feelings of self-esteem, achievement, personal development, accomplishment, and fulfillment of expectations (Herzberg, 1966; Sergiovanni, 1992). Extrinsic satisfiers, or hygienes, are those aspects of an individual's job such as degree of respect and fair treatment received, the feeling of being informed, the amount of supervision received, and the opportunity for meaningful participation in the determination of workplace methods, procedures, and goals. The instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Establishing Instrument Validity

This study employed a factor analysis, a commonly used method for assessing the validity of hypothesized scale dimensions, to establish the validity of the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument and the MCMJSS. Factor analysis is a branch of applied mathematics used as a tool in the empirical sciences whose structure is related to such commonly used techniques as multiple regression, Pearson correlation, and analysis of variance (Rummel, 1970). The objective of factor

analysis, which has been widely used to assess the construct validity of tests and scales in to obtain a more prudent set of variables (factors) based on an analysis of the correlations among the items and their subsequent linear combinations (Hatcher & Stepanski, 1994). As a flexible analysis technique applicable to a wide range of research designs, factor analysis is used to yield a set of equations that can describe and predict behavior.

Factor analysis is particularly useful when the data are expected to consist of *redundant variables*, which are variables that are highly correlated with each other and essentially measure the same construct (Rummel, 1970). Factor analysis has been used to reduce the number of variables to a smaller number of underlying constructs that has accounted for most of the variance in the observed variables.

The purpose of factor analysis in this study was to examine whether published hypothesized constructs of the Larson & LaFasto Team Excellence and the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction scales were empirically valid on this study's sample of middle school teachers. Factor analysis is performed using a three-step operation. The first step is to extract the components using an eigenvalue > 1.0 criterion. Eigenvalues represent the variances of associated factors. As a result of the original measures being standardized to a variance of 1.0, any eigenvalue greater than 1.0 corresponds to a factor with greater variance than that of any of the original measures (Hatcher & Stepanski, 1994). Thus, any eigenvalue greater than 1.0 made a genuine contribution to the total variance in this study and was therefore retained as a factor.

The second step of factor analysis, is conducting a factor rotation to assist in factor scale interpretation (Hatcher & Stepanski, 1994). A *rotation* is a linear transformation that is performed on the factor solution. A factor pattern matrix is developed which represents the variable loadings on each factor called *factor loadings*. Factor loadings are bivariate correlations between the observed variables and the factor. Meaningful factor loadings exceed .40 in magnitude of the loadings on the factor. If a variable loads meaningfully on more than one factor, it is considered complex and generally excluded from the subsequent factor analysis.

The final step of a factor analysis involves the interpretation of each retained factor to determine which construct it measured and to choose a name that described the construct represented by the factor scale. This is accomplished by evaluating the relationships between all the variables that load on each factor and the magnitude of their loadings.

Establishing Instrument Reliability

The *reliability* of a scale describes the extent to which the observed score variance is due to true score variance and not random error (Hatcher & Stepanski, 1994). Cronbach's coefficient alpha measure of internal consistency reliability was employed to determine the reliability of the scales used in this study. *Internal consistency* is the extent to which individual items on a survey correlate with one another and/or with the entire survey. Coefficient alpha is one of the most widely used indices of internal consistency reliability in the social sciences (Cronbach, 1951). Cronbach's coefficient alpha is a general formula that assesses scale reliability

based on internal consistency by analyzing how well a set of items or variables measure a single one-dimensional latent construct (Hatcher & Stepanski). Cronbach's coefficient alpha is high for a given scale if the survey items are highly correlated with each other (Hatcher & Stepanski). A reliability coefficient of $\geq .70$ or higher is considered acceptable in most social science applications. This study computed coefficient alphas for each of the derived factors from the factor analysis to establish factor-scale reliability.

Psychometric Properties of the Team Excellence Feedback for Development

Instrument

Validity. The psychometric properties of the hypothesized Larson & LaFasto Team Excellence Scales will be investigated to establish their validity and reliability with the study sample. Because no prior factor analysis of this instrument has been published, the results of this factor analysis will contribute to the research literature about the measurement of theoretically important team leadership constructs. The Team Excellence Feedback for Development Instrument is hypothesized to measure eight dimensions of team assessment. The data from this study were subjected to a factor analysis using principal components factoring and iteration to an orthogonal (varimax) rotation.

The factor analysis of the 40 items yielded an 8-factor solution that accounted for 31.6% of the variance of the items. Seven of the 8 factors retained the item structure hypothesized. Two constructs—collaborative climate and standards of excellence—proved to form a one-dimensional structure rather than the separate

constructs hypothesized. All of the item loadings on the factors were high, exceeding the .40 criterion for meaningfulness (see Table 6 for factors and item-factor loadings). No items failed to load on a factor or no items loaded on multiple factors, thereby providing evidence of the clarity and meaning of the items and factors.

Reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of reliability were estimated for items on the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument. The reliability of the scales based on data provided by this study exceeds, and for several scales greatly exceeds, the .70 minimum criterion of acceptability for all scales and levels.

Psychometric Properties of the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales

Validity. The psychometric properties of the MCMJSS were investigated to establish their validity and reliability with the study sample and to compare this study's results to published measures of validity and reliability.

Table 6.

