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Educator Experiences Associated with Lateral Mobility: A Narrative Inquiry

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Educator Experiences Associated with Lateral Mobility: A Narrative Inquiry

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. Qualitative narrative interviews were conducted with six educators, including four administrators and two teachers, who met specific research participation criteria. Thematic analysis and axial coding were performed on the collected data. A framework based on self-determination theory was used to further interpret the research findings. Research findings included participant accounts related to organizational perceptions, emotional effects, and perceptions of superordinate behaviors, before and after making a lateral move. Participants reported experiences associated with negative wellbeing and thwarting the basic psychological needs satisfaction of autonomy, competence, and relatedness prior to making a lateral move. Participants reported experiences associated with positive wellbeing and supporting the satisfaction of basic psychological needs after making a lateral move. The tenets of self-determination theory were supported. Recommendations for professional practice and future research are included.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wife, Leslie, and our wonderful family, which grew by two in the process. I am thankful for all your support of me to pursue and complete this degree. I could not have done it without you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Foley, Dr. Flora, and Dr. Boyd, for serving on the committee for this dissertation. Their leadership, guidance, and support has helped me to grow immensely as a person and an educator.

I must also thank Leslie for serving as my editor-in-chief, in addition to bearing the brunt of our family's needs throughout this degree. She deserves all the credit.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In 12 years as a band director at the same school, I worked for and with 13 administrators, 6 orchestra directors, 6 choir directors, and 6 band personnel. Most of these people left the district to take a job elsewhere with the same title, role, and responsibilities. Many of them did so by pursuing openings with nearby districts offering similar, and often lower compensation. Some of these individuals were new to the profession, but a considerable contingency were seasoned and successful veterans. Anecdotally, I knew or had heard of dozens of similar occurrences across content areas, grade levels, and hierarchical strata.

Educator mobility is a phenomenon that has drawn considerable interest of researchers and stakeholders (Bradley & Levin, 2019; Bradley, Levin, & Scott, 2019). A certain amount of employee turnover is expected and necessary for any healthy organization. However, the retention of qualified and effective educators is likewise a matter of great importance (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020).

Investigations have expanded into various related facets regarding the antecedents, outcomes, and effects of educator mobility. External factors such as student, school, and district characteristics have been examined. Individual aspects have been explored relating to educators' demographics, burnout, wellbeing, and motivation. Significant negative fiscal, instructional, and personal consequences of turnover have been identified (Bradley & Levin, 2019; Bradley, Levin, & Scott, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). A growing body of evidence has evaluated educator experiences in terms of the basic psychological needs satisfaction and various forms of motivation described by self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

A common finding of investigations into educator mobility and other aspects of the overall educator experience has been the need for more qualitative efforts in this area. This need has been specifically stated regarding educator mobility (Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b), burnout (Jones et al., 2019; Van den Berghe et al., 2014; Van Maele & Van Houtt, 2015), and wellbeing (Andrews et al., 2017). The utility of SDT to evaluate educator experiences as well as the compatibility of SDT and qualitative designs has been well documented (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Extant research has provided significant insights around easily measured criteria regarding many aspects of educator mobility, but has also revealed unexplained complexities regarding individual experiences (Abos et al., 2018; Van den Berghe et al., 2014). A greater depth of investigation through qualitative inquiry is needed to provide better understanding of the turnover experience and how it may be productively addressed (Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b). The current surface-level opacity regarding the unexpected mobility of valued and dedicated educators presented a problem worthy of investigation.

Statement of Purpose

The present study focused on the circumstances surrounding career path decisions of six educators through their individual narrative accounts. This study intended to specifically investigate the occurrence of established and successful educators who made seemingly lateral professional moves from one school district to another, unrelated to compensation. The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move.

Research Questions

The data collected were analyzed to identify patterns and common themes, which were utilized to address the overarching question of this study: What are the lived experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The research questions utilized to guide this research were the following:

1. What experiences are associated with successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

2. What emotions are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

3. What superordinate behaviors are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

Significance of the Study

Much research has been conducted around educator motivation and burnout, particularly in educators with less experience. Additionally, there is significant information available regarding educator turnover, mobility, and compensation. However, related research often overlooked school leaders and remains mixed in many respects (Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). An exhaustive search of the literature did not locate research that directly addressed the phenomenon of established and successful educators who make elective, lateral, career moves to another district, within a small geographic radius, and unrelated to compensation. The present study was designed with the intention of providing significant practical, methodological, and theoretical contributions.

There are a wide variety of practical contributions provided by the present study. Rather than adding to the extensive amount of research that has documented *what* deleterious impacts

are associated with educator turnover, this study focused on the *how* and *why* of complex individual circumstances that cannot be obtained through simple experiments (Hancock, 2016; Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Sibbald, 2017a). The nature of the research further allowed for the exclusive targeting of educators with a strong commitment to the profession and successful track records. Thus, the evidence spoke directly to the experiences of educators whose merits arguably made them desirable human assets for long term retention, while avoiding more commonly documented cases of early career attrition. A final practical contribution was that the present study included both teachers and principals working in various grade levels and content areas, potentially providing insights around the extent of commonality in educator experiences.

Educators are the primary source for recounting their own experiences and there has been a documented need and appreciation for related qualitative inquiry (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Narrative research has grown significantly in recent decades, particularly in fields such as education where complex social interaction is salient (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The present research provided an opportunity to empower the narratives of a specific group of educators and make the benefits of sharing their experiences accessible to wider audiences. This study continued an established and growing body of qualitative inquiry in educational settings.

Self-determination theory was developed by Ryan and Deci (1985) and grew out of earlier work on motivation such as that of de Charms (1968). Extensive research has guided the evolution of SDT since that time (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The effectiveness of SDT to describe complex psychological processes (Ryan & Deci, 2017) as well as its compatibility with qualitative designs and applicability to educational settings is supported by considerable evidence (Ryan & Deci, 2020). The present research used SDT as an interpretive lens for

understanding educator narratives. This effort aimed to make a theoretical contribution further supporting the flexibility and application of SDT.

Definitions

1. *Amotivation* is defined in SDT as having an impersonal locus of causality with a lack of value, relevance, and perceived competence (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

2. *Basic psychological needs (BPN)* are defined by SDT as the satisfaction of individual perceived autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

3. *Established* is defined as an educator having at least 12 years of experience in the field of public education.

4. *Eudaemonic* wellbeing is defined as realizing one's optimal functioning through meaning and self-realization (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

5. *Hedonic* wellbeing is defined as individual happiness in terms of pleasure fulfillment and pain avoidance (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

6. A *lateral career move* is defined as one between positions that are hierarchically similar, in different school systems, and unrelated to compensation.

7. *Locus of causality (PLOC)* is viewed by SDT in terms of the extent to which perceived causality is internally or externally regulated, affecting the degree to which motivation is self-determined (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

8. *Motivation* is identified in SDT as largely falling on a spectrum of from extrinsic to intrinsic, manifesting as regulatory styles of varying degrees of internalization including external, introjected, identified, integrated, and intrinsic (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

9. Defining the parameters of what makes an educator *successful*, empirically, is difficult. Research subjects were given an opportunity to summarize personal success in their own terms and list any accolades or supporting evidence as desired. This data was synthesized and de-identified.

Limitations

The present study had some limitations. Bias and influence resulting from the researcher's previous knowledge and experience has been noted as an important factor to manage in qualitative investigations (Creswell & Poth 2018; Patton, 2015). I am a lifelong resident of upper east Tennessee, an alumnus of a local public school district, and career educator in the area. My particular interest in studying the phenomenon of educators' lateral movement was a direct result of my lived experience. This provided me with an insider's knowledge of most of the participant's accounts, but also likely included some personal predispositions that could affect the process of data interpretation. Measures outlined in the research methodology were taken to promote awareness and address elements of researcher influence.

Additional limitations directly related to research subjects exist in the collection of narrative data. The emotional state of interviewees at the time of providing narrative accounts can create distortion. Other factors such as recall error and self-serving responses are possible contributors to inaccuracies in the data as well (Patton, 2015). Participants were consulted on multiple occasions and given opportunities at multiple points in the study to provide input regarding the accuracy of their accounts and the presentation thereof.

The integrity of narrative research is ultimately dependent upon the capabilities and trustworthiness of the researcher (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). Extensive efforts were

taken to ensure the credibility of this work. Close involvement with the research methodologist, dissertation committee members, and selected colleagues was integral to the production of a sound study. All related research activities were conducted with high ethical standards in accordance with guidelines set forth by the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

A final commonly found limitation with qualitative inquiries is transferability (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Patton, 2015). The present study included a small sample of individuals meeting criteria specific to the focus of the research. These participants were also representative of a limited geographic area. These factors may limit the extent to which the findings of this study are transferable in describing experiences in other settings. Additional similar studies are needed to support and confirm the findings of this research.

Delimitations

The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. The present study examined the narratives of educators falling within a specific subset of the mobility phenomenon. Interviewees were intentionally selected as meeting certain criteria and prescreened to ensure that higher compensation was not a motivational pull (Boyce & Bowers, 2016; Farley-Ripple, 2012; Snodgrass Rangel, 2018) in the decision to make a lateral move. Participants included both classroom teachers and building administrators with at least 12 years of public school experience. All the educators included in this research moved to another district within close geographic proximity of their previous role. Lateral movement is described in this study as mobility between roles of similar hierarchical status and responsibilities. The geographic area of study included the northeast corner of Tennessee.

The narrative design allowed for educator experiences associated with lateral movement to be described using the progressive-regressive method. Denzin (2001) characterized the

progressive-regressive method of narrative research as starting at a specific event in an individual's life and working forward or backward. A commonality among all participants was an ending that included a lateral career move to another district. Interviewees were given no restrictions on where to begin their narratives or about what events and information should be considered significant. The essence of the research was uncovering the emergence of commonalities among participants in circumstances that resulted in lateral movement.

The utilization of an SDT framework as an interpretive lens provided a sound theoretical perspective from which data could be analyzed. According to SDT, individual behavior is impacted by states of motivational regulation that are influenced by the nature of perceived locus of causality and the extent to which BPN are supported or thwarted (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Self-determination theory has proven effectiveness for use in qualitative designs and educational settings (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Specific probes were used to increase the depth of clarity regarding certain aspects of SDT throughout the interview process. The flexibility of SDT to describe complex social interactions facilitated the interpretive nuance necessary for analyzing narrative data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Overview of the Study

The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. The thick and rich description provided through participant narratives allowed for theoretical insight into individual experiences around educator mobility. This study includes five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a foundational basis for the research including an introduction, statement of the problem, research questions, definition of terms, and limitations and delimitations of the study. Chapter 2 is a review of literature related to educator mobility and associated areas of interest. Chapter 3 is a complete description of the methodology and design

used for the present study. Chapter 4 is a presentation of the data analysis of descriptive data, and

findings gathered from participant narratives. Chapter 5 is a summary of the findings,

professional and practical implications, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Introduction

Literature that specifically addresses the phenomenon of this study does not currently exist to the knowledge of the researcher. Additionally, most related research is solely focused on classroom teachers and rarely includes administrators with consistency (Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). However, a considerable body of knowledge around relevant related topics is available. It has been suggested that lateral occupational movement is yet under studied (Sullivan & Ariss, 2019). Furthermore, the vast majority of existing research into educator mobility and turnover is quantitative. The need for qualitative investigations has been recommended by numerous researchers to help better understand what is hidden beneath easily gathered employment numbers and survey data (Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b). This literature review is organized by sections on occupational movement, school leaders, educator burnout, occupational motivation and wellbeing, and relevant research rooted in self-determination theory (SDT). Existing research is followed by a theoretical framework and summary.

Occupational Movement

This section of the review is focused on lateral occupational movement, broadly, along with mobility and the effects of turnover in the field of education, specifically.

Lateral Occupational Movement

Although lateral career movement is wanting for more research, there are many significant findings in the existing research. One such finding is that lateral movement can be representative of a career plateau (Sullivan & Ariss, 2019). A recent study found this to be particularly common in music teachers (Hancock, 2016). Like most individual schools or

districts, music programs with a considerable history are often known by their reputation of success and perceived support. Hancock noted that a common practice among music teachers is to vie for more desirable positions as a method of career advancement. Research focused on teachers in other academic subjects have noted similar findings (Feng & Sass, 2017; Ladd, 2011; Vekeman et al., 2017).

Another important generalization about lateral career movement from occupational research is that some seek such moves to achieve better alignment between personal values and values present in the work setting (Wolf, 2019). The importance of value alignment within educational organizations is a concept embraced by authors and researchers for decades. Likewise, many recent studies about teacher mobility have named value alignment as an important factor around employment decisions (Hancock, 2016; Kraft et al., 2016; Ladd, 2011; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b; Vekeman et al., 2017).

Sullivan and Ariss (2019) suggested that nonevents related to lateral career movement are an area of particular interest which future research should investigate. In other words, people potentially make lateral moves not because undesirable events occur, but because desirable events do not occur or are unlikely to occur. This idea would appear to be closely related to many findings around teacher mobility and turnover, as addressed in other sections of this literature review. A clear example from Hancock (2016) is the migration of better qualified music teachers to programs that have known or perceived inherent advantages regarding support and resource allocation that were unattainable in their previous positions.

Teacher Mobility

For the purposes of this literature review, discussion of teacher mobility is limited to the aspects of career movement and the individual, not including effects of mobility on schools or

students. The most documented elements of teacher mobility are related to working conditions such as student population characteristics and the quality of school leadership. Teacher attributes such as years of experience and effectiveness are also recognized predictors of mobility (Feng & Sass, 2017; Ladd, 2011; Podurgsky et al., 2016). A notable systemic deficiency was uncovered by Podurgsky et al. (2016) during a longitudinal study of teacher movement across Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, in that teacher mobility is not monitored in many states. This study also found that intrastate movement was more impactful than interstate movement, likely due in part to issues with teaching license reciprocity from one state to another.

The relationship between standardized testing accountability and teacher intent to leave was recently investigated in a large study involving 1,866 educators across Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Connecticut. Results found that testing accountability had significant impacts on perceived stress and burnout in teachers. Testing accountability as well as school climate predicted both teacher migration and attrition. Interestingly, years of experience predicted teacher migration. Teachers with more years of experience were more likely to migrate than to leave the profession altogether. However, those with the most experience were also more likely to remain at their current school (Ryan et al., 2017).

The nature and scope of specific research on teacher mobility and working conditions often determines which factor is most consequential. An unfortunate reality is that school demographics and poverty are frequently in contention for the strongest correlating factors to teacher mobility (Feng & Sass, 2017; Hancock, 2016; Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b). However, there is not universal agreement on this topic. A longitudinal study of 16 urban school districts across multiple states found that the only statistically significant variable to teacher mobility was regional unemployment. This research also

concluded that readily available statistics do not provide the depth of knowledge necessary for understanding teacher mobility (Papay et al., 2017).

Feng and Sass (2017) stated that peer characteristics play a significant role in employment decisions for teachers. Collaboration within the school and between teachers and administration is another commonly cited factor of working conditions and teacher mobility (Hancock, 2016; Ladd, 2011; Sibbald, 2017b). Vekeman et al. (2017), in a survey of 74 Flemish schools, found job satisfaction related to person-organization fit to be the primary determinant of employment intention. Similarly, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) found that dissatisfaction with accountability pressures, administrative support, and working conditions were most closely related with intentions to leave using national survey data. Ladd (2011) found the perceived quality of school leadership to be the dominant factor regarding working conditions and further specified leadership in terms of support for teachers, a shared vision, a trusting environment, and effective processes of decision-making. Other studies cited quality of leadership as a primary factor with mobility as well (Hancock, 2016; Kraft et al., 2016).

Sibbald (2017a; 2017b) conducted significant qualitative research on teacher mobility within the Ontario school boards. The documented processes of posting and filling teaching positions in both studies were similar to what might be found in any large unified school district in the United States. The first study focused on teachers working in grades 9-12. Two primary antecedents to transferring for teachers with the most experience were working conditions and personal life factors. However, the most impactful antecedent overall was caregiver fatigue reported by teachers working in higher needs schools (Sibbald, 2017a). Individuals interviewed by Sibbald (2017b) reported a great deal of stress, both physical and mental, and even guilt around the decision-making process to change jobs. Subjects in this study felt that moving was

necessary for their personal wellbeing or career improvement. Collaboration within the school was stated as the primary factor for transfer from these interviews. Sibbald (2017a; 2017b) recommended that more qualitative work is needed and that future research should include a focus on stress experienced by teachers. Additionally, Sibbald (2017b) developed 15 qualitative themes related to teacher mobility; leadership issues, policy issues, quality of match to peers and school environment, achievement and poverty, building issues, efforts to improve one's working conditions, opportunities for promotion and growth, to address productivity, financial gain, proximity to areas and people of personal significance, commuting and stress, and cultural elements of the school.

Some generalizations about individual characteristics and teacher mobility have been made. Teachers with less experience are more likely to transfer (Feng & Sass, 2017; Hancock, 2016; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a). Teacher effectiveness as measured using a value added model has been found to be predictive of teacher mobility as well. Feng and Sass (2017) reported that teachers at spectral ends of the effectiveness scale were most likely to leave, but that highly effective teachers were the most likely to stay overall. Multiple studies have found distinct differences between those who leave and remain in education throughout career changes (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Feng & Sass, 2017; Vekeman et al., 2017). Some research has indicated that moving often has positive outcomes for those teachers (Hancock, 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald 2017b). Moreover, the perceived improvements following a transfer may not be easily measured such as one's perception of making a difference in the lives of others, personal accomplishment, and work that is intellectually challenging (Hancock, 2016).

Effects of Teacher Turnover

It is widely accepted that the right amount of teacher turnover is necessary and desirable (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020). Sorensen and Ladd (2020) firmly stated that encouraging ineffective teachers to leave is important for the overall wellbeing of the school. However, turnover rates in education tend to exceed healthy levels. According to a recent study by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) using national survey data, southern states were found to have the highest turnover at 16% annually. Despite the inability to ascertain causality with teacher turnover, the consequences of high turnover are quite clear. Additionally, there is agreement among researchers that the costs of turnover, at times, outweigh the benefits (Hanushek et al., 2016; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020).