Factor Loadings for Items Measuring Team Excellence

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| <i>Factor 1: Principled Leadership</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Our leader stands behind our team and supports us. | .83 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader exhibits trust by giving us meaningful levels of responsibility. | .83 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader exhibits personal commitment to our team’s goal. | .80 | | | | | | | |
| The team leader provides me with the necessary autonomy to achieve results. | .79 | | | | | | | |
| Our team leader is fair and impartial toward all team members. | .76 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader is open to new ideas and information from team members. | .76 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader avoids compromising the team’s objective with political issues. | .73 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader does not dilute the team’s efforts with too many priorities. | .73 | | | | | | | |
| Our team leader articulates our goal in such a way as to inspire commitment. | .71 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader recognizes and rewards superior performance. | .67 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader is influential in getting outside constituencies—industry, board, media, the next level of management—to support our team’s efforts. | .67 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader presents challenging opportunities which stretch our individual abilities. | .66 | | | | | | | |
| Our leader is willing to confront and resolve issues associated with inadequate performance by team members. | .65 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Factor 2: Collaborative Climate & Standards of Excellence</i> | | | | | | | | |
| We help each other by compensating for individual shortcomings. | .75 | | | | | | | |
| We can trust each other to act completely and responsibly in performing our individual tasks. | .73 | | | | | | | |
| We trust each other sufficiently to accurately share information, perceptions and feedback. | .68 | | | | | | | |
| As a team we embrace a common set of guiding values. | .68 | | | | | | | |
| Our team has high standards of excellence. | .60 | | | | | | | |
| We require each other to perform according to our established standards of excellence. | .51 | | | | | | | |
| Our team exerts pressure on itself to improve performance. | .49 | | | | | | | |

Table 6 (continued)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--|---|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|---|
| <i>Factor 3: External Support & Recognition</i> | | | | | | | | |
| The reward and incentive structure is clearly defined. | | | .80 | | | | | |
| The reward and incentive structure is viewed as appropriate by team members. | | | .80 | | | | | |
| The reward and incentive structure is tied to individual performance. | | | .73 | | | | | |
| The reward and incentive structure is tied to team performance. | | | .72 | | | | | |
| Our team is sufficiently recognized for its accomplishments. | | | .68 | | | | | |
| Our team is given the resources it needs to get the job done. | | | .52 | | | | | |
| Our team is supported by those constituencies capable of contributing to our success. | | | .47 | | | | | |
| <i>Factor 4: Clear, Elevating Goals</i> | | | | | | | | |
| The significance of our team is appealing: Our purpose is noble and worthwhile. | | | | .80 | | | | |
| The significance of our team is appealing: Our goal challenges individual limits and responsibilities. | | | | .74 | | | | |
| The significance of our team is appealing: Our goal represents an opportunity for an exceptional level of achievement. | | | | .73 | | | | |
| There is a clearly defined need—a goal to be achieved or a purpose to be served—which justifies the existence of our team. | | | | .65 | | | | |
| Our goal is compelling enough that I can derive a worthwhile sense of identity from it. | | | | .53 | | | | |
| <i>Factor 5: Communication System</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Our communication system has credible sources of information. | | | | | .80 | | | |
| Our communication system has information, which is easily accessible. | | | | | .74 | | | |
| Our communication system has methods for documenting issues raised and decisions made. | | | | | .67 | | | |
| Our communication system has opportunities for team members to raise issues not on the formal agenda. | | | | | .66 | | | |
| <i>Factor 6: Unified Commitment</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Achieving our team goal is higher priority than individual objectives. | | | | | | .74 | | |
| Team members believe that personal success is achieved through the accomplishment of the team goal. | | | | | | .73 | | |
| Team members are willing to devote whatever effort is necessary to achieve team success. | | | | | | .60 | | |

Table 6 (continued)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|
| <i>Factor 7: Competent Team Members</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Each individual on the team demonstrates a strong desire to contribute to the team's success. | | | | | | | | .71 |
| Team members possess the essential skills and abilities to accomplish the team's objectives. | | | | | | | | .70 |
| Team members are confident in the abilities of each other. | | | | | | | | .65 |
| Team members are capable of collaborating effectively with each other. | | | | | | | | .41 |
| <i>Factor 8: Results-Driven Structure</i> | | | | | | | | |
| We have an established method for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback. | | | | | | | | .56 |
| There are clear consequences connected with our team's success or failure in achieving our goal. | | | | | | | | .52 |
| Our decision-making process encourages judgments based on factual and objective data. | | | | | | | | .43 |
| Each member's relationship to the team is defined in terms of role clarity and accountability. | | | | | | | | .42 |
| The design of our team is determined by the results we need to achieve rather than by extraneous considerations. | | | | | | | | .40 |

The MCMJSS purported to measure two dimensions of job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. This study similarly tested the hypothesis that intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction are separate dimensions rather than opposite poles of a unidimensional construct through performing a factor analysis on the 4 items measuring intrinsic job satisfaction and 4 items measuring extrinsic job satisfaction. The data from this study were subjected to a factor analysis using principal components factoring and iteration to an orthogonal (varimax) rotation.

The factor analysis of the 8 items on a scale identified as having 2 empirical constructs yielded the hypothesized 2-factor solution, but accounted for 45.3% of the variance among items. Intrinsic job satisfaction had an eigenvalue of 4.2 and

extrinsic job satisfaction had an eigenvalue of 1.2. All of the item loadings on the factors were high, greatly exceeding the .40 criterion for meaningfulness (see Table 7 for factors and item factor loadings).

Table 7.

| <i>Factor Loadings for Items Measuring Job Satisfaction</i> | | |
|---|----------|----------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| <i>Factor 1: Intrinsic</i> | | |
| The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment in your job. | .83 | |
| The feeling of self-esteem or self-respect you get from being in your job. | .81 | |
| The opportunity for personal growth and development in your job. | .75 | |
| Your present job when you consider the expectations you had when you took the job. | .73 | |
| <i>Factor 2: Extrinsic</i> | | |
| The feeling of being informed in your job. | | .81 |
| The amount of supervision you receive. | | .80 |
| The opportunity for participation in the determination of methods, procedures, and goals. | | .76 |
| The amount of respect and fair treatment you receive from your superiors. | | .66 |
| Cronbach's Alpha (Raw) Middle School Overall | .80 | .71 |

Reliability. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of reliability were estimated for items comprising the intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction scales for the overall sample. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 7. The reliability of scales based on data provided by this study greatly exceeded the .70 minimum criterion of acceptability. Reliability coefficients for the intrinsic job satisfaction scale exceeded .80 overall and for each level. Reliability coefficients for the extrinsic job satisfaction scale exceeded .80 overall. The reliability of the extrinsic job satisfaction scale was

somewhat lower for the middle school teachers at .71, but still met the criterion for acceptability. These scale reliability coefficients were almost identical in magnitude to those reported for educator respondents by Mohrman et al. (1977), where reliability on the intrinsic scale ranged from .81 to .87 and the reliability of the extrinsic scale ranged from .77 to .82. The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for both factor scales are provided in Table 8, found in Chapter 4.

Procedures for Data Collection

The data collection procedure followed the four-step process of (a) making personal contact with each building principal to set a date for survey delivery, (b) making an on-site delivery of the surveys with instructions, (c) collecting the completed surveys, and (d) digitizing the data. Each building principal was contacted in order to ascertain an appropriate date for the survey and questionnaire delivery and completion. During the on-site visits, each teacher was handed a cover letter that described the purpose of the study, provided instructions for responding to the survey items and emphasized that participation was voluntary and responses would remain anonymous. An empty envelope was given to each teacher in which he or she would seal the completed surveys.

The teachers then responded to the survey items on the Team Excellence Feedback for Development instrument and MCMJSS. Scaled responses to both instruments were recorded on an answer sheet that was provided for each teacher. Ancillary data were collected on a questionnaire to identify the types of teams of which the teachers consider themselves members, their gender, and their length of

service in the building and in the district. All surveys from the same building were assigned a coded number and all individual surveys were assigned a random number that could not be used to identify individual subjects.

Analyzing the Data

The data collected in this study were analyzed with a variety of statistical methods provided by the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) program. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) were calculated for purposes of sample description and scale description. The following procedures and tests served as the bases for the data analysis:

1. The SAS factor analysis will be used to establish the validity of hypothesized team excellence and job satisfaction scales for the study's sample.
2. Cronbach's alpha coefficients will be used to assess the reliability, in the form of internal consistency, of the scales used in this study.
3. The SAS Stepwise Regression procedure will be used in order to address the meaningfulness of statistically significant differences and the comparative power of team excellence scales to predict intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 4:

RESULTS

Introduction

This study examined the relationships between teachers' perceived characteristics of their teams and their expressed job satisfaction. A variety of tests and procedures were used in order to determine statistical significance and meaningfulness.

Presentation of Data Analysis

The data analysis was conducted to address the research questions that guided this study. The following sections present the major findings of the data analysis.

Research Question 1: Is there a significant relationship between perceived characteristics of highly effective teams, as measured by the Team Excellence Feedback for Development, and perceived teacher job satisfaction as measured by the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales of middle school teachers?

Spearman correlations were computed to investigate whether teacher ratings on eight dimensions of team effectiveness are related to their intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. These findings are presented in Table 8 for the overall sample. Correlations range from .0 to .99, with a range of .20 to .30 indicating a weak correlation, a range of .40 to .60 indicating a moderate correlation, and a correlation over .60 indicating a strong correlation.

Table 8. *Spearman Correlations of Job Satisfaction and Team Excellence Scales*

| | OVERALL | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Intrinsic Job Satisfaction | Extrinsic Job Satisfaction |
| Principled Leadership | 41 | 44 |
| Collaborative Climate & Standards of Excellence | 34 | 41 |
| External Support & Recognition | 49 | 55 |
| Clear, Elevating Goals | 38 | 39 |
| Communication System | 23 | 42 |
| Unified Commitment | 29 | 40 |
| Competent Team Members | 27 | 28 |
| Results Driven Structure | 36 | 47 |

*Note – Decimals have been omitted

Each dimension of team effectiveness demonstrated a positive and non-zero correlation with intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, although the magnitude of the correlations varied among the dimensions of team effectiveness. The strongest correlation that emerged was the moderately strong relationship between external support and recognition and job satisfaction. The higher teachers rated the external support and recognition provided by their teams, the greater was their intrinsic ($r_s = .49$) and extrinsic job satisfaction ($r_s = .55$). This relationship was the strongest among team effectiveness scales.