Teacher turnover causes disruptive effects to student achievement and school culture. Adverse outcomes with student learning correlated to turnover have been documented by numerous recent studies (Hanushek et al., 2016; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020). There exists some disagreement about the level of impact that turnover has on achievement. In a large study based in Texas, Hanushek et al. (2016) found that the negative effects of turnover on student achievement were less in traditionally higher achieving schools. Another sizeable study of New York City schools found that the negative impacts of turnover on student achievement are tangible and substantial regardless of school type (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). The loss of program cohesion was noted due to the excess burden placed on returning teachers of catching up new teachers. Ronfeldt et al. further speculated that the disruptive effects of turnover may ultimately amount a loss of collegiality, relational trust, and the institutional knowledge among faculty critical for supporting a productive learning environment.

A common finding in turnover research is the resulting inequitable distribution of effective teachers. Studies geared more toward teacher mobility have found that highly effective teachers tend to seek groups of other highly effective teachers (Feng & Sass, 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Vekeman et al., 2017). Others have found that the replacement teachers of those moving often have a high degree of variability in qualification and effectiveness (Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorensen & Ladd 2020). This unpredictability around human capital compounds the preexisting dilemma of nationwide teacher shortages (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

There are financial costs incurred with teacher turnover as well. Sorensen and Ladd (2020) stated the drain of human resources funds as a primary hidden cost to turnover. Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) estimated that the average cost of replacement for urban school districts could exceed $20,000 per teacher. In addition to human resources funds such as recruitment and benefits, Ronfeldt et al. (2013) listed professional development and new hire training as significant costs associated with teacher turnover. The time and money required to navigate the process of turnover ultimately results in lost resources for instruction and other aspects of school improvement.

Implications of research into teacher turnover on educational policy are rather consistent. Kraft et al. (2016) stated that strengthening the organizational environment promotes retention of teachers and accelerates student achievement. There is also considerable evidence that people who leave education altogether are different than those who stay or move (Feng & Sass, 2017; Hanushek et al., 2016; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020; Vekeman et al., 2017). Sorensen and Ladd (2020) asserted that there are significant policy concerns regarding teacher turnover. Hanushek et al. (2016) suggested that universal human resources policies are inadequate and that the retention

of highly effective teachers requires a more focused and intentional approach. Vekeman et al. (2017) concluded that leavers and movers can be identified and should be approached differently by school leaders and policymakers.

Conclusion

Much of the hidden costs and negative effects of teacher turnover are avoidable. Minimally, there exists room for considerable improvement over the present. Empirical research has uncovered many of the readily observable relationships related to these events. The limited and limiting nature of this understanding has also been reached (Hancock, 2016; Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Sibbald, 2017a). Qualitative inquiry is needed to flesh out the nuance and depth of understanding necessary for significant and lasting progress.

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School Leaders

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This section specifically addresses school leaders. Extant research in this area has been described as relatively limited for various reasons (Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). It was anticipated that the present study would include at least one school leader. The following literature was reviewed in order of logical relevance.

The first two studies in this subsection were framed in SDT. Fernet (2011) developed and validated an instrument to measure work role motivation in school administrators with a sample of 570 French Canadian principals. Motivation was measured in terms of the five motivational forms identified by SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Work roles were classified as administrative, instructional, and informational (Fernet, 2011). The findings indicated the presence of a motivation continuum, as described by SDT, related to each of the work roles. Intrinsic motivation and identified regulation were significantly associated to each work role. In turn, motivation was linked to role self-efficacy. Higher perceptions of self-determined forms of

motivations resulted in higher self-efficacy. The instructional leadership role was most related to job commitment and burnout. The overall findings confirmed a multifaceted nature of school leader motivation that changes with the perceived level of self-determination. An implication of this research was the importance of autonomy in behavioral self-regulation.

Another study investigated administrators' perceived autonomy support from superintendents, affective commitment, and job satisfaction. Career experiences were considered for possible moderating effects. The sample included 1,501 public school principals with an average of 7.2 years of educational leadership experience. Higher perceived autonomy support from superintendents correlated with greater affective commitment to the district and higher job satisfaction. Results also indicated that perceived autonomy support from superintendents was especially important for administrators with fewer years of experience in their current district. The effect gradually declined as years of experience increased. It was further observed that principals' emotional attachment to their district grew with experience. Other predictors of affective commitment included schools with larger student populations and districts with smaller overall student populations. Career experience directly related to job satisfaction, increasing over time. Urbanicity was not significantly related to any variables after controlling for perceived autonomy support. The research concluded that superintendents should endeavor to promote positive relationships and autonomy with building administrators, particularly those with less in district experience (Chang et al., 2015).

Maxwell and Riley (2017) examined the interrelated nature of emotional demands, emotional labor, burnout, wellbeing, and job satisfaction. Emotional labor strategies were conceptualized as deep acting and surface acting. Deep acting was described as a manifestation of genuinely felt emotions and surface acting as the suppression thereof. Surface acting was

further classified as hiding or faking emotions. The sample included 1,320 principals in Australia. The use of each emotional strategy increased predictably with rising emotional demands. Administrators were found to report higher burnout, work-related emotional demands, and significantly lower wellbeing, yet higher job satisfaction when compared with the general population. Many other specific relationships were found. Deep acting had no correlation to the outcome variables, however, it was also associated with the least negative consequences. Both dimensions of surface acting were inversely related to job satisfaction. Additionally, surface acting-hiding was inversely related with burnout and wellbeing. Surface acting-hiding was the most likely emotional labor strategy employed by principals as emotional demands increased. The research recommended tailored interventions to help school leaders to manage emotional demands, specifically mindfulness training. Mindfulness interventions have been found effective in educational settings by other researchers as well (Alahari, 2017; Garwood et al., 2018; Heckenberg et al., 2018; Iancu et al., 2018).

The next four studies reviewed in this subsection represent a lineage of continuous efforts to better understand the unique experience of educational leaders. Johnson (2005) conducted qualitative interviews with 12 individuals that exited the principalship. These participants were ultimately viewed in two broad categories of satisfied and disaffected in the principal role. Common themes present in all interviews included cultural issues within the school, workload, bureaucratic difficulties, student discipline, and disgruntled parents. However, individuals identified as being satisfied in the administrative role reported having no intent to leave before a more desirable opportunity became available. Most interviewees expressed no regret in exiting the principalship, although some alluded to the possibility returning in the future. All the former principals spoke about the emotional difficulty of leaving. When asked to provide insights about

principal retention, emergent themes included balancing accountability and autonomy, reducing workload and social isolation, and providing meaningful internship programs for aspiring educational leaders.

Another qualitative inquiry investigated processes and forces that impact the career paths of educational leaders through an embedded case study. The research collected data from 48 principals and assistant principals working in Delaware public schools, including over 100 career moves. Participants reported self-initiation as a primary factor for pursuing the role of principal. Overarching factors around becoming an administrator and role transition included recruitment, reassignment, being passed over, deciding to stay, and removal. The research revealed personal, behavioral, and environmental influences related to career paths. Personal influences included individual beliefs about educational leadership, expectations, sense of self-efficacy, and familial motivations. Behavioral influences included individual educational pursuits and professional development, roles and responsibilities, and relationships at work. Environmental influences included working conditions, school district characteristics, policy, and district decision-making. Specific influential factors were identified as pushes, pulls, and contributing to equilibrium regarding role transition. Pushes were described as negative motivational factors to move and included work-related politics, role conflict, and poor interpersonal relationships. Pulls were described as factors drawing individuals to move and included salary, available opportunities, sense of self-efficacy, and retirement benefits. Factors contributing to equilibrium, or the intention to stay, included relationships with students, district-level support, perceived self-efficacy and autonomy, positive interpersonal relationships, and retirement benefits. Participants who were willing to speak on removal cited nonrenewal, politics, and personality conflicts. Overall findings indicated that the decision to stay was primarily impacted by relationships with

students and district-level support. The research concluded that phenomena related to career path decisions are complex and warrant further investigation (Farley-Ripple et al., 2012).

Snodgrass Rangel (2018) sought to build on the work of Farley-Ripple et al. (2012) by reviewing literature on school administrator turnover between 1990 and 2017. This effort uncovered some significant hurdles to deeper understanding in the form of inconsistent methodologies and measures and a near total lack of research replication. Reviewed research findings were identified as mixed and consistent. Variables with mixed findings related to turnover included principal gender, race, age, and years of experience as well as student characteristics, salary, school level, poverty, and working at a larger school. Factors with consistent findings included school performance, school conditions, number of students receiving special education services, accountability policy, challenges related to human resources, and job characteristics. School conditions were described in terms of student discipline, workload, and staff cohesion. Job characteristics included perceived autonomy, interpersonal relationships, and the evolving nature of administrative roles. The most consequential factors to principal turnover in extant literature were determined to be school performance, accountability policy, and professional development. Specifically, administrators with doctoral degrees were more likely to move than others were. The literature review also indicated that principals likely fall into broad categories of satisfied and dissatisfied. Further implications were that the complexities of principal turnover reach far beyond binary satisfaction measurement. Snodgrass Rangel (2018) pointed to Boyce and Bowers (2016) as one of the most promising recent studies.

Boyce and Bowers (2016) conducted research to create a typology of school administrators who leave using latent class analysis, based on national survey data that included

1,470 principals. The analysis was guided by variables regarding principal perceptions, contextual factors, and related turnover outcomes. Principal perceptions included perceived level of influence, school climate, administrator attitudes, and salary disposition. Contextual factors included principal gender, race, age, years of experience, and level of education as well as salary, collective bargaining, parent involvement, school size, urbanicity, school level, and poverty. Turnover outcomes included another principal appointment, other school position, central office position, and retirement. An important result was the statistical confirmation of satisfied and disaffected administrator subgroups, in agreement with the qualitative findings of Farley-Ripple et al. (2012). Boyce and Bowers (2016) also corroborated the concept of personal, behavioral, and environmental influences as well as the presence of identifiable pushes and pulls that motivate turnover. Motivational pushes were identified as a lower sense of autonomy, interpersonal conflicts, and poor working relationships. Findings showed that satisfied principals reported greater autonomy, fewer school climate issues, more positive work-related attitudes, and favorable salary dispositions. Disaffected administrators were more likely to be women, had not attended an aspiring principals training program, reported lower parent involvement, and more often worked at a school located in a city or town. However, urbanicity of the school was not directly related to overall reported job satisfaction. Additionally, it was found that satisfied principals could be enticed to move given the right motivational pulls and that disaffected principals were more likely to turnover into a non-principal position. The conclusions of Boyce and Bowers (2016) were in close agreement with Farley-Ripple et al. (2012).

The most recent evidence on school administrator turnover was provided by Levin and Bradley (2019) and Levin et al. (2019) in collaboration with the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the Learning Policy Institute. Notable national statistics

included that 35% of administrators remained at their schools for fewer than 2 years and only 11% stayed for 10 years or more. Job satisfaction in terms of positive working conditions, increased autonomy, and favorable salary disposition were found to be significant to principal retention (Levin & Bradley, 2019). Factors related to administrator turnover were identified as poor working conditions, a sense of being undervalued, lower autonomy, and punitive accountability systems. Recommended strategies for retaining administrators included high quality professional development opportunities, increased decision-making authority, the promotion of learning-conducive environments, fair compensation, and productive accountability policy (Levin et al., 2019).

Conclusion

Many factors related to the principalship and principal turnover have been identified, yet much investigative work remains to be accomplished (Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). Supportive conditions are necessary for the retention and continued recruitment of thriving school leaders. The circumstances facing educational leaders and decisions regarding their career paths are related in complex ways in which understanding remains limited (Boyce & Bowers, 2016; Farley-Ripple et al., 2012). Promising directions for future research have been identified to pursue deeper understanding (Snodgrass Rangel, 2018).

<center>**Educator Burnout**</center>

Research into burnout has the potential to reveal insight about a wide array of environmental variables and educator-perceived factors that are relevant to the present study. The majority of associated research used the Maslach Burnout Inventory to measure the nature and severity of burnout syndrome in educators (Garcia-Carmona et al., 2019). Maslach (1982) defined burnout as having three components including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization,

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and personal accomplishment. These three burnout components and their causality are addressed in SDT as function of basic needs satisfaction (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This section is divided into four subsections including situational burnout research, burnout and self-efficacy, burnout and SDT, and burnout meta-analyses.

Situational Burnout Research

Campbell et al. (2013) designed and tested a comprehensive model of burnout based primarily in conservation of resources theory. This model contained elements of organizational justice, perceived support, burnout, and attitudinal withdrawal. Organizational justice was further categorized into distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Perceived support included organizational and supervisor support. Burnout was defined in traditional terms. Attitudinal withdrawal was assessed as organizational commitment and intent to leave. The study included a sample of 343 social workers. Significant relationships were found between supervisor support, all elements of organizational justice, and emotional exhaustion. Procedural justice was correlated with both organizational and supervisor support. Somewhat expectedly, interactional justice was only related to supervisor support. A spiraling effect was described regarding burnout where lower organizational and supervisor support were strongly associated with emotional exhaustion, which further indicated trends toward depersonalization and lower perceived sense of accomplishment. Burnout was associated with lower organizational commitment, which was directly related to intent to leave. The research concluded that organizations must strive to treat individuals fairly. It was recommended that the first level of leadership is an appropriate starting point for professional development interventions and that these strategies should be supported through organizational policy. Further recommendations included that organizations should

provide ample resources and outlets for employees to detect early signs of burnout and support resolution.

Establishing trust within school organizations is a salient topic throughout teacher and educational leadership development literature. Van Maele and Van Houtt (2015) conducted a large study with elementary teachers in Belgium to investigate the relationship between burnout and trust in various contexts. Notably, the authors expressed a need for more qualitative work on burnout to understand this phenomenon more deeply. Findings of this research indicated that a lack of trusting relationships with students was most strongly associated with burnout. Trust in students also predicted teachers' sense of personal accomplishment. Other results were that trust in colleagues was correlated with depersonalization and trust in administrators was closely associated with emotional exhaustion. Somewhat against the grain of other existing data, no relationship was found between burnout and school characteristics such as poverty. Van Maele and Van Houtt (2015) described the importance of trust, particularly between administrators and teachers, as a safeguarding barrier against teacher burnout.

Special education teachers are more susceptible to burnout than others due to the uniquely challenging aspects of the work (Garwood et al., 2018; Langher et al., 2017). Langher et al. (2017) explored how special education teachers' perception of support from regular teachers affected burnout. This study was conducted with a large population of secondary special education teachers in Rome, Italy. An important factor stated by the authors was that all special education students are mainstreamed in Italian schools, further emphasizing the importance of this collaboration between regular and special education teachers. Increased perceived support was found to boost special education teachers' sense of personal accomplishment, while decreased perceived support impacted emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Population

characteristics mediated much of the variability across the findings. Female teachers and those working in lower performing schools were more likely to report emotional exhaustion. Middle school teachers were also more likely to be burned out than their high school counterparts.

Another study focusing on special education teachers in rural settings conducted qualitative interviews related to burnout. Emergent themes included a lack of clarity around role responsibilities, overextended roles, emotional exhaustion, and a lack of accomplishment. Findings suggested that special education teachers who did not experience burnout had stronger coping ability through redefining success in more perceivably achievable goals. This research highlighted the importance of student and colleague relationships, self-care, and the potential benefits of mindfulness training (Garwood et al., 2018). Related research focusing specifically on mindfulness practice and school psychologists' wellbeing echoed many similar findings (Alahari, 2017).

The relationship between depression and burnout was explored in a longitudinal study with secondary teachers in South Korea. Subjects completed three surveys, separated by 6 months each. Results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between teachers' initial burnout and depression levels. The longitudinal rate of change between depression and burnout was significant as well. The most important finding was that increased burnout preceded a rise in depression on the subsequent survey. However, this relationship was not reciprocal, implicating the need for further understanding on the complexity of this interplay between these variables (Shin et al., 2013).

Gluschkoff et al. (2016) researched effort-reward imbalance in 76 Finnish elementary teachers. Results indicated that effort-reward imbalance was related to higher burnout rates. The study focused on recovery experiences including relaxation in leisure time and sleep wellness.

Further analyses concluded that poor recovery partially explained a lower sense of self-efficacy and that poor sleep partially explained emotional exhaustion and overall burnout.

Burnout and Self-efficacy

Literature reviewed in this subsection speaks more specifically to self-efficacy and burnout. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016, 2017) conducted two such studies with Norwegian teachers. Teacher perception of school goal structure was the focus of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017). In schools where goals were perceived to be more oriented toward student learning, teachers reported higher self-efficacy, greater job satisfaction, and less intent to leave the profession. Deleteriously high workload, emotional exhaustion, and more intent to leave were reported in school perceived to have goals oriented toward performance or achievement outcomes. In Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2016), seven perceived burnout-related variables were investigated as potential predictors of teacher self-efficacy. Workload was found to be a predictor of emotional stress, which was related to lower engagement but not to lower self-efficacy. Value conflict, low student motivation, lack of administrator support was related to lower self-efficacy. Collectively, workload, emotional exhaustion, value conflict, low student motivation, and lack of administrator support were associated with intent to leave the profession.

A large study of middle school teachers in China investigated the mediating role of self-efficacy between work-related stress and burnout. Yu et al. (2015) found that stress was not directly related to burnout. However, higher stress was associated with lower self-efficacy and lower self-efficacy was correlated to higher burnout. This nuance of this finding speaks to the concept of locus of causality (Ryan & Deci, 2017), which is further elaborated upon in later sections.

Perceived self-efficacy to motivate students as related to burnout, job satisfaction, illness, and intent to leave the profession was researched by Wang et al. (2015). The study included 523 Canadian teachers and also focused on personal attribution as a mediating factor. Teachers who reported higher self-efficacy also had less emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, greater sense of personal accomplishment and job satisfaction, less frequent illness, and lower intent to leave. Personal attribution was found to mediate job satisfaction beyond perceived self-efficacy and significantly mediated reported illness and intent to leave. Wang et al. (2015) concluded that personal attributions contribute independently of self-efficacy to burnout-related outcomes. The implementation of stress-conscious teaching and motivational strategies was recommended.