The magnitude of the overall correlations of dimensions of team effectiveness were similar for principled leadership; clear, elevating goals, and competent team members with respect to intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction. The magnitude of the overall correlations between extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction were stronger for the

relationship of extrinsic job satisfaction and collaborative climate and standards of excellence ($r_s = .41$ vs. $.34$), communication system ($r_s = .42$ vs. $.23$), unified commitment ($r_s = .40$ vs. $.29$), and results driven structure ($r_s = .47$ vs. $.36$).

Although the results of the factor analysis demonstrated that the hypothesized dimensions of team effectiveness were empirically validated, moderate to strong correlations existed among these scales. The impact of this multicollinearity was that the same variation in job satisfaction that was explained by one dimension may be jointly explained by another factor. In order to investigate which of the dimensions of team effectiveness were the best predictors of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, the Statistical Analysis System's (SAS) Regression procedure was used. Multiple regression analysis investigated the relative importance of the independent variables in predicting the dependent variables, controlling for the influence of other predictor variables.

These analyses are presented in Tables 9 and 10 indicate that the best single predictor of intrinsic job satisfaction was the extent to which teachers received external support and recognition. This aspect of team excellence accounted for a lower percentage of variation on intrinsic job satisfaction for middle school teachers. Other aspects of team excellence, including a collaborative climate and standards of excellence, competent team members, and principled leadership, combined to explain variation in middle school teachers' intrinsic job satisfaction.

The extent to which middle school teachers received external support and recognition again provided the best predictor of extrinsic job satisfaction, accounting for more than one-fourth of the variation for middle school teachers.

Table 9. *Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of Intrinsic Job Satisfaction*

| Step Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | β | R^2 Change |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| External Support & Recognition | .25 | .03 | .40 | .27 |
| Principled Leadership | .07 | .02 | .17 | .02 |
| Clear, Elevating Goals | .19 | .06 | .15 | .01 |
| Standards of Excellence | .13 | .06 | .09 | .04 |
| Unified Commitment | .31 | .07 | .19 | .04 |
| Results Driven Structure | .17 | .08 | .12 | .01 |
| Competent Team Members | .34 | .09 | .18 | .01 |
| Collaborative Climate | .14 | .06 | .13 | .01 |

Constant = 10.6
 $R^2 = .31$; Adj $R^2 = .31$; $F = 57.08$; $p = < .0001$

Table 10.
Summary of Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis of Extrinsic Job Satisfaction

| Step Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | β | R^2 Change |
|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|---------|--------------|
| External Support & Recognition | .25 | .04 | .34 | .30 |
| Principled Leadership | .31 | .07 | .19 | .04 |
| Results Driven Structure | .17 | .08 | .12 | .01 |
| Competent Team Members | .34 | .09 | .18 | .01 |
| Collaborative Climate | .14 | .06 | .13 | .01 |
| Standards of Excellence | .22 | .08 | .27 | .05 |
| Clear, Elevating Goals | .34 | .13 | .28 | .03 |
| Unified Commitment | .24 | .15 | .20 | .01 |

Constant = 6.6
 $R^2 = .37$; Adj $R^2 = .36$; $F = 47.95$; $p = < .0001$

Although the teaming items loaded on distinct, orthogonal factors, this finding does not imply that scale scores computed from these items will necessarily be uncorrelated. Since the teaming variables were entered into multiple regression analyses to predict job satisfaction, it is essential to establish whether these predictors are highly intercorrelated or relatively independent of one another. To the extent that two or more teaming variables are intercorrelated, it is less likely that both teaming variables will make a significant unique contribution to the prediction of job satisfaction, as the contribution of one predictor will be suppressed by the other.

Very high intercorrelations between predictors would raise concern about potential multicollinearity. In order to examine the magnitude of the associations between the teaming variables, correlations were computed. The matrix of correlations between these variables is shown in Table 11. The correlations among teaming variables ranged from .137 to .501, with a median value of .287. The median correlation of .287 between teaming variables is moderate in strength. The cumulative pattern of these findings suggests that the teaming variables are correlated, though the items load on orthogonal factors. The strength of the correlations among the teaming variables suggests that, though they are correlated, they are not so highly correlated that they are redundant with one another.

Table 11.
Correlation Matrix

| | IJS Intrinsic Job Satisfaction | EJS Extrinsic Job Satisfaction | CEG Clear Elevating Goal | RSD Results Driven Structure | CTM Competent Team Members | UC Unified Commitment | CC Collaborative Climate | SE Standards of Excellence | ESR External Support and Recognition | PL Principled Leadership |
|------------|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| IJS | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| EJS | 0.62 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| CEG | 0.38 | 0.39 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| RSD | 0.36 | 0.47 | 0.34 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| CTM | 0.27 | 0.28 | 0.26 | 0.28 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| UC | 0.29 | 0.40 | 0.25 | 0.27 | 0.31 | 1.00 | | | | |
| CC | 0.34 | 0.41 | 0.27 | 0.36 | 0.19 | 0.21 | 1.00 | | | |
| SE | 0.34 | 0.41 | 0.43 | 0.40 | 0.28 | 0.50 | 0.43 | 1.00 | | |
| ESR | 0.49 | 0.55 | 0.35 | 0.35 | 0.31 | 0.48 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 1.00 | |
| PL | 0.41 | 0.44 | 0.17 | 0.24 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.20 | 0.15 | 0.29 | 1.00 |