Malinen and Savolainen (2016) investigated the mediating role of self-efficacy and collective efficacy regarding classroom management in the effect of perceived school climate on job satisfaction and burnout. This was a longitudinal study with a population of middle school teachers in Finland. Participants completed three surveys during September, January, and April of the same academic year. Findings were that climate was positively related to job satisfaction and this effect was partially explained by self-efficacy. In turn, teachers who reported positive school climates were more likely to have higher self-efficacy and lower burnout. Collective efficacy was not correlated with job satisfaction or burnout. This finding indicated the likelihood of considerable overlap between perceived collective efficacy and school climate. The importance of emotional support for teachers was emphasized.

Burnout and SDT

The present study investigated specific educator experiences through the lens of SDT. Literature on burnout based in SDT is particularly valuable regarding design elements and terminology alignment.

A recent study including Belgian physical education teachers sought to identify individual motivational profiles and explore their relationship to experiences of need satisfaction, teaching style, and burnout. Four motivational profiles were defined as good quality, high quantity, low quantity, and poor quality. Teachers identified as having good quality motivation reported the highest need satisfaction, particularly in the areas of autonomy and competence. Individuals in both the good quality and high quantity motivational profiles reported more need supportive teaching styles (Van den Berghe et al., 2014). Consistent with SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017), a subgroup of teachers with coexisting high levels of autonomy and controlled motivation was identified (Van den Berghe et al., 2014). The research emphasized that quantitative methodologies are limiting in this area and more qualitative work is necessary for deeper understanding.

Several recent studies about burnout and SDT have been conducted with physical education teachers in Spain. Bartholomew et al. (2014) investigated the effect of job pressure on illbeing and found that job pressure was associated with psychological needs thwarting, which was predictive of burnout. Specifically, competence thwarting correlated to physical symptoms. Another study sought to validate SDT instruments in Spanish contexts. In addition to successful validation, the research found highly significant relationships between teachers' perceived basic needs thwarting and burnout (Cuevas et al., 2015). More recently, Cuevas et al. (2018) explored the effects of teacher evaluation based on student performance. Resulting perceived pressure from this type of evaluation was associated with lower autonomous motivation and greater amotivation. In turn, autonomous motivation and amotivation positively predicted wellbeing and burnout, respectively. The research concluded that the controlling pressure manifested by such

evaluations could lead to less authentically motivated instruction with negative effects for both teachers and students.

Two similar studies were conducted to further expand on the development of teacher profiles related to motivation and burnout. Teachers from 106 secondary schools in Spain were included in the samples. The first study resulted in four motivational profiles described as amotivational, relatively controlled motivation, combined controlled-autonomous motivation, and relatively autonomous motivation. The overall findings supported general tenets of SDT related to basic needs satisfaction as a predictor of where teachers fall on the motivational spectrum. Though, competence need satisfaction was found to have the strongest correlation to motivation type as opposed to autonomy. Teachers reporting more autonomous motivation were less likely to experience burnout and had the most positive outcomes (Abos et al., 2018). As in Van den Bergh et al. (2014), Abos et al. (2018) found that teachers who reported high levels of controlled motivation were often highly engaged as well. However, these individuals suffered more negative psychological consequences associated with burnout and fewer positive work outcomes. Teachers with higher controlled motivation and higher engagement were more likely to report ego-oriented work environments, prioritizing performance-oriented teaching and learning goals.

The next study attempted to expand burnout profiles through SDT, using the Farber burnout types as starting point. The Farber burnout types of frenetic, underchallenged, and worn out were compared with psychological, physical, and work-related outcomes. The results identified two additional profiles. A total of five profiles were identified as disengaged underchallenged/worn out, lowly engaged underchallenged/worn out, highly engaged high frenetic, highly engaged moderate frenetic, and moderately engaged low burnout. Findings

indicated a general spectrum with burnout and engagement at opposite ends. However, the coexistence of burnout and engagement in three of the groups demonstrated the presence of phenomena described in SDT. Physical outcomes related to burnout affected all teachers similarly including reported depression, anxiety, and sleep issues. The moderately engaged low burnout group had the most positive outcomes. It was suggested that there may exist a high frenetic-high engagement threshold at which point the frenetic aspect causes an individual to spiral into full burnout (Abos, Sevill-Serrano et al., 2019).

Abos, Haerens et al. (2019) conducted similar research about job satisfaction and emotional exhaustion related to motivation in elementary physical education teachers. Four motivational profiles of relatively motivated, somewhat motivated, autonomous-controlled motivated, and relatively autonomously motivated were identified. Teachers identified as being relatively autonomously motivated were associated with the most favorable outcomes and reported significantly lower rates of emotional exhaustion.

Early childhood educators in Australia were the subjects of a qualitative inquiry into burnout and workplace wellbeing. Jones et al. (2019) noted a scarce amount of existing qualitative work in the concerning SDT and educational settings. A semi-structured interview approach framed in SDT was selected to capture elements of both hedonic and eudaemonic wellbeing. Emergent themes from the analysis included a sense of belonging, workplace equity, and workplace flow. The most prevalent them related to workplace wellbeing was a sense of belonging, which included strong relatedness need satisfaction and family-conscious flexibility in work policies. Issues related to workplace equity such as inequality around expectations and pay for teachers and assistants were associated with burnout.

The final study reviewed regarding burnout and SDT focused on the supportiveness of school leaders. The sample included 1,500 teachers from an urban school district with high poverty in the Midwest. The supportiveness of school leaders was reported in terms of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational needs satisfaction. The results uncovered clear differences between teachers with an intent to leave the school and those with an intent to leave the profession. Analysis showed that teachers with unmet intrapersonal needs around autonomy and competence were more likely to burnout and leave the profession. To an even greater effect, teachers reporting unmet interpersonal needs related to autonomy were more likely to migrate to another school. Organizational commitment was the strongest predictor of intent to migrate. Recommendations to improve intrapersonal perceived support by increasing the quality and frequency of supportive administrator-teacher interactions. Improvement of perceived interpersonal support was suggested by implementing shared decision making and empowering teachers (Ford et al., 2019).

Burnout Meta-Analyses

Three varying meta-analyses of burnout research are included to provide a synthesized review of literature in this area. Garcia et al. (2019) performed a meta-analysis of burnout research in secondary grades that included 49 samples and 14,410 teachers across 15 countries. Results were that an overreliance on survey data and a limited number of instruments could be prone to bias. Interestingly, this study revealed that publication of burnout research in educational settings was declining. Another issue highlighted was that burnout research often does not directly target the prevalence of burnout among the total teacher population. However, the findings indicated that burnout is likely quite high among secondary teachers and much higher than that of other occupations.

Another meta-analysis focused on self-efficacy and burnout compared with the type of instrument used, occupation, years of experience, and cultural contexts. This analysis included 57 studies with 22,773 individuals working in education, health care, and other occupations. In contrast to Garcia et al. (2019), Shoji et al. (2015) found that different measurement instruments yielded similar results. A moderate effect between burnout and self-efficacy was indicated and a sense of lack of accomplishment had the largest effect among burnout components. Findings showed significantly larger effects for teachers, older individuals, and those with more years of experience. Somewhat similar to Van Maele and Van Houtt (2015), Shoji et al. (2015) suggested that self-efficacy may be a buffer against burnout and is particularly important for educators.

The final meta-analysis in this review looked at the effectiveness of burnout interventions. The types of interventions included cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness and relaxation, social-emotional skills, psychoeducational approach, social support, and professional development. Intervention types were further scrutinized by teaching level, time lag, and intervention duration. Findings indicated small effects overall and no practical difference between intervention types. Effects were reduced for elementary and middle school teachers, although this was stated as an inconclusive finding. Mindfulness interventions did have significant impact on improving emotional exhaustion and sense of personal accomplishment (Iancu et al., 2018). This finding was confirmed by another meta-analysis of mindfulness interventions that focused on teacher physiological indicators (Heckenberg et al., 2018). Furthermore, interventions lasting 1-3 months and a post-assessment time lag of 1-3 months demonstrated better outcomes (Iancu et al., 2018). Tailoring burnout interventions to the educational was a primary recommendation (Heckenberg et al., 2018; Iancu et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Existing research does not fully explain burnout. Burnout antecedents and outcomes fall on complex and overlapping continuums that affect all educators. Investigating this complexity is important for supporting improvements to professional practice (Abos et al., 2018; Abos et al., 2019; Van den Berghe et al., 2014). More qualitative investigation is needed to understand and prevent burnout (Jones et al., 2019; Van den Berghe et al., 2014; Van Maele & Van Houtt, 2015). Self-determination theory provides a valuable framework for the continued progress toward understanding perceived experience in educational environments (Abos et al., 2018; Abos et al., 2019; Ford et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017; Van den Berge et al., 2014). Workplace wellbeing and motivation are discussed further in later sections.

Occupational Motivation and Wellbeing

Many of the themes present in educator mobility and burnout research are similarly related to motivational concepts and individual wellbeing. The following section is a review of literature whose primary focus was understanding various aspects of motivation and wellbeing at work. Likewise, considerable overlap exists in this body evidence relative to literature previously reviewed. Individual motivation is broadly conceptualized into categories of intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation. According to SDT, a combination of perceived individual and contextual factors affect and explain personal motivation. Motivation and wellbeing are connected in complex and reciprocal relationships (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This section is organized into subsections of brain research, situational motivation research, and literature on organizational climate and wellbeing.

Brain Research and Motivation

The next series of literature reviewed in this section involved experiments designed to understand psychological mechanisms related to motivation, need frustration, and motivation restoration as described by SDT. The first experiment attempted to determine if perceived competence could explain autonomy restoration. Radel and Sarrazin (2013) divided a sample of undergraduate students into two groups to play a puzzle game under varying conditions. Each group was further scrutinized by novice and experienced players. Autonomy satisfaction was intentionally thwarted in the experimental group during the first round. Results indicated that perceived competence is important to addressing threats to autonomy and suggested important differences between the way individuals responded. An elevated sense of competence was associated with autonomy restoration in the subsequent round and the opposite was found for those with lower perceived competence. Additionally, the coping strategies were described as avoidant in those with lower perceived competence versus approach coping displayed in the group with high perceived competence. This study was preceded by others that are not covered in this literature review, but may be helpful as further reading (Radel et al., 2011, Radel et al., 2009).

Subsequent experiments were conducted by Radel et al. (2014) to explore the effect of controlling antecedent contexts on subsequent intrinsic motivation. One experiment involved sixth grade students who responded to surveys about a general music class which all students were required to take and the class preceding it. Responses about the preceding class were analyzed and divided into groups of controlling and neutral. The general music class was intentionally designed to reduce threats to student autonomy. Results indicated that students

associated with an antecedent controlling environment engaged in autonomy restoration during the music class.

The second experiment expanded on these results using a sample of undergraduate students. This design involved groups learning to play a game under neutral and controlling conditions. Participants in the initially controlling environment were further split into groups that completed the subsequent, neutral, activity either in the same room or a different room. Results validated the findings of the first experiment and provided additional insights. Individuals that moved to a different room for the second activity displayed engagement in autonomy restoration similar to observations in the first experiment. Participants who remained in the same room following the initial autonomy frustrating treatment displayed continuing deleterious effects to intrinsic motivation. This suggested that perceived associations with the physical environment have lasting impacts on subsequent motivation. These findings also have indirect parallels to phenomena described in educator mobility research (Feng & Sass, 2017; Hancock, 2016; Kraft et al., 2016; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b; Vekeman et al., 2017), burnout research (Abos, Sevill-Serrano et al., 2019), and echo previous SDT research (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

More recent research has been conducted to expand these experimental understandings of need frustration and restoration. Fang et al. (2017) followed a similar design to the first experiment in Radel et al. (2014), with a population of undergraduate students in China, to study the effect of prior competence need thwarting on subsequent intrinsic motivation. Students responded to surveys corresponding to a required history course, assumed to be neutral, and the course preceding it. Survey responses about the preceding course were divided into groups competence thwarting and neutral. The results indicated a curvilinear relationship to preceding

competence frustration on subsequent engagement in intrinsic motivation restoration. Prior competence frustration was increasingly associated with lower subsequent intrinsic motivation before reaching an inflection point where intrinsic motivation began to rebound (Fang et al., 2017). This suggested that the effects of need satisfaction are not binary and have complex nuance.

Three follow up experiments were conducted using electrophysiological observations. The first by Fang et al. (2018) examined the effect of competence thwarting on subsequent motivation. Two groups of undergraduate students performed a series of tasks with stopwatches. The first group performed two tasks of moderate difficulty and the other group performed an initial task of extreme difficulty followed by a moderately difficult task. Brain activity in the experimental group showed much more intrinsic motivation on the second activity, suggesting the activation of restorative processes. These findings implicated that individuals should be provided an opportunity to experience success following a difficult experience whenever possible.

The next experiment dealt with performance goal orientation and competence. Individuals were prescreened into two groups as having either a high or low performance goal orientation. Both groups completed two identical tasks in which the first was designed to be overly difficult, competence thwarting, and the second was moderately difficult, competence supportive. The group initially identified as having low performance goal orientation experienced more competence restoration in the second activity. Additionally, those with a high performance goal orientation displayed less autonomous motivation in the second activity. This suggested that having a predisposed high performance goal orientation could have lingering

effects to stunt competence restoration and undermine autonomous motivation (Fang et al.,
2019).

In a third follow up experiment, Fang et al. (2020) revisited antecedent autonomy
frustration to investigate the extent of associated lasting impacts. Initial tasks were designed with
neutral and autonomy thwarting characteristics. Additionally, participants were prescreened for
inherent control and autonomous orientation attributes. Both groups completed a subsequent
autonomy-supportive task. Participants in the initially thwarting group displayed lower
motivation and attention levels in the subsequent activity. The affect was further pronounced in
individuals prescreened as having greater control orientation. Notably, this compounding affect
was not observed in participants with a control orientation in the first group. This seeming
contradiction to Radel and Sarrazin (2013) more likely suggests a limiting nature of simple
experiments on complex human behavior. Fang et al. (2020) implicated the importance of
protecting autonomy in occupational settings. Electrophysiological research is an increasingly
growing and important body of evidence to be considered in future research.

Situational Motivation Research

All literature reviewed in this subsection was framed in SDT. Guntert (2015) conducted
research with individuals from the Swiss insurance industry to examine whether types of
behavioral regulation could explain various occupational antecedents and outcomes. Antecedent
variables included motivating potential of the job, autonomy supportive leadership, and the
individual's perception of the organizational strategy. Outcome variables included job
satisfaction, turnover intention, and the organizational citizenship behaviors of civic virtue and
altruism. The study found that intrinsic motivation and identified regulation were positively
related to organizational citizenship and job satisfaction. Individuals who reported higher levels

of external regulation were associated with lower job satisfaction and higher intent to leave. The overall findings supported previous SDT research evidence. However, Guntert (2015) stated that further research focused on the internalization of extrinsic motivation, such as value congruence between organizations and employees, had the potential to deepen the understanding of occupational antecedents and outcomes through SDT.

Motivation related to implementing new teaching innovations has been a topic of interest in public education for many decades. Gorozidis and Papioannou (2014) used a mixed methods approach to investigate teacher perceptions around professional development and implementing new teaching innovations. The sample included 218 teachers in Greece and it was noted that professional development training is completed on a voluntary basis in this country, potentially removing many elements of controlled motivation found in settings where in-service learning is compulsory. As expected, Gorozidis and Papioannou found that autonomous motivation positively predicted teacher intent to complete professional development training and implement new innovations. Intrinsic motivation was reported in 69% and identified regulation in 34% of respondents, whereas controlled motivation such as introjected regulation was reported in 5% and external regulation in 25% of individuals. The percentage of teachers reporting external regulation was potentially explained by situations where a paradigm shift in certain content areas necessitated the need for retraining. Professional development hours also lead to financial incentives. However, it was discussed that autonomous motivation appeared to be more impactful than salary compensation. In addition to overall findings, the usefulness of SDT to study educational settings was emphasized.

Research that investigated internalized forms of motivation and public service motivation in German university professors (Wilkesman & Schmid, 2014) revealed some interesting

findings that also help to synthesize the results of Gorozidis and Papioannou (2014) and Guntert (2015). Wilkesman and Schmid (2014) studied the effect of a long-established reward system for university professors in Germany on teaching motivation. The reward system was described as being based on meeting certain predetermined performance goals, either personal or instructional, and leading to annual award designations and relatively small financial incentives. Furthermore, it was argued that performance goals such as course load and article publication, which are perceived as increasing professional status, may not align with more authentic outcomes. It was highlighted that no punitive measures exist for professors who elect not to participate, indicating that professor involvement is likely driven by autonomous motivation. This reward system created a crowding effect due to competing intrinsic motivational factors. The research supported that basic needs satisfaction is critical to understanding individual motivation as laid out in SDT. It was concluded that educational environments clouded with misaligned intrinsic competition could undermine teaching and learning outcomes.

Tadic et al. (2013) explored the fluctuation of self concordant motivation from one occupational task to another, related to work demands and happiness. According to SDT, self concordant motivation encompasses both identified and integrated motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). A large sample of secondary teachers participated in the study. Work demands were found to have a negative relationship with happiness. Self concordant motivation acted as a barrier against these negative effects for most tasks excluding professional development. Significant within day variability was observed, in agreement with expectations proposed by SDT. This indicated that teacher happiness at work fluctuates frequently based on subjective experience of the moment. The research concluded that intrinsically motivated teachers will be

happier and work harder. Implications included that teachers who are unable to establish self concordant motivation in their current job may need to reevaluate employment intentions.

Organizational Climate and Individual Wellbeing

Research in general occupational settings is followed by research in educational settings in this subsection. Bono et al. (2013) studied the effects of daily events on employee stress and health with a positive reflection intervention. The research was designed as a 3 week longitudinal study and the sample consisted of 61 healthcare workers. Measured indicators included perceived stress, blood pressure, physical symptoms, mental health, and work detachment. Daily work events were defined as positive, negative, and conflict that carried over from home. The positive reflection intervention consisted of having individuals write a daily reflection about three good things that happened throughout the given day. Findings showed that positive work events and positive reflection resulted in reduced perceived stress and improved health, with the exception of blood pressure. Results also indicated that positive events, negative events, and family conflict carryover each contributed independently to individual outcomes. These effects were measurable across various time intervals from momentary to afterwork hours. The research concluded that organizations should not merely focus on reducing negative work events, but also on increasing positive work events.

Another longitudinal study investigated work engagement through personal resources and emotionally demanding conditions. Personal resources were defined in terms of self-efficacy and optimism. Emotionally demanding conditions were classified as emotional demands and emotion-rule dissonance. Emotional demands were defined as strenuous emotionally charged social interactions. Emotion-rule dissonance was described as the conflict between genuinely felt emotions and situationally appropriate emotions for the work context. Data were collected twice

over a 1.5 year period and the population included 163 employees working in various aspects of customer service at an electronics company in the Netherlands. No significant relationships were found regarding optimism. Self-efficacy was found to have significant impacts on work engagement. Individuals with higher perceived self-efficacy became more engaged in work as emotionally demanding conditions increased. The opposite was true for individuals with lower perceived self-efficacy. This indicated that emotionally demanding conditions served as an activating mechanism for individuals with higher perceived self-efficacy to use their personal resources. It was noted that balance is important regarding this phenomenon as engagement sustainability becomes difficult in unrelenting emotionally demanding conditions and the absence thereof can lead to boredom and disengagement. Implications were that professional development supporting self-efficacy is important as the possibility of reducing emotionally demanding conditions is limited depending on the work setting (Xanthopoulou et al., 2013).

Tims et al. (2013) explored the effects of job crafting related to occupational demands, resources, and wellbeing. Job crafting was described as a process where individuals change their work by creating new or different tasks, developing interpersonal relationships, or positively reframing their mindset toward work functions. Occupational demands and resources were classified as challenging or hindering and structural or social, respectively. Structural resources were defined as relating to autonomy, variety, and personal development. Social resources were defined as social support and feedback. Wellbeing was defined in terms of work engagement and job satisfaction. The study was longitudinal with data being collected three times, each separated by a month. The sample included 288 employees working at a chemical plant. Crafting job resources was positively associated with wellbeing and resulted increased structural and social resources. The crafting of challenging job demands was also related to higher wellbeing. The

research concluded that individuals can enhance their own workplace wellbeing when given the opportunity.

Attempts to describe and understand school climate and its associated effects have been salient throughout education literature for several decades. Garrick et al. (2014) studied the impact of teachers' and principals' perceived school psychological safety climate on individual psychological outcomes. This was accomplished using a longitudinal design where participants completed 3 weeklong journals over 8 months, covering topics of job demands, fatigue, and engagement. Schools with a higher perceived psychological safety climate were associated with better psychological recovery in teachers. Fatigue was reported to have a significant acute impact on daily engagement, but not teachers' individual mindset. The importance of offering mental health resources and destigmatizing teachers' use of them was emphasized. Situationally targeted psychological interventions were recommended, a claim supported by Heckenberg et al. (2018) and Iancu et al. (2018).

Qualitative interviews were conducted with a group of Norwegian elementary and middle school teachers, both working and retired, about job satisfaction, work stress and its consequences, and coping strategies by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015). Most teachers reported high job satisfaction along with considerable stress and exhaustion, citing similar sources for each. Emergent themes regarding job satisfaction included working with students, variation in the work, collegiality, and autonomy. Sources of challenge and stress included workload demands, adapting to individual student needs, classroom management, value incongruence, lack of autonomy, teamwork, and professional status. It was noted that co-teaching is a common practice in Norwegian schools. In addition to consequential exhaustion, teachers reported other psychosomatic symptoms including difficulty concentrating, sleep issues, physical pain, and

deleterious social impacts. Further consequences included a reduced sense of accomplishment and self-efficacy, negativity, and low self-esteem. Some differences were found across age groups with regard to coping strategies. Younger teachers tended to overextend themselves in attempt to outwork the challenges. Ascending the age groups, teachers began reporting variability in their motivation to teach, touch more sick leave to recover, and found ways to reduce their workload. The research concluded that workload and stress lead to many unhealthy outcomes and efforts should be made to identify and address these issues.

Another study by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2018) explored similar variables using a quantitative design. They used a large sample of teachers to investigate the effect of job demands and resources on wellbeing, engagement, and intent to leave the profession. Time pressure was a significant predictor of lower wellbeing, similar to findings reported in Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017). Teachers who reported having more resources at work were moderately associated with better wellbeing. Overall, higher teacher wellbeing predicted higher engagement and lower intent to the leave the profession.

Organizational Climate, Individual Wellbeing, and SDT

Literature reviewed in this subsection is similar to the previous one, with the exception that the following research was framed in SDT. Research in general occupational settings is followed by research in educational settings.

Gillet et al. (2013) designed and tested a model linking procedural justice theory, SDT, and organizational support theory. Other specific design elements included supervisor autonomy support, work satisfaction, organizational identification, and job performance. The study included a sample of 323 nurses in France. Findings indicated that higher perceptions of procedural justice and supervisor autonomy support significantly impacted basic needs

satisfaction and perceived organizational support. In succession, need satisfaction and perceived organizational support were predictive of job satisfaction, organizational identification, and performance. The study recommended professional development for leadership ranks on fairness and autonomy-supportive behaviors concurrent with Campbell et al. (2013).

A recent meta-analysis of SDT research in the workplace was conducted by Van den Broeck et al. (2016). Findings included that perceived organizational support and person organization fit were more associated with autonomy satisfaction and suggested that competence satisfaction is more task oriented. The satisfaction of each basic need was related to individual wellbeing. All basic needs had a positive relationship with job satisfaction and affective commitment. Likewise, basic needs satisfaction was negatively associated with intent to leave. The study recommended a need for future research investigating need thwarting and turnover intentions.

One such study explored whether affective commitment and the effects of basic needs satisfaction on positive affect, cynicism, and intent to leave. The sample included 129 graduate students with fulltime employment and evaluated need satisfaction in terms of work variety, role conflict, and supervisor support. The research found that need satisfaction was positively associated with affective commitment. Specifically, individuals with higher affective commitment reported more leader support and variety at work as well as lower rates of cynicism and intent to leave. Role conflict was significantly related to need thwarting (Gillet, Forest et al., 2015).

A research by Gillet, Fouquereau et al. (2015) focused on the effects of job demands and organizational resources in two phases. The first included work engagement related to need satisfaction and the second concentrated on burnout related to need thwarting. Job demands were

defined in terms of task change and ambiguity. Organizational resources were defined in terms of interpersonal and informational justice. Findings included that workers reporting greater job demands may experience need thwarting through perceived inequity. Negative perceptions around organizational resources were significantly related to need thwarting. Need satisfaction and thwarting were predictive of engagement and burnout, respectively.

Bullying at work is recognized as an important problem for healthy organizational climates and their employees. This phenomenon was studied in terms of psychological health with a large population of Canadian nurses. Bullying was defined as being regularly subjected to negative personal, work, and physical intimidation related behaviors by coworkers. Basic needs thwarting related to bullying was associated with lower work engagement. Lack of autonomy satisfaction was particularly correlated with burnout. It was concluded that workplace bullying presents a significant drain on individuals' psychological resources. This finding was evident across all population characteristics such as age and gender (Trepanier et al., 2013).

Guo et al. (2014) investigated the effects of intrinsic motivation and social exchange related to developmental feedback and job performance. Developmental feedback was defined as providing meaningful interaction toward future improvement without pressure related to measured accountability. This process was viewed as supporting basic needs satisfaction. The study sample included 202 supervisor-subordinate dyads from several Chinese enterprises. Developmental feedback was found to have a significant positive correlation to job performance and intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation was also strongly related with job performance and partially explained the relationship between job performance and developmental feedback. The research concluded that leaders behaviors supportive of basic needs such as developmental feedback boost employee performance.

Qualitative job insecurity has been defined as an individual's perceived fears related to undesirable change in role and responsibilities. Van den Broeck et al. (2014) studied whether basic needs satisfaction could explain the effects of qualitative job insecurity on counterproductive work behavior. Counterproductive work behavior was classified as either being directed at the organization or coworkers. This research was conducted with a population from Romania, including some teachers. Qualitative job insecurity was associated with need thwarting and counterproductive work behavior. Behaviors identified as being toward the organization such as intentionally being late for work were correlated with all three BPN. Autonomy frustration was significantly related to counterproductive behaviors such as public humiliation toward coworkers. The research concluded that the threatening perception of qualitative job insecurity interrupts need satisfaction. The manifestation of counterproductive work behaviors was interpreted as a means for individuals to reestablish locus of causality. Implications included that such negative effects may permeate throughout the organizational climate if left unaddressed.

Another recent meta-analysis compiled the findings of 72 studies regarding perceived leader autonomy support at work. The results showed a significant positive relationship between leader autonomy support and autonomous forms of work motivation. This effect increased with higher individual reports of internalized forms of motivation. No relation of significance was found between perceived leader autonomy support and controlled motivation. Additionally, leader autonomy support was positively correlated with basic needs satisfaction, wellbeing, favorable work behaviors, and it was negatively related with distress. All of these relationships were confirmed through pathway analysis. Another interesting finding was these results were consistent across study characteristics such as country of origin and publication status. The

research concluded that autonomy supportive leadership is important for achieving the best possible work outcomes (Slemp et al., 2018).

The remaining research reviewed in this subsection was conducted within educational organizations. Eyal and Roth (2010) studied the relationship between leadership style and teacher motivation, using a combination of SDT and the full range model of leadership. The sample included 122 elementary school teachers in Israel. Findings indicated that leadership styles are impactful on teachers' motivation and wellbeing. Specifically, transformational leadership was associated with autonomous motivation and transactional leadership was related to controlled motivation perceptions by teachers. Likewise, autonomous and controlled motivation partially explained the relationships between transformational and transactional leadership, respectively, and teacher burnout. This suggested that administrators' have significant potential to increase teachers' sense of purpose, effective instruction, wellbeing, and retention through supporting autonomous motivation.

In a follow up investigation of Jones et al. (2019), previously reviewed in burnout research, Jones et al. (2020) examined the wellbeing of early childhood educators related to basic needs satisfaction. The results indicated that workplace wellbeing was predicted by need satisfaction, notably, controlling for school and population characteristics. However, schools recognized as being successful by government agencies did report significantly higher rates of teacher wellbeing overall. Work variety and teacher empowerment were correlated with autonomy satisfaction. Meaningful colleague collaboration and perception of having a shared school vision were associated with relatedness satisfaction. Quality time with students, favorable perceptions of professional development, and elements of workplace equity were related to competence satisfaction. The research highlighted the importance of addressing emotional labor,

forced emotional responses often in avoidance of expressing negative feelings, as it was significantly related with lower teacher wellbeing.

A recent study including a large sample of teachers in Singapore investigated teacher perception of principal and immediate supervisor support through empowering behaviors. Other variables included psychological empowerment of teachers and work outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and professional commitment. Psychological empowerment was defined in terms of teacher-perceived meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact. All elements of psychological empowerment were correlated with perceived empowerment behaviors by immediate supervisors and work outcomes. Perceived empowerment behaviors by principals were associated with all work outcomes and psychological empowerment elements except competence. This discrepancy between immediate supervisors and principals was potentially explained by proximity and amount of direct interaction with teachers. Perception of meaning was directly related with all work outcomes. Findings also indicated that autonomy was more associated with organizational commitment and competence was more strongly related to professional commitment. Similarities in teacher perception of empowerment behaviors between immediate supervisors and principals was pointed out as a potential insight that behaviors are modeled downward from higher leadership (Lee & Nie, 2014).

Another study examined teacher wellbeing outcomes with types of motivation and perceived autonomy support (Nie et al., 2015). The five types of motivation described in SDT include intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, and amotivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Wellbeing was defined in terms of job satisfaction, stress, and somatic symptoms. Perceived autonomy support was directly related with different types of

motivation and wellbeing outcomes. Specifically, job satisfaction was positively correlated to intrinsic motivation and identified regulation and negatively correlated with external regulation and amotivation. Work stress was related to higher reports of external regulation and amotivation. Introjected regulation shared a smaller, yet positive relationship to both job satisfaction and physical illbeing. In addition to introjected regulation, amotivation was positively related and intrinsic motivation was negatively related to illbeing. These findings supported general tenets of SDT. The research concluded that organizational climate does effect work and wellbeing outcomes through need satisfaction. The importance of quality over quantity regarding teacher motivation was emphasized (Nie et al., 2015).

Collie et al. (2015) researched the predictive effects of perceived autonomy support on basic needs satisfaction. A secondary focus was whether need satisfaction was predictive of wellbeing, motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The sample included 485 Canadian schoolteachers. Findings indicated that perceived autonomy support was associated with need satisfaction, which was related to work outcome perceptions. In this study, competence satisfaction was most related to teacher wellbeing and collegial relatedness was the strongest predictor of organizational commitment. Perceived autonomy support and positive student relationship were also correlated with organizational commitment. An important implication was that need thwarting may be more identifiable through introjected regulation than need satisfaction. Ryan and Deci (2017) have claimed that the absence of need satisfaction does not necessarily imply need thwarting. This notion is also in agreement with the findings of Nie et al. (2015) and Van den Berghe et al. (2014).

The final research reviewed in this section was a qualitative multiple case study conducted across seven municipalities in Brazil. School districts were selected based on their

relatively superior performance in teaching and learning outcomes with student populations experiencing high poverty. Interview subjects included teachers, administrators, and local government officials. The data were analyzed through a SDT framework and found that these schools were succeeding as a byproduct of teacher commitment. This level of commitment was nourished by support from leadership, elevated status within the community, and the absence of performance goal accountability. Teachers reported high levels of perceived competence and autonomy. High levels of community involvement in the schools were observed. Other notable characteristics of these districts included the absence of measurable learning goals carrying punitive consequences and performance-based pay, although merit-based pay systems which were viewed as fair and appropriate by teachers were used. The instructional methods employed were described as congruent with common best practices, but innovation was not perceived as an end in itself. Teachers felt empowered to assess and provide for the learning needs of students with great discretion. Administrators and government officials expressed high levels of support and trust in teachers that was demonstrated in both words and action. The research concluded that educational success in high poverty populations requires teachers who are highly self-motivated. This implied that districts aiming to improve learning outcomes for such students should foster these elements of practice and perception (Andrews et al., 2017).

Conclusion

There is broad agreement that basic needs satisfaction, motivation, and wellbeing are related and consequential in the workplace (Ryan & Deci, 2017). New technologies have allowed for increasing and novel understandings of these biological mechanisms (Fang et al., 2020). A majority of research to date has focused in the area of individual autonomy. This may be partly due to individual perception of competence being relatively more static (Van den

Broeck et al., 2016). Other research has shown that SDT is compatible, valid, and expandable in ways relevant to the present study (Eyal & Roth, 2010; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Most importantly, the research revealed that individuals are capable of successfully meeting difficult and necessary challenges when properly supported (Andrews et al., 2017).

Theoretical Foundations

Emergent themes were expected to guide and evolve the theoretical framework in a qualitative research such as this one (Patton, 2015). However, there is an expansive preexisting body of knowledge about human behavior and working conditions from which a lens of analysis can be constructed. The unique selection criteria of this study targeted a specific subset of individuals that, through a lateral career move, maintained their vocation, but decided to do so in another school district within geographic proximity and outside the context of compensation. The theoretical framework for this research is rooted in SDT.

Personal Causation

De Charms (1968) was an early pioneer of the modern organismic approach in motivational psychology. This work was largely the result of a growing realization that positivist approaches to understanding and explaining human behavior and development were limited. De Charms argued that individuals are neither completely passive entities nor reducible to a fixed set of operational functions or motives. Behavioral motives were defined as relatable between people yet objectively intangible, preventing universal generalizable reduction, and the result of complex interactions between lived experience, conditional components, and the desire for individuals to have some control over their environment. Therefore, individuals are viewed as the originating source of their motivation and action in personal causality.

Ideas within personal causation also emphasized the existence and importance of psychological needs satisfaction and goal orientation related to motivation. This further revealed the likelihood of nuance between individual outcomes that could not be fully explained by the presence or absence externally observable factors, particularly in the form of simple experiments. This led to implications about perceived autonomy and satisfaction related to locus of causality having a significant impact on the extent to which people are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated (de Charms, 1968). The notion that these many interrelated factors coexist in overlapping ways laid much of the groundwork resulting in the development of SDT.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory is rooted in humanistic psychology and the work of de Charms (1968) on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci and Ryan (1985) originally developed SDT and remain contemporary authorities (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This theory is considered a macro-theory, having at least four distinctive features, related to human personality and basic needs (Koole et al., 2018).

The first component of self-determination theory is that all people have three basic needs including autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These needs are viewed through an organismic lens, meaning that people are active participants in the social contexts which ultimately support and thwart individual motivation and wellbeing. Autonomy is defined as the need for control over the course of one's life; competence is defined as the need to be effective in dealing with one's environment; and, relatedness is defined as the need to have meaningful relationships with others (Ryan & Deci, 2018).

The other three components of self-determination theory deal with the extent to which these needs are met. Meeting these needs allows for autonomous self-regulation that encourages

intrinsic engagement and wellbeing. Individuals who are unable to meet these needs may develop an alienated mode of self-regulation which leads to inner conflict and reduced wellbeing. Equilibrium in self-regulation hinges upon the supportiveness of the social and environment and one's chronic causality orientations (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Self-determination theory is comprised of six mini-theories. Each one attempts to explain certain elements of motivation or personality functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Cognitive Evaluation Theory

Cognitive evaluation theory (CET) deals with intrinsic motivation and how it is affected in social contexts by such factors as rewards, interpersonal controls, and ego-involvements. According to CET, intrinsic motivation is significantly dependent upon one's perceived autonomy and competence (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Organismic Integration Theory

Organismic integration theory (OIT) concerns extrinsic motivation. Instrumental elements that manifest as extrinsic motivation include external regulation, introjection, identification, and integration. In OIT, a spectrum of individual internalization describes predictable effects of extrinsic motivation to elicit resistance, partial adoption, or full internalization of behaviors, values, and ideas. This mini-theory specifically relates to perceived autonomy and sense of relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Causality Orientations Theory

Causality orientations theory (COT) addresses variability in individual tendencies to frame particular social situations and environmental contexts. There are three types of causality orientations including the autonomy orientation, the control orientation, and the amotivated orientation (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Basic Psychological Needs Theory

Basic psychological needs theory (BPNT) expands on concepts related to evolved psychological needs and their impact on overall psychological health and wellbeing. Conforming to BPNT, contexts are evaluated by the extent to which they support or thwart the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Goal Contents Theory

Goal contents theory (GCT) seeks to more completely distinguish nuance between intrinsic and extrinsic goals and how they affect individuals. Generally, intrinsic goals are more positively associated with greater wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Relationships Motivation Theory

Relationships motivation theory (RMT) deals primarily with the basic need of relatedness. Additionally, the satisfaction of relatedness need through quality relationships and a sense of belonging has notable impacts on autonomy and competence as well (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Attempting to understand human behavior in the organizational environment is difficult and complex. A unified theory to explain or predict all related facets, circumstances, and events is not yet available.