Summary

This chapter presented the data analysis and major findings from the investigation into teachers' perceived characteristics of teams and their expressed job satisfaction. The statistics revealed a significant relationship between teachers' perceived characteristics of their teams and their expressed job satisfaction. To determine which dimensions of team effectiveness are the best predictors of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction, the SAS Regression procedure was performed. This analysis revealed the best single predictor of intrinsic job satisfaction is the extent to

which teachers receive external support and recognition. The next chapter will discuss the implications of the findings in this study.

CHAPTER 5

EXPLANATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND SUMMARY

Introduction

This chapter presents explanations and implications of the findings of the data analysis. The chapter is divided into the following major sections: (a) explanation of findings, (b) implications for practice, (c) implications for educational leadership, (d) implications for future research, and (e) summary of the chapter and study.

Explanation of Findings

Two major themes emerged from this study. First, team attributes are related to intrinsic and extrinsic teacher motivation and second, leadership is related to teacher motivation and satisfaction.

Team Attributes Relates to Intrinsic and Extrinsic Teacher Motivation

The study results clearly indicate that the perceptions of teachers, with regard to the existence of some team attributes, influences their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Motivating teachers to work above and beyond the call of duty may be determined by the extent to which the attributes or characteristics of highly effective teams exist within the organization, regardless of the existence of any formal group configurations.

Although extrinsic factors such as salary, security and working conditions could lead to greater job satisfaction, they seem to be unrelated to the teacher motivation to improve performance. When teachers engage in interpersonal

relationships, feel a sense of recognition, and gain responsibility, their job satisfaction and motivation are likely to increase. These intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors may be enhanced when the existence of some effective teaming characteristics are present within the organization. An organization that encourages competent team members with a unified commitment to work together toward clear and elevating goals within a results-driven structure that maintains a collaborative climate, standards of excellence, external support and recognition, and principled leadership tends to create workers who are motivated toward and satisfied within their jobs.

The encouragement of educators working collaboratively in purposeful activities seems to be a critical component of school improvement. Without effective collaboration, teachers may be deprived of professional and personal growth, and students deprived of better instruction. Whether within a leadership content team, or simply a group of educators working collaboratively on purposeful activities appears to promote a meaningful experience for educators and provide them a sense of ownership and empowerment within the organization. The research of both McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) AND Wilson and Berne (1999) confirms what this study suggests: Teacher discussion and collaboration are important components in effective professional development.

Leadership Relates to Teachers' Motivation and Satisfaction

The results of this study emphatically and consistently present two teaming characteristics, principled leadership and external support and recognition, as statistically significant and highly correlated with intrinsic and extrinsic job

satisfaction. External support and recognition was found to be the best single predictor of intrinsic and extrinsic teacher job satisfaction. The evidence is clear that the approach taken by educational leaders and team leaders will significantly impact the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and satisfaction of teachers.

This study considered individual teachers or teacher teams that do not view themselves as working in a manner compatible with their organization's philosophy as individuals or teams without a purpose, identity, or a home. An organization's members or teams of teachers within the organization need to experience the genuine support from both leaders and the organization as a whole. Without this critical element of external support and recognition, intrinsic and extrinsic motivators may suffer along with opportunities for individual success.

Although the statistics revealed that external support and recognition is the single best predictor of teacher satisfaction, one could argue that this characteristic may not exist without leaders who demonstrate principled leadership. A leader who does not facilitate an effective collaborative climate, provide opportunities for support and recognition, and establish a solid communication system can create an organization that is isolated and fragmented. The only commonality educators may share in this organization is the name itself and have little motivation in working for a higher purpose.

The findings in this study indicate that principled leadership is an important factor in the motivation and satisfaction of teachers. Principled leadership inspires others to rise above their current level by creating a collaborative climate with

purposeful and focused activities to improve the organization. The leader promotes continual professional and personal development in a synergistic manner. Principled leaders believe that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts, and by delegating responsibilities and empowering their workers, increase teacher job satisfaction and motivation.

Implications

The following sections discuss the implications of the study findings for educational practice and reform, educational leadership, and research.

Educational Practice and School Reform

General discussion. School improvement has long been dealing with the issues of schooling on a procedural or program basis. The neglected component of school improvement seems to be the educators themselves. Laws and regulations cannot substitute for the autonomy of professional educators working collaboratively and making meaningful decisions in a school. This organized collaboration could mean the collection of creative ideas, shared values, and a personal commitments that embody the organization. Such synergism could lead to continual improvement in instruction, discipline, teacher development, and ultimately, student achievement. Education is labor-intensive and a stressful endeavor for many of its stakeholders. Recognizing that their greatest assets are the individuals within them, effective organizations are organized in a way that shares the burden, while creating new methods and procedures that lead to the highest student and teacher performance possible.