Self-determination theory is inherently compatible with qualitative research designs (Koole et al., 2018; Ryan & Deci, 2017) and such methodology has been recommended for research such as the present study (Farely-Ripple et al., 2012; Johnson, 2005; Jones et al., 2019; Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b;

Snodgrass Rangel, 2018; Van den Berghe et al., 2014; Van Maele & Van Houtt, 2015). The following theoretical framework is presented.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework for Describing Lateral Moves
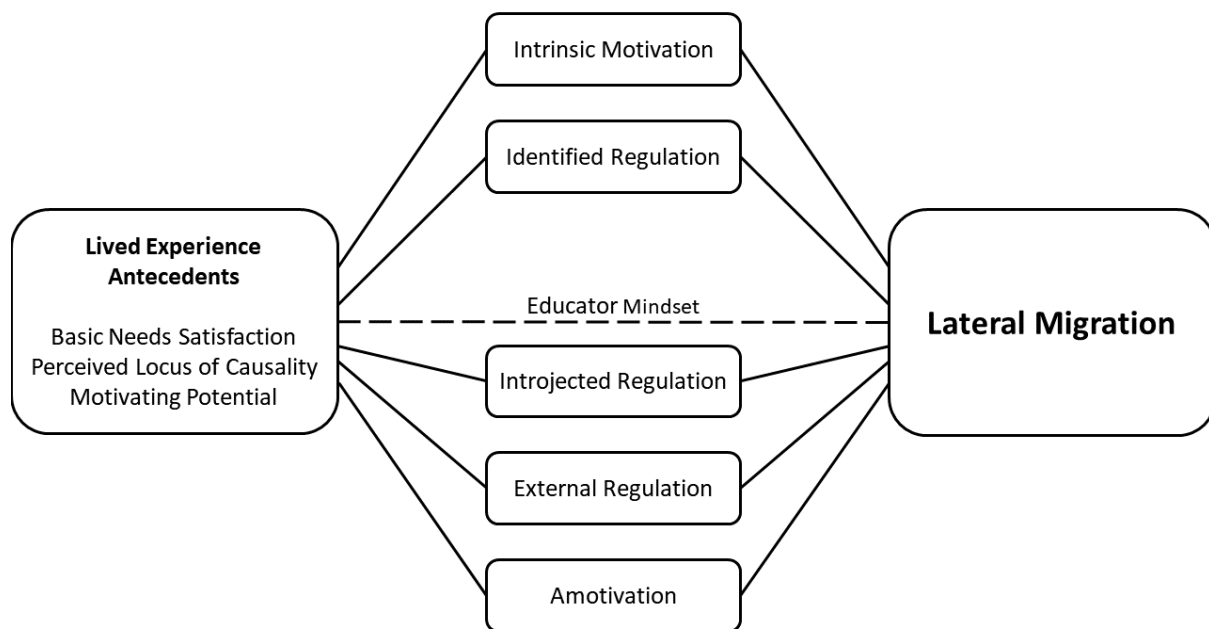
Note. Linear representation of perceived impact from lived experience resulting in a lateral move to another school district. Adapted from "The impact of work design, autonomy support, and strategy on employee outcomes: A differentiated perspective on self-determination at work," by S. T. Guntert, 2015, *Motivation and Emotion*, *Volume 39*, *76*. 2014.

The phenomenon of this research was approached through a lens built upon SDT as related to the educator's perception of their previous and current roles. The framework was constructed with intentional broadness to facilitate analysis of the many facets of lived experience in personal and professional contexts. The antecedent lived experience and lateral migration outcome are connected by the five forms of motivation described in SDT. The educator mindset describes an individual's perception of their working conditions in terms of

basic needs satisfaction resulting from various forms of internal and external stimulation and psychological states. Careful analysis of themes emergent in subject narratives can be associated with tenets of SDT and explained to a great extent through perceived basic needs satisfaction and motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

These individuals made potential professional sacrifices regarding tenure and seniority, among others, but remained dedicated to the profession of education. For reasons yet unknown, they made lateral career moves within geographic proximity of their home communities to continue and further their success as educators. Likewise, these lateral career moves were not motivated by compensatory gain. An inquiry into this phenomenon hoped to uncover emergent patterns and themes among subjects. This research aimed to describe commonalities in the experiences and circumstances regarding the decision-making process that ultimately resulted in lateral career moves. Better understanding of this phenomenon through an SDT lens may yield applicable recommendations for professional practice in the retention of such educators.

Summary

Educator turnover and negative environmental factors are consequential for all stakeholders (Hanushek et al., 2016; Levin & Bradley, 2019a; Levin & Bradley 2019b; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020). However, motivated and supported educators are capable of accomplishing great outcomes (Andrews et al., 2017). Educator mobility is a complex phenomenon well suited for qualitative inquiry (Johnson, 2005; Farely-Ripple, 2012; Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b; Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). Educators are the prime source from which these insights should be gathered (Andrews et al., 2017; Snodgrass Rangel, 2018). The present study aimed to make a value contribution in this direction. Self-determination theory has been proven as a compatible and

robust lens through which to evaluate educator experiences (Gillet et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

Overview

This research study is associated with the tradition of narrative research. Specifically, this study is a narrative interview design. The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. The emergent nature of this research provided the researcher with opportunities to collect rich and deep data during participant interviews. Interviews are considered to be one of the most important methods of collecting rich qualitative data. Furthermore, interviews are often used in preliminary research efforts, such as this one, and these findings may lead to the development of standardized protocols for future research pursuits. Interpretivist approaches like interviews result in the researcher's representation of the data that aspire to generate understanding of lived experience around a phenomenon (Turner, 2010; Qu & Dumay, 2011; Alvesson, 2012; Patton, 2015).

Research Questions

The data collected were analyzed to identify patterns and common themes, which were utilized to address the overarching question of this study: What are the lived experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The research questions utilized to guide this research were the following:

1. What experiences are associated with successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

2. What emotions are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

3. What superordinate behaviors are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research designs are utilized to inductively expand understanding of perceived meaning and experience around a given phenomenon (Mohajan, 2018). The present study is a narrative inquiry. Narrative research has a lineage steeped in philosophy and is built upon thick description and analysis of lived experience (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The use of narrative inquiry is most appropriate for understanding the lived experience of individuals through the stories they tell. Narrative research is effective in revealing how individuals create meaning around complex events and interactions that are not easily measured in quantifiable terms. Narrative accounts can be collected by the researcher through the progressive-regressive method (Denzin, 2001).

The present study was approached with an interpretive framework of social constructivism. Social constructivism is rooted in understanding lived experience and is linked to specific philosophical concepts about the perception of reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Ontologically, social constructivism promotes the idea of multiple coexisting realities generated by lived experience and interaction with others. Creswell and Poth noted that the epistemological beliefs of this approach are that reality is shaped by lived experience and co-constructed by participants and the researcher. The belief that personal values are negotiated through social interaction and should be honored characterize the axiological underpinnings of social constructivism. Narrative research design elements such as interviewing are methodologically aligned with social constructivism.

The goal of narrative research is to empower the stories of individuals and make them appropriately available to wider audiences. Narratology is particularly suited for inquiry into areas where little research has been conducted (Mohajan, 2018). Given that the content and

philosophical underpinnings of narrative inquiry are subjective in nature, the researcher must be diligent in providing explicit descriptions of how the work is intended to be understood (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Qualitative research such as narrative inquiry is characterized by the emergence of deep and rich understanding of lived experience (Patton, 2015). Patton further noted that narrative research should be guided by an emphasis on openness, the questioning of preconceptions, and a reflective attitude. The merit of such research is determined by its trustworthiness and integrity (Levitt et al., 2017).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher has a profound impact on the outcome of a qualitative study. Qualitative research is complex and labor intensive. The researcher must be prepared to commit the necessary resources and effort to plan, design, conduct, and report the work with high ethical standards in a rigorous, complete, accurate, and just manner. Qualitative inquiry also requires significant flexibility. The researcher must be prepared to adjust course as the dynamic and emergent nature of qualitative investigation guides the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Narrative research begins with a single focus (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The focus of the present study was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. From this starting point, multiple angles of analyzation became possible through thematic representation and alignment of findings to a SDT framework. Creswell and Poth noted that researcher contributions are another important piece of qualitative inquiry. This was accomplished through reflexivity and the inclusion of purposeful subjective interpretation informed by personal experience. Reflexivity and expert consultation of the dissertation committee and selected others also served as a means to identify and bracket researcher bias.

The researcher served as a gatekeeper for the present study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This required developing a trusting relationship and rapport with research participants. The researcher was forthright about the nature, intentions, and focus of the study. Maintaining the dignity and respect of participants was a salient priority of the research. Written consent was obtained from all participants. Interviewees were dutifully informed that participation in the research was optional and that they were empowered to discontinue at any time.

Ethics

Permission to conduct this study was obtained by the IRB of East Tennessee State University prior to active research. All data collected during this research were maintained per IRB protocol.

Participants were invited to take part in the interview process. A form developed by the researcher and approved by the IRB was collected from each interviewee as documentation of their consent to participate in the study. The researcher exercised care to do no harm, protect confidentiality of individuals and data collected, be honest, and treat participants with respect and fairness. An understanding of the purpose of the study was established with all participants prior to conducting the interviews. The researcher strived to develop and maintain a respectful and attentive rapport with participants throughout the entire research process. Participants were encouraged to be completely open and honest about their experiences without manipulation or coercion regarding research outcomes. Interview transcripts were reviewed and checked for accuracy by the research participants. All identifiable information within the collected data was masked prior to data analysis. Collected data were strictly maintained by the researcher to ensure the safety and security thereof. Participants were transparently given the option to freely withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Setting

Qualitative research is best conducted in natural settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The participants of the present study gave historical accounts of lived experience around the phenomenon of lateral mobility. Interviews were conducted primarily through internet-based videoconferencing. This platform provided both increased flexibility and accuracy of data collection.

Sample

The research sample included six individuals. Narrative research seeks to gather information from people whose experience was proximally meaningful and relevant to the phenomenon being studied. Selection of the sample was based on the goal of achieving maximum variation within the narrative accounts as a means of strengthening analytical commonalities of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The interviewees were representative of the lateral mobility of both teachers and administrators as well as multiple school districts of origin and destination regarding the phenomenon. All subjects were vetted to ensure that this move was indeed lateral and not motivated by an increase in compensation.

Sampling Strategy

Multiple sampling strategies were used in the selection of the study sample. Nonrandom sampling is a frequent strategy in narrative research to obtain thick and rich descriptions about the focus of the research. Certain criteria determined the investigative eligibility of individuals. Snowball sampling in the form of identifying individuals of particular interest to the study proved beneficial as well (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This population consisted of certified educators working in public school districts. Their specific positions included instructional and school leadership roles. These interview subjects were established and successful educators,

having at least 12 years of experience in public education, that made a lateral career move from one school district to another in upper East Tennessee.

Data Collection Procedures

Narrative accounts tell the stories of individuals lived experience regarding a specific phenomenon (Patton, 2015). The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. Interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed primarily through internet-based videoconferencing. An initial 2 hour interview was conducted with each participant. Semi-structured interviews were used to allow for flexibility in participant response with the goal being to surface truly emergent understanding of lived experience regarding the phenomenon of lateral mobility. Interviewees provided narrative accounts relating to experiences that led to their decision to make a lateral move to another school district. Additional data were collected through researcher reflections and memos. A subsequent session was scheduled with each participant for the purposes of conducting member checks. Participants were given the opportunity to review interview transcripts as well as provide additional information and clarity regarding their narrative accounts. Stringent preparation and maintenance of all data was performed throughout the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Interviews

The intent of an interview is to broadly cover themes while creating space for a greater depth of exploration as guided by the interviewee (Alvesson, 2012). Questions during a semi-structured interview arise out of the immediate context and are asked according to the natural flow of the narrative without predetermination. This allows for interviews to be tailored to each participant (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, the use of unscheduled probes was employed as deemed appropriate by the researcher. Variation among interviewee responses allow the

researcher to understand how subjects create meaning about their environment and contributes to the richness of the data (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Although there will be variation between specific interviews, the thematic focus will remain consistent (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Good interviewing requires a balance of responsiveness and sensitivity from the researcher with the interviewee to obtain optimal responses (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Alvesson (2012) presented eight metaphors about the complexity of the interview situation that represent a key feature of interviews and a related obstacle that an interviewee must overcome. The quality of an interview is largely determined by the interviewer (Patton, 2015). The quality of an interview is fostered by encouraging the narrative flow of the interviewee, attending to a positive rapport with the interviewee, and avoiding interviewer bias (Shensul et al., 1999). Patton (2015) recommended that control of the interview is exercised by staying focused on the topic, asking intentional questions, listening well, and maintaining appropriate interaction with the interviewee through verbal and nonverbal feedback. Ultimately, the researcher must be well prepared for the interview process.

Extensive planning is required to conduct interviews (Alvesson, 2012; Qu & Dumay, 2011). Many typologies of interview questions exist (Qu & Dumay, 2011). Researchers must be informed and have a working knowledge of question types and their construction. Interview questions were aligned to the research questions and theoretical framework lens through which they were analyzed. Central questions guiding the interviews included:

- Describe the work related experiences, both in terms of specific events and routine occurrences, which influenced your decision to make a lateral career move.

- What emotions were you feeling as a result of these experiences and throughout the process of deciding to make a lateral career move?

- Describe the work related interactions and relationships with individuals, particularly those in positions of authority, that influenced your decision to make a lateral career move.

- How did the experiences associated with the decision to make a lateral career move affect you personally and professionally?

Data Management

Participant narrative accounts contained an extensive amount of identifiable information. Names of interviewees, other individuals mentioned, districts, schools, and locations were masked or coded with pseudonyms. Pseudonyms were secured separately from original data sources. All data reported in the present study were masked with pseudonyms.

Measures of Rigor

Validity in qualitative research is achieved through trustworthiness and integrity (Levitt et al., 2017). Trustworthiness is typically defined in terms of credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and audit trails. Triangulation is a primary method of ensuring that the research is credible (Nowell et al., 2017). Integrity is achieved by making logical and appropriate decisions regarding how the research is conducted and reported (Levitt et al., 2017; Nowell et al., 2017).

Credibility

Credibility refers to the validity of qualitative research. Credibility has also been described as the congruence between participants' views and how they are represented by the researcher (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Creswell and Poth (2018) outlined nine validation strategies

for qualitative research and recommended using no less than two. Triangulation and member checks were two strategies utilized in this research.

Triangulation

Triangulation occurs when evidence from multiple sources is corroborated around a central perspective to increase the credibility of a qualitative study. Triangulation in qualitative research is the utilization of multiple data, investigators, theoretical or literature perspectives, and methods to fortify the validity of findings and conclusions (Patton, 2015). The present study performed multiple means of triangulation throughout the entire research effort. Interviews are a primary method of collecting narrative data. Interview participants included classroom teachers and building administrators as a means of triangulation. Interview data collected during this research were triangulated with researcher reflections and memos. Analysis of all data sources remained an iterative process during the data collection and analysis phase of the present study. This enhanced research validity through data saturation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Member Checks

Seeking participant feedback in the form of member checks is a way to increase validity in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were provided with a hardcopy of their interview transcript to verify the credibility and accuracy of their narrative account. All related discrepancies were identified and remedied.

Transferability

Transferability is a term in qualitative research that describes the extent to which findings can be generalized (Patton, 2015). Narrative research is primarily concerned with transferability within the scope of the study. The researcher must provide thick and rich descriptions so that

readers may assess the transferability of the study to other contexts or settings (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Thick Description

Thick descriptions of interviewees lived experience were provided through narrative interviews. These narrative accounts were collected through the progressive-regressive method (Denzin, 2001) and analyzed by and thematic representation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Additionally, thematic analysis was conducted and interpreted through the SDT framework.

Purposive Sampling Strategy

Narrative research benefits from sampling strategies that target participants based on their potential to provide thick and rich description related to the research focus (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher purposively sampled six educators meeting the stated criteria for investigating lateral mobility.

Dependability

Dependability in qualitative research is achieved through transparency of the research process. Readers should be able to assess that research decisions are logical, traceable, and clearly documented (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Audit Trail

An audit trail of the entire research process was constructed for the present study. Records were meticulously organized and maintained. Audit trail items include transcripts, memos, and personal reflections.

Code-Recode Strategy

Analysis of the data was a constant, iterative process. Initial codes were developed before searching for themes. Initial themes were reviewed and revised throughout the research process until a final set of themes were named and defined (Nowell et al., 2017).

Triangulation

Source triangulation is a procedure to identify multiple and varied data sources of information that are corroborated within the same research method to increase research reliability (Patton, 2015). Triangulation increased validity by assessing the merit of findings and interpretations of the present study through expert scholarly peer review.

Expert Scholarly Peer Review

Peer review of the work was sought from the research committee and appropriately deemed others at regular intervals throughout the study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These individuals took a constructively critical approach to identify potential areas requiring further attention. All input gathered from peer review was carefully considered and fully addressed.

Confirmability

Confirmability is accomplished through the combination of credibility, transferability, and dependability (Patton, 2015). In other words, confirmability may be thought of as holistic transparency and clarity regarding the research (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Reflexivity

The researcher kept a reflective journal throughout the study to gain additional insights and guard against personal bias. Other reflexive activities included memoing (Creswell & Poth, 2018), member checks, and peer scholarly review. These reflexive artifacts contributed significantly to the present study's audit trail.

Data Analysis

Creswell and Poth (2018) used a spiral metaphor to emphasize the iterative and immersive nature of qualitative data analysis. The analytical spiral is composed of six primary coils including data collection, managing and organizing data, reading and memoing emergent ideas, describing and classifying codes into themes, developing and assessing interpretations, and representing and visualizing the data.