Those promoting school improvement have faced many barriers, including the following:

1. The struggle for survival and unwillingness to confront the competitive challenges to education.
2. Educators who have a weak knowledge base. Isolation might have actually helped in creating this ignorance.
3. Schools have been typically organized in a way that discourages problem solving in a broad perspective. Boundaries and adversarial relationships between teachers and administrators can destroy the opportunity for meaningful collaboration.
4. Self-efficacy has been a characteristic that has festered in education. Teachers and administrators may believe that the causes of learning are outside their influence.
5. Isolation, fragmentation, and the inability to work and collaborate in continuous improvement for the betterment of the profession and the students seem to have been slow to spread in school reform.
6. Traditional leadership styles, policies and procedures appear to have been accepted without regard to researching best practices. Without a leader who is willing to change and empower others to explore best practices and facilitate change, there may be no change.

Meaningful school improvement begins and ends with those that face the challenges of education on a daily basis. The study findings clearly indicate that

teachers are inspired when they feel a sense of recognition, responsibility, achievement, and advancement as a result of their efforts. Other factors such as interpersonal relationships and salary issues can also lead to satisfaction, but do not greatly inspire teachers. It would behoove school organizations to understand and create conditions that enhance intrinsic and extrinsic teacher motivators. Motivating and inspiring teachers can lead to enhanced instruction, professional development, and ultimately, greater student achievement.

Recommendations. Effective teams operate in ways that build shared commitment and utilize collective skills and task-appropriate coordination strategies. The likelihood of team effectiveness increases when the leader demonstrates principled leadership that inspires the group to work in a focused manner. The results of this study clearly indicate that principled leadership and external support and recognition are the two dimensions that have the strongest impact on teacher motivation and satisfaction.

Reforming traditional school timelines and schedules to allow more time for teachers to collaborate and work on teams, may lead to meaningful and continuous school reform. Teamwork is an effective professional development and problem-solving tool that should be used in more areas than just subject departments and content areas. Leadership teams can foster teacher empowerment and meaningful participation in making decisions that lead to continuous improvement of the school community.

The best and least expensive resource in schools today is the one that seems to be overlooked most often: the people. The most productive professional development appears to be the job-embedded learning that could be occurring daily among educators. No value can be placed on the sharing of knowledge, skills, and experiences among educators.

The sharing of knowledge and experiences need not be confined to one school within one district. This analysis of the teaming characteristics and teacher job satisfaction for each middle school entailed the collection of scored responses from the individual schools that varied across all items. This information may be a valuable tool for administrative and district improvement. Any attempt to establish a true school learning community should start with the educational leaders of the district. The sharing of ideas among building administrators could be invaluable to the improvement of individual buildings as well as the entire school district community.

Educational Leadership

General Discussion. Traditional educational leaders manage the school organization by setting the direction and making key decisions in a top-down style. In such an environment in which decisions are made in isolation based on little rationale, there appears little need for teachers and administrators to collaborate. Students learn what the individual teachers deem important, collaboration occurs only when absolutely necessary, and little autonomy is promoted in daily school activities. Administrators and teachers perform their responsibilities with being able to take

advantage of the wealth of knowledge and experiences in their environment that can enhance their development and improve student achievement. Unfortunately, this description of educational leadership and practices can facilitate isolation and stifles personal and organizational growth. These practices may be linked to decreased teacher motivation and satisfaction and poor student achievement.

Recommendations. The existence of high motivation and satisfaction increases the likelihood of establishing and developing meaningful collaboration activities. These activities can create a school culture in which educators are empowered to improve their organization and seek knowledge from other colleagues. This process does not just happen naturally but depends on initiation by educational leaders, with whom the process begins and ends. This study demonstrated that the existence and extent of teaming attribute impact teacher motivation and job satisfaction. Therefore, it could benefit educational leaders to identify, understand, and focus on the attributes of teaming in their organizations.

Any group of individuals can be labeled a team. However, to coordinate and facilitate meaningful and purposeful activities among educators in a school or school community requires more than an appellation. The benefits of team formation far outweigh its liabilities. Teachers often experience continuous improvement, personal commitment, and greater satisfaction when they collaborate within such communities.

Much like principled leadership, communication not only informs, but also inspires. Effective communication entails using every opportunity to relay information to the other members of the team or organization. Whether in the form of

words, body language, modeled behavior or writing, communication should be planned and articulated to fit the situation at hand. Without effective communication, a team or organization may lose focus and begin to focus on individual messages that conflict with the organization's values and goals.

As demonstrated by this study, one of the most critical and powerful means of communicating and reinforcing values is constant recognition and acknowledgement of teacher presence within the organization. The results from this study demonstrated that recognition could be a key component in building a strong school culture in which teachers and students tend to feel positively toward their work. Recognition and support should be focused on shared values and goals for the teams and the organization.

Although the transformational leadership approach tends to be more difficult to implement than the traditional approach, it can lead to many benefits for the school community. Understanding teacher motivation assists in transforming a school leader into an effective leader within an increasingly complex society. Neglecting to consider what motivates teachers to effectively work together may result in a loss of good teachers and opportunities to improve the school community. This study can be used as a tool to initiate change in educational leadership. For effective teaming to occur, transformational leaders must understand teacher motivation while initiating, facilitating, and fostering the conditions that improve education.

Implications for Future Research

Considering the limitations and findings of this study, the following are the recommendations for future research with regard to replication studies and new research.

Replication Study Suggestions

This study should be replicated using a state or national sample to see if the findings are consistent throughout the nation for teachers in other middle schools. A replicated study using other regions or states may present significant research with regard to the different geographical areas and various population sizes of schools.

In addition, a replication study using middle schools that employ the smaller learning community model by DuFour would provide important research on the existence of teaming attributes and the expressed job satisfaction and motivation of the teachers in these communities. The establishment and development of smaller learning communities and the educational practices that go along with these communities is prevalent in recent school reform efforts. The core belief in smaller learning community philosophy is educators, counselors, and administrators working collaboratively in purposeful activities for continuous professional and organizational improvement. The Team Excellence for Development instrument could be utilized to assess the establishment and development of collaborative activities in schools that incorporate smaller learning communities. An analysis of the teaming attributes and

teacher expressed job satisfaction could provide valuable information for present and future school districts that choose to utilize the smaller learning community concept.

While testing the validity of the Team Excellence for Development instrument through factor analysis, the data demonstrated that whereas the collaborative climate and standards of excellence were not separate structures, the communication system was a separate structure. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that Larson and LaFasto did not examine educational teams in their research. Considering the results of the factor analysis in this study, future research that assesses the characteristics of highly effective teams in an educational setting should consider the collaborative climate and standards of excellence as one structure and the communication system as a separate structure.

New Research Suggestions

Accepting that student achievement should be the focal point in the continuous school improvement process, a study that examines the existence of highly effective teaming characteristics in relation to data based on student achievement would provide valuable findings for school leaders. Teachers and students could assess the extent to which teaming characteristics exist in their schools. Such a study could reveal the effectiveness of the existence and extent of teaming characteristics with regard to student achievement. Again considering student achievement, new research could assess the expressed job satisfaction and motivation of teachers in relation to student achievement based on the premise that

the motivation and satisfaction teachers possess in the planning and presentation of instruction to their students significantly impact the achievement of their students.

A final research suggestion is the analysis of the leadership approach of the educational leader of a team or organization and the job satisfaction and motivation of teachers. The Team Excellence for Development instrument or another leadership assessment instrument could be used to determine whether a correlation exists between leadership approach and teacher job satisfaction and motivation. This research could be useful in determining effective leadership approaches for increasing teacher motivation and job satisfaction.

Conclusion and Summary

This chapter presented explanations and implications of the findings of this study. The major findings and implications of this study may be useful information for educational reform and practice, educational leadership and future research. The information used in this study could be presented in educational journals and applied to educator and administrative education and professional development activities. The utilization of the research could also be an integral part of the continuous school improvement research.

Teachers are faced with many challenges including increased accountability standards, high stakes testing, and increasingly complex social problems. This study was developed on the premise that these massive challenges can only be overcome with calculated, systemic, and collaborative school improvement. In particular, there is a need to examine educators learning to work successfully with one another in

assessing problems; developing, and implementing new ideas and practices; and evaluating the effects and outcomes. Teamwork can provide both a structure and a process to meet these objectives.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between the extent of teaming characteristics established in a school organization and teacher job satisfaction. Specifically, this study examined the perceptions of middle school teachers regarding the characteristics of their teams in the school and job satisfaction levels.

The review of literature considered the relationship between teacher job satisfaction and characteristics of highly effective teams through many relevant topics. Overall, the review of literature indicated that characteristics of highly effective teams do impact teacher job satisfaction. Therefore, some attributes of teaming increase teacher motivation and job satisfaction.

Two survey instruments were utilized to collect the data. The Team Excellence Feedback for Development (LaFasto & Larson, 1990) was used to identify the degree of the characteristics of highly effective teams that exist as perceived by classroom teachers. Job satisfaction expressed by teachers was measured using the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales. Ancillary data was collected on a questionnaire in order to identify the teachers' types of teams on which they are a member, gender, and length of service in their building and the district.

There were several data analysis procedures used in determining validity, reliability, statistical significance, correlations, and variable predictors. The results

provided valuable information in examining the teachers' perceived characteristics of their teams and their expressed job satisfaction levels.

The major findings of this study have clear implications for educational practice and leadership. Specifically naming teams as such is not important to motivation; rather, a collaborative culture in which educators engage in focused and purposeful activities pertaining to instruction, assessment, governance, and professional development is important in motivating teachers to go beyond their current performance level. The research suggests that some team attributes could impact teacher attitudes toward their jobs and their level of motivation.

Senge (1990) stated that when groups or teams in an organization function as a whole, a commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and an understanding of how to complement one another's efforts are created. Senge explained that collaborative groups or teams within an organization create an environment of dialogue, as well as the freedom to explore complex issues that not only creates a larger intelligence but allows other transformations to occur. Personal growth, self-esteem, and competence increase with team development. In turn, increased self-esteem increases teachers' confidence that they can communicate with their colleagues in a more professional manner, which allows them to become collectively more prepared to introduce a change process in their schools. The positive environment created by collaboration leads to greater empowerment and autonomy and stronger interpersonal relationships that are intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for teachers feeling satisfied in their work.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Survey Booklet

Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales

The following is a list of items on the Mohrman-Cooke-Mohrman Job Satisfaction Scales (1978). Consider each statement based on your perception of the item in your school. Please respond by marking an X in the appropriate box of your scaled response. The number 1 is the highest ranked response and the number 6 is the lowest ranked response. Please mark your responses on the answer sheet provided.