All interviews were transcribed prior to analysis. This research used a narrative interview design where the data were collected through the progressive-regressive method (Denzin, 2001) and underwent thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher followed the phases of analysis established by Nowell et al., (2017): 1.) familiarizing yourself with your data; 2.) generating initial codes; 3.) searching for themes; 4.) reviewing themes; 5.) defining and naming themes; 6.) producing the report. Subsequent axial coding of the themes resulted in the naming of categories.

Discovering and describing emergent themes was the primary focus of interview transcript analysis. This was an iterative process guided by the triangulation of teacher and administrator accounts, audit trail components created by the researcher, and peer scholarly review. Emergent themes were then aligned to the SDT framework.

Creswell and Poth (2018) stated that the use of *a priori* themes from theoretical and extant literature perspectives can limit qualitative data analysis. Self-determination theory was selected as a theoretical perspective, in part due to its broad and flexible application (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Additional analyzation of emergent themes in terms of motivation and BPN satisfaction was designed with the purpose of deepening the understanding and implications of research findings rather than limiting the analysis thereof.

Data Presentation

Representation and visualization of qualitative findings entails developing a point of view and displaying and reporting the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Research questions of the present study guided the presentation of the data. Initial codes were developed through line-by-line analysis of the interview transcripts. Initial themes were developed and revised throughout the research process until finalized themes were named and defined. The final themes were aligned with components of the SDT framework. Tables presenting detailed information related to emergent themes were constructed. The researcher's point of view was established through bracketing and reflexive practice during the entirety of the study. Analyses of the research findings are presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4. Data Analysis

Introduction

The matter of educator mobility includes multifarious phenomena. There is a considerable amount of extant research in areas of interest such as new teacher attrition (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ryan et al., 2017) and educator burnout (Garcia et al., 2019; Shoji et al., 2015). A growing body of literature has attempted to broadly identify variable relationships in educators who move rather than leave the profession (Feng & Sass, 2017; Hanushek et al., 2016; Sorensen & Ladd, 2020; Vekeman et al., 2017). The focus of recent research has continued to emphasize the urgent problem of educator turnover and found relationships between educator turnover and various negative outcomes (Bradley & Levin, 2019; Bradley, Levin, & Scott, 2019; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Attempting to understand the complex nature and interaction of mobility drivers is limited by quantitative methods. There have been consistent calls for more qualitative research around educator mobility (Ladd, 2011; Papay et al., 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Sibbald, 2017a; Sibbald, 2017b).

The purpose of this research was to understand educator experiences associated with a lateral career move. The overarching research question for this study was: What are the lived experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The research questions utilized to guide this research were the following:

1. What experiences are associated with successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

2. What emotions are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

3. What superordinate behaviors are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves?

Data Analysis

Chapter 4 presents the relevant findings of the qualitative interviews with six educators, two teachers and four administrators, who elected to make a lateral career move in Upper East Tennessee. The individual years of service in public education at the time of interviewing ranged from 13 to over 30 years. The individual years of service in participants' most recent previous districts ranged from 7 to 24 years. Educator accolades included attendance at prestigious universities as well as district, state, and national recognitions. This section of chapter 4 contains information regarding the thematic analysis of interview transcript data.

The researcher performed an initial coding of participant accounts to establish themes. Subsequent axial coding of the themes resulted in the naming of categories. Categories and themes are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Overview of Emergent Categories and Themes

Category	Themes
Organizational Perceptions before Lateral Move	Peer Relationships Organizational Climate Workload External Forces Student Behavior Belief Misalignment Advancement Opportunity Passed Over Standardized Testing Pressure
Perceptions of Superordinate before Lateral Move	Collegial Support Superordinate Lack of Support Superordinate Turnover Negative Perceptions of Superordinate Not Valued by Superordinate Negative Superordinate Interaction Superordinate Lack of Empathy Superordinate Duplicity
Psychological and Physiological Effects before Lateral Move	Family/Friend Observations Stress Frustration Personal Relationships Exhaustion Self-Doubt Physical Symptoms Defeat Coping Sacrifice Anxiety Internal Struggle Depression
Mobility	Sum Career Transitions Spontaneity Compensation Mobility Intention Family/Friend Push Professional Intention Destiny Personal Growth

Category	Themes
Mobility	Tenure
Organizational Perceptions after Lateral Move	Peer Relationships Organizational Climate Professional Autonomy Professional Growth Outcomes
Perceptions of Superordinate after Lateral Move	Superordinate Support Positive Perceptions of Superordinate Valued by Superordinate
Psychological and Physiological Effects after Lateral Move	Adjustment Positive Wellbeing
Reflexivity	Perceptions of Self Sense of Purpose Hindsight Long-term Goals Gratitude Hierarchical Parallels

Emergent Themes

The overarching question for this research was: What are the lived experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? Participants were first given an opportunity to provide a brief self-introduction including basic aspects about their experience in public education and what they considered to be their greatest career achievements. Participants were then asked to tell the story of how they made a lateral professional move including what they perceived to be influential factors considered in the decision making process. Probing questions were used throughout the interviews to promote thick and rich descriptions of the participants' lived experiences.

The researcher coded participant accounts into themes. Table 2 lists themes in a chronologically progressive manner. Participants are coded with an A or T to identify them as a school administrator or teacher, respectively.

Table 2

Participant Responses by Category

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Organizational Perceptions before Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Perceptions of Superordinate before Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Psychological and Physiological Effects before Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mobility	X	X	X	X	X	X
Organizational Perceptions after Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Perceptions of Superordinate after Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Psychological and Physiological Effects after Lateral Move	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reflexivity	X	X	X	X	X	X

Research Question One

Research question one (RQ1) for this study was: What experiences are associated with successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The emergent categories that best answered this question are organizational perceptions before lateral move, mobility, and organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Organizational Perceptions before Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed organizational perceptions related to their previous school or district (see Table 2). The themes related to organizational perceptions before lateral move discussed, in order of frequency, are peer relationships, organizational climate, workload, external forces, student behavior, belief misalignment, advancement opportunity, passed over,

and standardized testing pressure. Table 3 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions before lateral move.

Table 3

Frequency of Organizational Perceptions before Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Peer Relationships	X	X	X	X	X	X
Organizational Climate	X	X	X	X	X	X
Workload	X	X	X	X	X	X
External Forces	X	X	X	X	X	
Student Behavior	X	X	X			X
Belief Misalignment	X		X	X	X	
Advancement Opportunity	X	X		X		X
Passed Over		X		X	X	X
Standardized Testing Pressure	X				X	X
Buffer		X	X			

Peer Relationships

The theme peer relationships addresses participant perceptions regarding the quality of professional relationships they had in their previous role. All of the six participants indicated that they had strong positive relationships with their proximal coworkers prior to a lateral move. All of the four administrators interviewed expressed feelings of positivity and respect for their subordinates as well.

Teacher 1 stated "I really, really did. … I mean, these are my girls. … And those are my friends, but then also other classroom teachers, too. … So much respect for them. … I always had great support and great camaraderie with my peers."

Administrator 2 said "It was very easy to have that trusting relationship. And I will tell you that I would work with him until the world ended because he's a fantastic principal and he gets it."

Administrator 3 had spent several years in their previous district as a teacher before becoming a principal. They shared:

> And as a teacher, and then as an administrator, I had very strong relationships with so many people within the system, whether it be central office staff, or teachers across many of the schools, my fellow principals, I just can't speak highly enough about my time in that particular group of administrators and how close we were.

Organizational Climate

The theme organizational climate includes discussion about the perceived overall mood of the participants' previous districts. All six of the participants voiced concerns or unfavorable language about the organizational climate of their previous district.

Teacher 1 expressed "It was just really cutthroat and nothing was ever good enough" when describing a climate of fear and intimidation. They continued later by telling a story about a faculty meeting where the principal discussed teacher tenure denials:

> She was saying 'Listen, this isn't working out some of you aren't getting it.' And she said 'I know it's really hard to work here and wherever you go, I'll give you a good recommendation because I know that we're better than everybody else and it's hard to work here, and if it's…' you know.

Teacher 2 described "It wasn't just me. There were lots of teachers who were trying to transfer to other schools. Teacher morale was really, really bad." Teacher 2 later continued "with this continued emotional stress at work and just the whole negativity. And it was like every

teacher in my building … we'd stand there a few minutes and chitchat and just rant to each other …"

Administrator 1 described a climate in need of change and stated:

I was still enough of an optimist, in that, this isn't really happening. … And then I was seeing patterns develop in the people at central office in addition to the superintendent. These are patterns with people and it's not just one. These things aren't changing.

Administrator 3 recounted a central office culture which resulted in a climate of intensity beyond productivity:

It was the leadership culture at that time and the expectations at that time. … It was a culmination of many, many things and the culture set forth with our team of admins as far as the expectations put on us at that time.

Workload

The theme workload includes discussion about working expectations exceeding the limits of reasonability. All of the six participants made direct comments about different manifestations of workload issues in their previous districts. Administrator 4 spoke about student-administrator ratios and the dysfunction of certain district departments as primary drivers for additional workload.

Teacher 1 felt additional pressure from required lesson plan documentation "I would tell people the level of lesson plans that I had to do, I am not lying when I say it, was more than what you have to do when you get a formal observation. Every single day."

Complaints of being pulled away from what participants considered to be the most important work were common. Administrator 2 said:

There was a time when I was going to Nashville two or three times a year, for a week at a

time, to do item review and stuff. And there was one point where I just broke. And I was

like 'I'm not going to this one.'

Administrator 3 stated:

I would probably average 60 to 80 emails per day and way more during certain periods of

the year. And then the majority of those that would need follow up were 90%. I mean, it

was... So what's hard for me is knowing that I needed to be the instructional leader and be

the lead learner. If all I'm doing is following up on emails, how can I be in my

classrooms? How can I be leading a PD?

External Forces

The theme external forces includes discussion about external power and political pressure

within participants' previous district. Five of the six participants, including one teacher and four

administrators, talked about external forces largely in terms of localized agendas.

Administrator 2 described a district leader's desire for the number of initiatives over the

long term investment in change:

But it seemed like, number one, the superintendent wanted to do a lot of things, but not a

lot of things well. So, they wanted to have our name, our stamp, on all of these

opportunities, but none of them to be at the point where we would really dig deep.

Administrator 4 said in reference to their confusion about the decision making process at

central office:

And I wouldn't say that they wouldn't acknowledge that maybe there was a need there,

but it just wasn't in their prioritization of what needed to happen. And so it wasn't always

clear of what their driving forces were, two, and how they determined that prioritization.

Student Behavior

The theme student behavior was present in four of the six participant accounts including one teacher and three administrators. Teacher 2 provided more of a general complaint that "… lots of discipline was out of control …"

Administrator 2 spoke about having constant contact with central office about behavior issues "because in my time at Anchor Elementary, like, children chose to bring knives. … there were all sorts of crazy things that went on. So, there was a lot of that that happened while we were there."

Administrator 1 talked about student behavior in a deeper and more compassionate manner:

> And we were taking a look at what we needed. And the teachers … the trauma the kids
> have. We were super stressed and struggling with the behavior. And so, that piece was a
> constant struggle in terms of we sacrificed in order to make a decision for the behavioral
> needs of our kids …

Belief Misalignment

The theme belief misalignment includes discussion about the ways in which participants felt philosophically out of sync with their former districts. Four of the six participants, including one teacher and three administrators, discussed instances of belief misalignment. Administrator 4 said more generally about their belief misalignment with central office "There was, structurally, just a mindset difference philosophically, and there was a lot of push and pull."

In reference to dislike for a teaching method initiative, Teacher 1 stated some of their personal beliefs that they felt were in conflict with the district:

I really think teaching is an art and you can maybe make a non-teacher a better teacher. But if a person is truly a teacher, you just have to stand back and let them teach. You know what I mean? No one can, you can't teach somebody to teach your way of teaching. And so, the more and more I did it that was less like me, the less effective I was.

Administrator 1 spoke about belief misalignment in terms of a district initiative and a difference of understanding with the superintendent:

I was working under more of a shared leadership model that I'm not sure fit nicely into what the superintendent thought an organizational structure would be. I think it does. I actually think it gels very well. … But I'm not sure he understood it.

Advancement Opportunity

The theme advancement opportunity includes discussion about participants' perceptions of factors that might have inhibited being selected for roles they found desirable within their previous district. Four of the six participants, including one teacher and three administrators, voiced concerns about limited advancement opportunity.

Teacher 2 felt that the age difference between themselves and others was significant "I knew the opportunity to do that in my previous district was not going to happen the folks … weren't going anywhere anytime soon. And were younger than I was …" Administrator 2 did not make any statements about their own age, but felt the youth of other administrators was a factor "But if you also look at the number of principals … and their average age, they're not going anywhere. … It's going to be a long time."

Passed Over

The theme passed over includes discussion about instances where participants felt that they were unduly denied professional growth opportunities. Four of the six participants,

including two teachers and two administrators, gave accounts of being passed over in their former districts.

Teacher 1 and Administrator 2 both indicated that being passed over was political in nature. Teacher 1 said:

You know who the favorites are and even though my scores were always excellent and in today's terms, I was a level five teacher, I wasn't a favorite for whatever reason. There were definitely favorites played and I wasn't on the in.

Administrator 2 gave a specific example about a colleague "… they drank the Kool-Aid. And that sounds awful of me, but they were given a few more roles. And they were always very involved in all the things. Where, I feel like some of us were not invited to that table."

Teacher 2 perceived that their content area had something to do with being passed over "I really felt like I just kind of became a glorified babysitter … As a related arts teacher wasn't included in any type of planning, wasn't given any leadership opportunities."

Standardized Testing Pressure

The theme standardized testing pressure includes discussion of ways that participants perceived testing accountability as having personal negative outcomes. Three of the six participants, including one administrator and two teachers, talked about challenges related to standardized testing. Teacher 2 perceived that content area was a factor "… the principal was just, everybody is all about the test scores and they were just more focused on those classroom teachers."

Administrator 1 described standardized testing pressure as something that caused problems, but not something they internalized to a great extent "I felt like we weren't seen and

no one paid attention until the data came in at the end of TNReady." A later reference to standardized testing included "… I don't get super hung up on that kind of thing…"

Contrastingly, Teacher 1 appeared to significantly internalize standardized testing pressure:

> I felt like we all walked around with a number on our head, which was your TVASS data. … and my principal was very super competitive. … And it was a meeting … [pronoun] actually said in a group of people 'I don't want to hear your ideas. Your scores are bad. Yours are good, what do you have to say?' I mean it was like that super competitive.

Buffer

The theme buffer refers to participant relationships with specific others within their previous organization which helped to moderate work related challenges. Two of the six participants, both administrators, referred to buffering relationships. Administrator 2 said about another administrator in their previous school "But knowing that they had a good background, knowing that they, you know, had walked the walk and could talk the talk. I think that was a huge buffer." Administrator 3 said of a central office administrator:

> I would walk to the end of the earth with him. So that trust was huge. And without that, I don't know that I would have been at [previous school] as long as I was, but their leadership and the trust definitely helped me be a better administrator every day, and a better educator as well.

Mobility

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category mobility (see Table 2). The themes related to mobility discussed, in order of frequency, are sum career transitions, spontaneity, compensation, mobility intention, family/friend push, professional intention,

destiny, and personal growth. Table 4 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within mobility.

Table 4

Frequency of Mobility

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Sum Career Transitions	X	X	X	X	X	X
Spontaneity	X	X	X	X	X	X
Compensation	X	X	X	X	X	X
Mobility Intention	X	X	X	X	X	X
Family/Friend Push		X	X	X	X	X
Professional Intention	X		X	X	X	
Destiny	X		X	X	X	
Personal Growth	X	X	X	X		
Tenure	X	X			X	

Sum Career Transitions

All of the six participants discussed their total number of career moves. This lateral move was the first time two of the participants, including one administrator and one teacher, left a district to work in another. Four of the participants, including three administrators and one teacher, had made more than one district transition at the time of interviewing.

Spontaneity

The theme spontaneity includes discussion around participant perceptions about the suddenness or chance circumstance by which they learned of the job posting that would ultimately result in their lateral movement. All of the six participants talked about spontaneous circumstances regarding their lateral move.

Administrator 1 and Administrator 4 were both contacted about the job postings by people they knew personally. Administrator 1 said "I went out to dinner with a friend who happened to work in [school district] and they mentioned this position was open, or I wouldn't have even known. … that all happened within a week." Administrator 4 said "I was contacted by a colleague that said 'Hey, there's a position open at [school district].' … it really wasn't on my radar to be honest with you."

Administrator 3 and Teacher 2 had been looking for job postings, but did not expect things to move so quickly. Administrator 3 said "Honestly, it's like we talked, my spouse and I, hear the job came available, I applied, next thing you know they're offering me the job and I had to make a decision that afternoon." Teacher 2 said:

> … it was literally the last minute before the school year ended kind of deal, or before school was getting ready to start back and I applied. And I remember driving to [school district]. It was my last day of summer vacation and I literally threw on some clothes. … They called me three hours later and I have a job.

Compensation

A delimitation of the present study was that higher compensation could not be a motivating factor for participants in their decision to make a lateral move. All of the six participants spoke on the matter of compensation. Two participants each subsequently made less money than before, roughly the same amount of money, or more money.

Compensation was not important to Teacher 1 "… I hadn't looked into it, I just wanted, you know, a good job in a good school that really cared …" Teacher 2 said "Compensation really had nothing to do with it."

Administrator 4 was willing to accept lower compensation "There was a potential for it to actually be less … initially it was going to be less. And I was still willing to do that …" Administrator 1 had a similar experience "In fact, when I met with the superintendent and they told me the salary, it was lower than what I was making in [school district]. I told them what I made and they said 'I'll meet it.'"

Mobility Intention

The theme mobility intention includes discussion about the critical moment when participants committed to the prospect of moving. All of the six participants talked about this turning point.

Administrator 2 had confidence in their mobility intention saying, "It wasn't hard for me to say goodbye. It just wasn't."

Administrator 3 was more mixed about the intent to move "I'm feeling this pull to apply, even though I don't really feel like I want to leave [school district]."