Intrinsic Motivation

1. The feeling of self-esteem or self-respect you get from being in your job.
2. The opportunity for personal growth and development in your job.
3. The feeling of worthwhile accomplishment in your job.
4. Your present job when you consider the expectations you had when you took the job.

Extrinsic Motivation

5. The amount of respect and fair treatment you receive from your superiors.
6. The feeling of being informed in your job.
7. The amount of supervision you receive
8. The opportunity for participation in the determination of methods, procedures, and goals.

Mohrman, A. M., Cooke, R. A. & Mohrman, S. A. (1978). Participation in decision making: a multidimensional approach. *Education Administration Quarterly*, 14, (1), 13-29.

Appendices

Appendix B

Team Excellence Feedback for Development

The following is a list of items on the Larson and LaFasto (1990) Team Excellence Feedback for Development assessment for team members. Consider each statement based on your perception as a team member in your school. Please give honest responses by marking true, more true than false, more false than true, or false to each item. Please mark your responses on the answer sheet provided.

Clear, Elevating Goal

1. There is a clearly defined need – a goal to be achieved or a purpose to be served – which justifies the existence of our team
2. The significance of our team goal is appealing:
 - a. Our purpose is noble and worthwhile
 - b. Our goal represents an opportunity for an exceptional level of achievement
 - c. Our goal challenges individual limits and responsibilities
3. There are clear consequences connected with our team's success or failure in achieving our goal.
4. Our goal is compelling enough that I can derive a worthwhile sense of identity from it.

Results-Driven Structure

5. The design of our team is determined by the results we need to achieve rather than by extraneous considerations.
6. Each member's relationship to the team is defined in terms of role clarity and accountability.
7. Our communication system has:
 - a. information which is easily accessible.
 - b. Credible sources of information.
 - c. Opportunities for team members to raise issues not on the formal agenda.
 - d. Methods for documenting issues raised and decisions made.
8. We have an established method for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback.
9. Our decision-making process encourages judgments based on factual and objective data.

Competent Team Members

10. Team members possess the essential skills and abilities to accomplish the team's objectives.
11. Each individual on the team demonstrates a strong desire to contribute to the team's success.
12. Team members are confident in the abilities of each other.
13. Team members are capable of collaborating effectively with each other.

Unified Commitment

14. Achieving our team goal is higher priority than individual objectives.
15. Team members believe that personal success is achieved through the accomplishment of the team goal.
16. Team members are willing to devote whatever effort is necessary to achieve team success.

Collaborative Climate

17. We trust each other sufficiently to accurately share information, perceptions and feedback.
18. We help each other by compensating for individual shortcomings.
19. We can trust each other to act completely and responsibly in performing our individual tasks.
20. As a team we embrace a common set of guiding values.

Standards of Excellence

21. Our team has high standards of excellence.
22. We require each other to perform according to our established standards of excellence.
23. Our team exerts pressure on itself to improve performance.

External Support and Recognition

24. Our team is given the resources it needs to get the job done.
25. Our team is supported by those constituencies capable of contributing to our success.
26. Our team is sufficiently recognized for its accomplishments.
27. The reward and incentive structure is:
 - a. clearly defined.
 - b. viewed as appropriate by team members.
 - c. tied to individual performance.
 - d. tied to team performance.

Principled Leadership

28. Our team leader articulates our goal in such a way as to inspire commitment.
29. Our leader avoids compromising the team's objective with political issues.
30. Our leader exhibits personal commitment to our team's goal.
31. Our leader does not dilute the team's efforts with too many priorities.
32. Our leader stands behind our team's efforts with too many priorities.
33. Our team leader is fair and impartial toward all team members.
34. Our leader exhibits trust by giving us meaningful levels of responsibility.
35. The team leader provides me with the necessary autonomy to achieve results.
36. Our leader is willing to confront and resolved issues associated with inadequate performance by team members.
37. Our leader presents challenging opportunities which stretch our individual abilities.
38. Our leader recognizes and rewards superior performance.
39. Our leader is open to new ideas and information from team members.
40. Our leader is influential in getting outside constituencies – industry, board, media, the next level of management – to support our team's efforts.

LaFasto, F., & Larson, C. E. (1990). *Team excellence: Feedback for development: Assessment by team member*. Deerfield, IL: Baxter Healthcare Corporation.

Appendices

Appendix C

Ancillary Information

The following questions will be asked of each teacher involved in the study in order to collect necessary data for analysis of the hypothesis:

1. Where do you currently teach?

_____ Middle School (Name of School)

2. _____ Male _____ Female (Please Check One)

3. How long have you taught in this particular middle school?

4. How long have you taught in this particular school district?

5. Which type of team best describes your situation in your school?

_____ Member of a governance or leadership team

_____ Member of a subject, content, or department team

_____ Member of a grade-level team

_____ Member of an interdisciplinary or multidiscipline team

_____ Member of a pedagogy team (study group or action research

investigating a particular topic or situation)