Teacher 2, Administrator 1, and Administrator 4 described being unwillingly driven to the decision. Teacher 2 said "… me doing all of these things and still feeling so frustrated in my job. That was motivating, right there, enough to get me to change." Administrator 1 said "I got to the point that I think my role is one of two things. I've either got to decide to stick it out and I'm going to stay here. … Or leave. Or seek another opportunity." Administrator 4 said "And so I was just kind of like … I don't need this. As much as I'm vested into this community, it doesn't need to be this way."

Family/Friend Push

The theme family/friend push includes discussion about participants receiving encouragement from family members or friends to pursue a career move. Five of the six

participants, including three administrators and two teachers, recollected moments of being pushed by friends or family to make a change.

Teacher 1 provided a powerful account:

To be honest, my family had been telling me for years, [the principal] was unreasonable and that I was so dedicated and loyal because of Stockholm syndrome and that we were being abused and that I should take this opportunity to get out.

Teacher 2 received a supportive push from their spouse "My [spouse] looked at me one day and was like 'look, you can either hang in there for five more years and retire, or you can do something about it.' And was so supportive, which really helped …"

Administrator 4 received a push from a colleague "I'm thankful that I did get that call and encouragement to seek more information about it."

Professional Intention

The theme professional intention includes discussion about participants' intention to stay in the profession of education. Four of the six participants, including three administrators, talked about their professional intention to stay. Administrator 2 did not address the topic of professional intention. Teacher 2 stated that they did consider leaving the profession of education at times.

Administrator 3 considered leaving the principalship "I wouldn't say contemplated leaving education. Looking for different positions within education with less stress, yes." Administrator 4 similarly stated "There were times that I had the thought, but I really always tried to re-center as to why I went into the profession to begin with."

Teacher 1 and Administrator 1 were matter of fact about their professional intention. Teacher 1 said "I don't think I ever did think of quitting." Administrator 1 replied to a direct question about consideration of leaving education "No. No."

Destiny

The theme destiny refers to a perception by some participants that the unfolding of their lateral move was preordained in some way. Four of the six participants, including three administrators and one teacher, made statements to this effect.

Teacher 1 said with appreciation "… it was meant to be … maybe the universe was kind of doing me a favor and nudging me in a new direction …"

Administrator 4 said "I was at peace with it. And just trusted that if it was meant to be that, if those doors were meant to open that, I need to be willing to walk through them."

Administrator 3 stated:

So I'm very much a believer in things happen for a reason, that we have to trust our journey. I've been so blessed on the moments when I've chosen to trust that journey. And that's when I've been the happiest. So that's a life lesson I would share with anyone.

Personal Growth

The theme personal growth includes discussion about personal growth aspects as part of the career movement process. Four of the six participants, all administrators, spoke about personal growth.

Administrator 1 said "I've always really grown from where I've gone." Administrator 3 stated "… I'm at a much different place than I had been as a new administrator. … everyone grows, but it's kind of been nice to talk about that growth today."

Tenure

The theme tenure includes discussion about how important the loss of tenure was in transitioning to a new district. Three of the six participants, including two administrators and one teacher, gave comments regarding the loss of tenure. No participants that spoke on this topic were concerned about losing tenure.

Organizational Perceptions after Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed organizational perceptions related to their following school or district (see Table 2). The themes related to this category discussed, in order of frequency, are peer relationships, organizational climate, professional autonomy, professional growth outcomes. Table 5 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Table 5

Frequency of Organizational Perceptions after Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Peer Relationships	X	X	X	X	X	X
Organizational Climate	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Autonomy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Growth Outcomes	X	X	X	X	X	X

Peer Relationships

The theme peer relationships addresses participant perceptions regarding the quality of professional relationships they had after a lateral move. All of the six participants indicated that they had strong positive relationships with their proximal coworkers following a lateral move.

Administrator 3 said "I've been blessed to work with amazing teachers, amazing leaders and have some incredible experiences." Teacher 1 said "… but since then I've really had true collaboration …" Teacher 2 was frank:

> I work with just some of the most amazing people I have ever worked with. And when you have that, even though sometimes we're all miserable, we're miserable together and you've got that support from your peers. It's priceless. … I'll get through the [worst] day just knowing that I've got folks there who are with me, and understand, and they're in the trenches …

Organizational Climate

The theme organizational climate includes discussion about the perceived overall mood of the participants' school district after a lateral move. All of the six participants made positive and favorable statements about the organizational climate of their following districts.

Teacher 1 referenced a conversation with a colleague who had recently moved between the same districts "… she's at [school] and loves it. And I was like 'I know, I know. It's amazing.'"

Administrator 1 said "It has been a wonderful experience and very freeing to be here. And it's cultural. It's all cultural."

Administrator 3 used greater detail:

> And there is a cultural shift here in systems, while we do have very high expectations … we do it in manageable chunks, and that allows us to do it with excellence. And it gives us time for input from staff and fellow administrators, our community. And I like the way we approach those items.

Professional Autonomy

The theme professional autonomy includes discussion about how participants perceived their ability make decisions about how to do their work after a lateral move. All six of the participants made comments related to having greater professional autonomy in their following districts.

Administrator 2 talked about new, positive challenges:

The building I'm in needed, and we're still working on sort of an SEL program. And so, the opportunity to kind of build that from the ground up instead of just inheriting one and trying to make it work. That was an interesting challenge for me.

Administrator 1 said "what's great about it is, I mean, the sense of ownership that I have, and that the teachers have, is great because it's ours."

Teacher 1 and Administrator 3 talked about trust regarding autonomy. Teacher 1 succinctly stated "They trust me." Administrator 3 said "It makes a big difference in the challenges that administrators face every day to know you're trusted to do your job."

Administrator 4 talked about autonomy in relativistic terms between their previous and following roles:

… if I could just be left to make the decisions and run the school the way that I need to. And that's what I love about this position, because I'm able to do that, then that would be a wonderful thing because then we can work together to kind of advocate and determine what the route we need to go.

Professional Growth Outcomes

The theme professional growth outcomes includes discussion about participant perceptions related to receiving desirable elevated responsibilities in their new districts. All of the six participants described positive professional achievements as a result of lateral movement.

Teacher 1 said "… then I came to [school district] and I'm respected. I was asked to take some leadership initiative."

Administrator 3 expressed a sense of pride and commitment:

But I want to see all the work that's been started here to fruition, and I'm watching the staff grow and believe in themselves. And it's just so rewarding, so I'm committed to finishing the work I've started here.

Teacher 2 said with confidence "… since I have been in [following district] my career has flourished. And [previous district] missed out. … I was not only teacher of the year for my building, I was teacher of the year … district-wide in [year]."

Summary

In describing the experiences of established, successful educators who elected to make a lateral move, the emergent categories that were most related are organizational perceptions before lateral move, mobility, and organizational perceptions after lateral move. The themes related to organizational perceptions before lateral move that best answered RQ1 were peer relationships, organizational climate, workload, and external forces. The themes related to mobility that best answered RQ1 were sum career transitions, spontaneity, compensation, mobility intention, and family/friend push. The themes related to organizational perceptions after lateral move that best answered RQ1 were peer relationships, organizational climate, professional autonomy, and professional growth outcomes.

Research question two (RQ2) for this study was: What emotions are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The emergent categories that best answered this question are psychological and physiological effects before lateral move and psychological and physiological effects after lateral move.

Psychological and Physiological Effects before Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category psychological and physiological effects before lateral move (see Table 2). The themes to related to this category discussed, in order of frequency, are family/friend observations, stress, frustration, personal relationships, exhaustion, self-doubt, physical symptoms, defeat, coping, sacrifice, anxiety, internal struggle, depression. Table 6 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Table 6

Frequency of Psychological and Physiological Effects before Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Family/Friend Observation	X	X	X	X	X	X
Stress	X	X	X	X	X	X
Frustration	X	X	X	X		X
Personal Relationships	X		X	X	X	X
Exhaustion	X		X	X	X	X
Self-Doubt	X		X	X	X	X
Physical Symptoms	X		X	X	X	X
Defeat	X		X		X	X
Coping	X		X		X	X
Sacrifice	X		X	X	X	
Anxiety	X		X		X	
Internal Struggle	X		X	X		
Depression						X

Family/Friend Observation

The theme family/friend observation includes discussion perceptions of participants by close others prior to making a lateral move. All six of the participants included comments about observations made by family or friends.

Teacher 2 and Administrator 3 talked about spousal observations. Teacher 2 said "… [spouse] said 'You're not really living your life right now. … there's no joy. … I can see you just kind of shutting down.'" Administrator 3 said "my [spouse] was like, '[name], I think you're going to need a doctor. I don't think you're handling this well.'"

Teacher 1 gave multiple accounts of observations made by their family. This one was made by their parents and spouse:

I had my parents, who are both retired educators saying '[name], that's not right. That is not right. …' And I had my [spouse] going 'You know this this isn't fair to us. Like, you're working all the time. Nothing's ever good enough.' Like 'You're Stockholm-ed.' You know 'You're still loyal to [the principal] and [the principal] treats you horribly.'

Stress

All of the six participants reported excessive stress in their previous districts. Administrator 2 made fewer references to stress than the other participants. Many of the participants indicated a perception that stress compounded or lead to other adverse health effects.

Teacher 1 said "Health problems. Health problems, mental health physical health, I feel like resulted from the stress levels." Administrator 3 said "I've always been fairly healthy. And so what I think stemmed is just the buildup of stress, and my body just finally said, listen, you've got to do better."

Administrator 4 discussed the spillover effects of stress "But it was stressful and when you get stressed like that, then you, sometimes you're not always on the top of your game and then it's impacting other parts of your life."

Frustration

Five of the six participants, including four administrators and one teacher, gave examples of being frustrated in their previous district. The nature of examples given included episodic and persistent frustration.

Teacher 2 discussed more internalized frustration "And I just was really unhappy and frustrated for lots and lots and lots of reasons …"

Administrator 1 expressed frustration related to unmet needs "And I never felt like the unique needs of our school were getting attention. … That piece was frustrating."

Administrator 4 expressed frustration related to external forces "… it's frustrating when you feel like, that it's a few that are influencing the majority or discrediting the work of their colleagues by going around when … it didn't go their way."

Personal Relationships

The theme personal relationships includes discussion about participant perceptions of excessive strain placed on their personal relationships related to working in their previous district. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, discussed adverse effects to their personal relationships before a lateral move.

Teacher 2 said in reference to being a parent:

I think they knew that I was really unhappy and dealing with some stuff. I think you hide a lot of stuff from your kids when you're a parent just because you don't want them to think that your life is not sunshine and rainbows.

Administrator 3 and Administrator 4 spoke more broadly about the impact to family interaction. Administrator 3 said "And so while they were supportive, they also saw that I wasn't taking time to do things with them, which brings me a lot of joy." Administrator 4 said "Definitely conversations with my family, for sure. Because I was seeing the impact that it was having on them as well."

Exhaustion

Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, reported being exhausted in their previous district. Most examples were related to physical exhaustion. Administrator 1 referred to mental exhaustion.

Teacher 1 said "I think it's fair to say … being completely overwrought and overworked was just standard." Administrator 3 said "I wasn't taking care of myself. And I was too exhausted to take care of myself."

Self-Doubt

The theme self-doubt includes discussion of participants questioning their competence and self-efficacy prior to making a lateral move. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, recollected moments of self-doubt in their previous districts.

Administrator 4 said "… feeling that there's certain things no matter what you do, you're not going to please certain folks, and it's just a no win kind of situation." Administrator 3 said "And you want to do your job, and you want to do it with excellence. And feeling like there were days where there's so much on your plate that sometimes you could not always do everything with excellence."

Administrator 3 and Teacher 1 discussed a more nuanced type of self-doubt. Administrator 3 said "And it made me feel confused. And I don't like feeling confused. And so, I felt like I had, I wasn't doing something right." Teacher 1 said "It's probably not … part of my personality to have so much professional self-doubt. And to be so insecure in my profession."

Physical Symptoms

Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, reported having physical symptoms perceived to be manifestations of working in their previous district. More serious issues included cardiovascular, physical mobility, and elevated chronic illness symptoms. Other symptoms were more episodic in nature.

Teacher 1 told several stories about faculty meetings in their previous district "… the very last meeting I was in … it was so scary I got diarrhea." Teacher 2 listed "Weight gain,

headache, exhaustion." Administrator 4 said "I definitely … health wise was not good. I mean, to the point where I wasn't even sleeping that well."

Defeat

The theme defeat includes discussion about situations in their previous role when participants felt like giving up. Four of the six participants, including two administrators and two teachers, expressed feeling defeated before a lateral move.

Teacher 2 discussed at decline at their school after administrative turnover "But a lot of us were just very frustrated because it had been a place where we were … proud to work. We were proud of the stuff we did every day. And that feeling was just gone." Teacher 2 continued later "I felt hopeless …"

Administrator 3 and 4 expressed defeat regarding perceptions of others. Administrator 3 said "I think we probably felt … that probably not a lot was going to be able to change …" Administrator 4 stated "I would just constantly go through this mindset of, and cycle of really trying to communicate and believing that this time, it's going to be different. And then it wasn't."

Coping

The theme coping includes discussion of participant behaviors that were used to deal with some of the challenges related to working in their previous districts. Four participants, including two administrators and two teachers, provided details about coping behaviors.

Administrator 1 and Teacher 2 reported seeking the help of medical professionals including the use of pharmaceuticals. Teacher 1 gave a blunt description about common practices in their former school "… people were turning to substance abuse to cope with the levels of stress." Teacher 1 continued later in the interview Well, I don't smoke pot and I didn't

drink. Although honestly, I can understand the desire. I slept. I mean, I was on medication. I was

on an anti-anxiety medication …"

Administrator 3 described social coping behaviors:

I was so blessed to work with a great group of administrators and we were each other's

rocks. So even on my worst days, I knew I could call any of them and they could call me.

We were really just close, and we could vent and lean on each other.

Sacrifice

Four of the six participants, including three administrators and one teacher, discussed

personal sacrifices they made prior to making a lateral move. Administrator 1 and Administrator

3 indicated that their physical exercise routines suffered and completely lapsed at times.

Teacher 1 shared a vivid memory of one particular sacrifice "My [child] was in

kindergarten and I never once took a day off to go and be the room mom, or go to the classroom,

or go to thanksgiving when they have this special thanksgiving."

Administrator 4 said "is it really worth like me having to sacrifice all of this, like my

personal health and family time and wellbeing and the wellbeing of others."

Anxiety

Three of the six participants, including two administrators and one teacher, made direct

references to experiencing anxiety in their previous roles.

Teacher 1 said in reference to a former principal "I can't explain … how really anxiety

producing [the principal] was."

Administrator 3 described workload related anxiety "So anticipating opening your inbox

and whether it be at night or on the weekend … was … more of anxiety for me than the actual

email itself."

Internal Struggle

The theme internal struggle includes discussion about some participants' inner dialogue about electing to make a lateral move. Three of the six participants, all administrators, talked about having an inner struggle prior to moving.

Administrator 1 provided the richest account:

And it really felt like a divorce. I mean, I've never been through a divorce, but it's what I might expect one feels like. Just, when you've poured your heart and soul into something that matters so much, for years.

Depression

One of the six participants, Teacher 2, reported experiencing depression related to working in their previous district. Teacher 2 said "… I was really very depressed for several years and finally found a doctor and medication. And even went and talked to a therapist for a little while just to kind of help me get past this."

Psychological and Physiological Effects after Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category psychological and physiological effects after lateral move (see Table 2). The themes related to this category discussed are adjustment and positive wellbeing. Table 7 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Table 7

Frequency of Psychological and Physiological Effects after Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Adjustment	X		X	X	X	X
Positive Wellbeing	X		X	X	X	X

Adjustment

The theme adjustment includes discussion of participant experiences regarding a transitional period of acclimating to their new districts. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, reported going through an adjustment period after a lateral move.

Administrator 3 described adjustment in terms of separation from previous colleagues "So change doesn't scare me that much. I'm pretty accustomed to it, and I'm pretty comfortable with it. I actually thrive in change, but it's the people that you leave behind. And that's the hard part."

Administrator 4 said:

… while it seems great and wonderful, you still are starting over. And while fresh starts can be a great thing, it's also a little bit scary at times, too. And so, while I often am one to embrace change, I still go at it with a little bit of hesitation and worry.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 had reported more transformational adjustment accounts. Teacher 1 said "And I remember in the interview faking this confidence. And my first couple years I faked my confidence until I got it back. I hadn't realized how insecure I had been, how scared I was of my administrators." Teacher 2 said:

It's like almost PTSD because it's like, literally, you're just constantly. I felt like I was always waiting for the other shoe to drop for somebody to walk in the door. And it took me months before I would finally go, okay, you know, and just kind of start to let that go, you know, let that guard down and feel like I could relax.

Positive Wellbeing

The theme of positive wellbeing includes broad discussions about participants' positive psychological and physiological outcomes after a lateral move. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, reported greater positive wellbeing in their following districts.

Administrator 3 made a general statement "I just felt overall I was going to be able to have a better balance. And that has come to fruition."

Teacher 1 reported multifaceted wellbeing improvement in their new district:

I mean holy cow, you know, just so much better feelings of self and happy. I mean, I went back to having personal hobbies, you know, having some energy. I started learning guitar. … I had some personal energy to spare.

Administrator 1 reported significant health workload improvements:

This spring my doctor lowered my blood pressure meds dosage, took me off anxiety meds and told me I had lost 10 pounds. I have not been trying to lose weight but did start going back to the gym … Most weeks, I am able to go to the gym 4-5 days a week. Also, most days I am home by 4:30 and I have no need to work while at home.

Summary

In describing the emotions of established, successful educators who elected to make a lateral move, the emergent categories that were most related are psychological and physiological

effects before lateral move and psychological and physiological effects after lateral move. The themes related to psychological and physiological effects before lateral move that best answered RQ2 were family/friend observation and stress. The themes related to psychological and physiological effects after lateral move that best answered RQ2 were adjustment and positive wellbeing.

Research Question Three

Research question two (RQ3) for this study was: What superordinate behaviors are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? The emergent categories that best answered this question are perceptions of superordinate before lateral move and perceptions of superordinate after lateral move.

Perceptions of Superordinate before Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category perceptions of superordinate before lateral move (see Table 2). The themes related to this category discussed, in order of frequency, are superordinate lack of support, superordinate turnover, negative perceptions of superordinate, not valued by superordinate, negative superordinate interaction, superordinate lack of empathy, superordinate duplicity, and collegial support. Table 8 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

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Table 8

Frequency of Perceptions of Superordinate before Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Superordinate Lack of Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Superordinate Turnover	X	X	X	X	X	X
Negative Perceptions of Superordinate	X	X	X	X	X	X
Not Valued by Superordinate	X	X		X	X	X
Negative Superordinate Interaction	X	X		X	X	X
Superordinate Lack of Empathy	X			X	X	X
Superordinate Duplicity	X		X	X		
Collegial Support		X	X		X	

Superordinate Lack of Support

The theme superordinate lack of support includes discussion of participant experiences where they felt unsupported by superiors in their previous district. All of the six participants provided examples of superordinate lack of support.

Administrator 2 discussed individual and group aspects regarding lack of support in their former district. Administrator 2 said in attempt to rationalize being passed over "… they kind of push you into the direction you need to go. And I don't think I got really a push …" Administrator 2 said in reference to a meeting with central office "… it's like we were being held accountable for something that we weren't instructed on."

Teacher 2 talked about being unsupported in the area of professional development:

[The school district] was adopting this learning focused approach to lesson planning and

teaching and things like that. And … our classroom teachers were being given

opportunities to receive training and support and I constantly kept asking, 'Hey, we'd like

in on this,' you know, whatever. We were never included in any of those …

Another example was, "When Tennessee switched evaluation models … classroom teachers,

they had like, an in-service on that at some point and related arts teachers, we never had

anything."

Administrator 1 was distressed about their previous superordinate lack of support:

… our district isn't student focused. And that's why I'm losing sleep at night. I'm losing

sleep because our kids aren't getting what they need. And our teachers aren't getting what

they need in order to give the kids what they need. And I can't do this anymore.

Administrator 1 later explained:

I think it was more about being ignored and being out of sight, out of mind. And hoping

that it just got better. I mean, that's the kind of feeling I got. Is that you know, somehow

we would just figure things out or we just suddenly get better. And things that are ignored

don't get better.

Administrator 4 indicated that available previous superordinate support was not evenly

distributed "… it was navigating what I feel like was a lack of support from administration …

There's not a balance of support."

Superordinate Turnover

The theme superordinate turnover includes discussion about participants' negative

perceptions related to the turnover of building or district level personnel. All of the six

participants described undesirable effects regarding superordinate turnover.

Teacher 1 said in reference to the competence of a new administrator "We got a new vice

principal and it wasn't good."

Teacher 2 had negative perceptions about the leadership selection process in their previous district "… we got a new principal and a new assistant principal at the same time. Neither of them had ever been at all."

Administrator 1 and Administrator 4 discussed negative perceptions about turnover in district leadership. Administrator 1 said "… it was very confusing because that's not the kind of leadership we had had in [the school district] before, and it was very stressful." Administrator 4 said "… with different administrators there's influence, not just at the school level, but also at the central office level … there's an impact when there's transition there, it impacts us as well on how we need to kind of execute …"

Negative Perceptions of Superordinate

The theme negative perceptions of superordinate includes examples of statements by participants indicating that they held generally unfavorable views about their previous superordinate. All of the six participants expressed negative perceptions about their previous superordinate.

Teacher 1 said of a previous administrator "[the principal] would have felt proud of the fact that lots of people didn't make it with them."

Administrator 1 said of a previous superintendent "… to be very honest … [the superintendent] wasn't a real deep thinker."

Administrator 4 describe unprofessional decision making practices in their former district leadership "It was … really unnecessary and almost felt more personal rather than it being an educated professional justification …"

Not Valued by Superordinate

The theme not valued by superordinate includes discussion about participants' perceptions that their work or their building was not important to their superordinate prior to making a lateral move. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, indicated that they did not feel valued in their previous district.

Administrator 1 described a conversation with their previous superordinate:

I was just super proud and excited about the prospects for [the school]. And so, when I shared that, I just did not … feel a connection. And that was a bit disappointing. … I never wanted the [school] staff to know that. So, it's not like I could share that with them, 'Hey, you all are great and the superintendent thinks you're not.'

Administrator 1 later continued "And that's a weird thing. I mean, I didn't feel valued."

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 perceived that their content areas were not valued. Teacher 1 said "… so I was hired to do both and they told me, 'you will teach [subject 1] and if you have any time left over teach [subject 2].' … I'm a [subject 2] person and that was just really insulting." Teacher 2 said "… after a while when it's like, you're trying to maintain good behavior and you're trying to maintain interest and then you are excited about what you're teaching, but nobody else really is …"

Negative Superordinate Interaction

The theme negative superordinate interaction includes discussion of unpleasant exchanges that participants had with their former superordinate. Five of the six participants, including three administrators and two teachers, shared negative interactions with their previous superordinate.

Teacher 2 and Administrator 4 described negative interactions with their previous superordinate as a regular occurrence. Teacher 1 said:

It was not uncommon to see teachers walking into the building crying in the morning and walking out of the building crying in the afternoon just because of things that had been said to them … So, just a very, environment of … disrespect. So, it was bad.

Administrator 4 said "… you'd be questioned about something, but then never given the opportunity to actually explain. So you're really talked at rather than talked, you weren't really part of the conversation."

Administrator 2 and Administrator 1 discussed episodic negative interactions with their former superordinate. Administrator 2 told the story of peer conversation following a negative superordinate interaction related to being passed over "… [pronoun]'s like, 'Are you okay?' … 'They had told me.' And then we talked about it. And I was like, 'It's fine. It's just like a gut punch.'" Administrator 1 described a meeting with their former superordinate:

[Pronoun] was very distracted during the entire meeting … it just felt like I was a child and had given a silly answer to a problem. And, again, not a solution with the given. And I did ask for one. No solution was given. And I just felt almost reprimanded that I would even ask …

Superordinate Lack of Empathy

Four of the six participants, including two administrators and two teachers, made statements indicating a lack of empathy from their previous superordinate.

Administrator 3 expressed about empathy related to workload with their former superordinate "And while we went through an activity of what could we take off the plates in reality, nothing was ever taken off the plate."

Administrator 2 told a story about being required to attend a large gathering just before a COVID-19 lockdown went into effect:

And it was in that open, in that auditorium. And so like, it's not that big. Like, it's not that big of an area. And I just remember being in there and being like, 'Why are we even doing this?' Like, we shook hands and talked to 40 people, 50 people, 100 people.

Superordinate Duplicity

The theme superordinate duplicity includes discussion of participant perceptions that the words and actions of their former superordinate were inconsistent. Three of the participants, all administrators, recounted examples of superordinate duplicity.

Administrator 2 said in reference to relaying district level feedback to teachers "They want to tell you, and then you tell them, so it doesn't look like central office is directing it. … So, there's a little bit of puppetry that goes on there." Administrator 4 said "as we were trying to do some collaborative work that aligned with some of the directives that-Sometimes the rugs would be pulled out from underneath of you, from the very individuals that gave the directives."

Collegial Support

Three of the six participants, including two administrators and one teacher, provided examples of collegial support from their previous superordinate or indirect superordinate.

Teacher 1 described their dual perception of a former principal "… in some ways [pronoun] was such a reasonable, good person. … in some ways she was very supportive."

Administrator 3 talked about a former indirect superordinate that was a dear mentor "So I capitalized on that feedback and grew exponentially under [their] leadership."

Perceptions of Superordinate after Lateral Move

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category perceptions of superordinate after lateral move (see Table 2). The themes related to this category discussed, in order of frequency, are superordinate support, positive perceptions of superordinate, valued by superordinate. Table 9 shows the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Table 9

Frequency of Perceptions of Superordinate after Lateral Move

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Superordinate Support	X	X	X	X	X	X
Positive Perceptions of Superordinate	X		X		X	X
Valued by Superordinate	X		X		X	X

Superordinate Support

All of the six participants reported perceptions of being supported by their superordinate following a lateral move.

Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 described being more effective because of the support of their following superordinate. Teacher 1 said "And so I was very glad that central office supported us teaching the state standards … having trust in us as professionals and as educators." Teacher 2 said "… if I went to [the principal] with a good idea, [pronoun] would get so excited and. And, anyway [pronoun] could support me, to help me make things happen … to … serve our students of today …"

Administrator 3 said:

I can't say enough about the leadership support that I've had coming into this community from the top leaders, central office leadership. I have been wholeheartedly supported, and because of that it made the transition so much easier. And to this day I continue to get that support.

Administrator 4 said "… the transition has allowed me to be able to see that, the impact of what a collaborative, supportive environment actually should look like."

Positive Perceptions of Superordinate

The theme positive perceptions of superordinate includes examples of statements by participants indicating that they held generally favorable views about their following superordinate. Four of the six participants, including two administrators and two teachers, expressed positive perceptions about their following superordinate.

Teacher 2 provided a lighthearted hyperbole:

And then when I had a principal who was like, 'Hey, what's going on? How's it going? Hey, what's happening?' You know (Administrator 2), 'I think I want to set books on fire and dance around them naked.' (Principal) 'Great, I think that's wonderful.' I mean just … high energy … And I don't take it for granted.

Valued by Superordinate

The theme valued by superordinate includes discussion about participants' perceptions that their work or their building was important to their superordinate following a lateral move. Four of the six participants, including two administrators and two teachers, indicated that they felt valued in their following district.

Teacher 2 said:

They see us as an essential part of the school and the team and the system. The director of

schools walks in the door, and [pronoun], 'Hey, [name].' I mean, [pronoun] knows me by

name, [pronoun] knows things that I'm doing, things that are happening in my

[classroom], and it's just like I feel valued.

Administrator 3 said of their following superordinate "What they are more interested in is

how we're reflecting and thinking through it. Which is all I ever asked for."

Summary

In describing the superordinate behaviors associated with the experiences of established,

successful educators who elected to make a lateral move, the emergent categories that were most

related are perceptions of superordinate before lateral move and perceptions of superordinate

after lateral move. The themes related to perceptions of superordinate before lateral move that

best answered RQ2 were superordinate lack of support, superordinate turnover, and negative

perceptions of superordinate. The theme related to perceptions of superordinate after lateral

move that best answered RQ2 was superordinate support.

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Emergent Category Unrelated to Research Questions

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An emergent category was discovered during the analysis of participant interview

transcript data that is not directly related to any research questions of the present study. This

section includes discussion related to the category reflexivity.

Reflexivity

All of the six participants discussed themes within the category reflexivity (see Table 2).

The themes related to this category discussed, in order of frequency, are perceptions of self,

sense of purpose, hindsight, long-term goals, gratitude, and hierarchical parallels. Table 9 shows

the frequency with which participants discussed each of the themes contained within organizational perceptions after lateral move.

Table 10

Frequency of Reflexivity

Participant	A1	A2	A3	A4	T1	T2
Perceptions of Self	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sense of Purpose	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hindsight	X	X	X	X	X	X
Long-term Goals	X	X	X	X		X
Gratitude	X	X	X	X		
Hierarchical Parallels				X		

Perceptions of Self

All of the six participants made comments related to their perceptions of self during the interviews. These perceptions were provided as supporting the rationalization for making a lateral move and the positive outcomes of making a lateral move.

Teacher 1 said "… by nature I'm a collaborative person. I really am like a team player. … I believe in synergy, I believe you know, two heads are better, more than just one plus one." Administrator 2 said "… there's something about being able to build something. And maybe it's the [musician] in me. Like, where you start from scratch and no one knows anything, and then you just build it all the way up." Teacher 2 said:

> I know that I have leadership skills and I know that I have good ideas. And, most of all, I'm that person, I show up and I do the work. And that to me, you know, is the biggest part because you have lots of people with lots of great, you know. But as far as roll up your sleeves and be there and let's do the work, I'm that [person].

Sense of Purpose

All of the six participants made statements related to their professional sense of purpose. These remarks were made in affirmation of the participants' internalized commitment to public education.

Teacher 2 said "… so that I could feel that I was adding value." Teacher 1 said "It's who I am. It's not necessarily just a job." Administrator 1 said:

> I have probably an unhealthy sense of ownership to the school where I serve. I am constantly thinking about how things can get better or how I could, myself, do things better. … The way I sleep at night is that I go to bed knowing that we're doing, that everyone as a school where I am, is doing all we can for kids.

Hindsight

The theme hindsight includes reflexive discussion about participants' perceptions regarding their lateral moves. All of the six participants made statements related to hindsight. The context of hindsight varied considerably between participants.

Administrator 4 said "That transition is where I gained a lot, learned a lot from those experiences, and they're definitely things that I would have approached differently and have in this transition."

Teacher 2 said:

> I just have had opportunities … have received awards and I've written grants and I've done so many wonderful things. … And had I stayed in [the previous district], none of that would have been possible, nothing. So it was definitely just the best move for me.

Teacher 1 said "But it was always nerve racking there. And I didn't realize that. That was the first and only place I'd worked and I love teaching and I did love my coworkers …"

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Long-term Goals

The theme long-term goals includes discussion of participants' future aspirations in the profession of education. Five of the six participants, including four administrators and one teacher talked about their professional long-term goals. Direct quotes related to the participants' long-term goals are not provided here as a matter of protecting their anonymity. Participant statements regarding their long-term goals included pursuing various leadership roles within education as well as retirement.

Gratitude

The theme gratitude includes discussion of participants' reflexive appreciation for the experience of working in their previous districts. Four of the six participants, all administrators, expressed this gratitude.

Administrator 4 said "I'm thankful for the experiences that I've had because I think it has definitely made me pause and be a little bit more reflective in how I'm approaching things in the future." Administrator 1 said "… each time I made a change in my career, I always viewed it as something that I was going to versus leaving. And I love, I've loved every place that I've been. And it's always been excruciating to leave …"

Hierarchical Parallels

The theme hierarchical parallels includes discussion about the similarity of experience shared by teachers and administrators. One participant, Administrator 4, made comments regarding hierarchical parallels. Administrator 4 said "… how this makes you feel as an administrator, your faculty is feeling the same way. … the parallels are the same. It's just, we're in different positions, but we experience it in different, at different levels."

Summary

The category reflexivity was not directly related to the research questions of the present study. However, it may provide some important insights that are discussed in Chapter 5. All of the six participants made reflexive statements during their interviews (see Table 2). The themes related to reflexivity that appeared most frequently in the data are perceptions of self, sense of purpose, and hindsight (see Table 10).

Summary of Findings

Eight categories emerged in the analysis, theme coding, and axial coding of the present study's interview transcript data (see Table 1). The emergent categories that were most related to RQ1 are organizational perceptions before lateral move, mobility, and organizational perceptions after lateral move. The emergent categories that were most related to RQ2 are psychological and physiological effects before lateral move and psychological and physiological effects after lateral move. The emergent categories that were most related to RQ3 are perceptions of superordinate before lateral move and perceptions of superordinate after lateral move. The emergent category reflexivity did not directly answer any of the research questions. Potential insights related to the category reflexivity are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5. Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Research Question One

Research question one for the present study was: What experiences are associated with successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? Table 11 shows the alignment of the most frequent emergent data related to RQ1 (see Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5) with components of the present study's theoretical framework.

Table 11

Alignment of RQ1 Emergent Data with SDT Framework

Emergent Data		Basic Psychological Needs			PLOC	
Category	Theme	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness	Internal	External
Org. Perceptions before Lateral Move	Peer Relationships			S	X	X
	Organizational Climate	F				X
	Workload	F	F	F		X
	External Forces	F				X
Mobility	Sum Career Transitions	N			X	
	Spontaneity	S		S		X
	Compensation	N				X
	Mobility Intention	S			X	
	Family/Friend Push			S		X
Org. Perceptions after Lateral Move	Peer Relationships			S	X	X
	Organizational Climate	S				X
	Professional Autonomy	S	S		X	X
	Prof. Growth Outcomes	S	S		X	X

Note. The effect of reported experiences within categorical themes on basic psychological needs satisfaction are indicated as supporting (S), frustrating (F), or neutral (N).

Discussion

Experiential accounts provided by the research participants revealed important insights about RQ1 regarding the perceived locus of causality (PLOC) and basic psychological needs (BPN) satisfaction tenets of SDT. The PLOC for a majority of the related themes was perceived by participants to be external in nature. The themes peer relationships before and after a lateral move, professional autonomy, and professional growth outcomes were interpreted as having both internal and external PLOC. A primarily internal PLOC was attributed to the themes sum career transitions and mobility intention.

The theme peer relationships before a lateral move supported the psychological need for relatedness. It was the only discussed theme in the category organizational perceptions before a lateral move that supported BPN satisfaction. The need for autonomy was thwarted by reported experiences within the themes organizational climate before a lateral move and external forces.

Participant accounts related to the theme workload thwarted satisfaction of all the BPN. Similar findings about workload are well documented (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Administrator 4 said related to workload and autonomy frustration "I can sense my patience dwindling … with the process or dealing with things that I felt like maybe were kind of unnecessary." Teacher 1 said related to workload and competence frustration "I felt like my scores got worse every year, my [standardized testing] data was worse." Administrator 3 said related to workload and relatedness frustration "That's an easy one. Work-life balance. It was non-existing." The theme external forces also overlapped with workload. Administrator 1 said about workload related to a previous district initiative "With that it felt like there were two jobs. There were just two focuses that would be constantly there." This finding is significant due to the

frustrating impact of experiences related to workload on all BPN and the compounding relationship between the themes workload and external forces.

The themes sum career transitions and compensation were interpreted as neutral regarding BPN satisfaction. Data provided by participants related to their sum career transitions were primarily delivered as tangential statements of fact. All of the participants indicated that compensation was not a significant factor related to making a lateral move, which was an intended delimitation of the present study.

The themes spontaneity, mobility intention, and family/friend push supported BPN satisfaction. The perceived spontaneity of job openings provided an opportunity for participants to exercise their autonomy. Additionally, this theme was aligned with relatedness in that most participants heard about these employment opportunities from friends or colleagues. The theme mobility intention has significance due to the alignment of perceived autonomy and internal PLOC. The theme family/friend push was connected to the need for relatedness and provided an external PLOC alignment with participants' mobility intention. Reported experiences within the themes spontaneity, mobility intention, and family/friend push aligned motivational forces toward the decision to make a lateral move.

All of the reported experiences within the themes related to the category organizational perceptions after a lateral move supported BPN satisfaction. The themes professional autonomy and professional growth outcomes were connected as they both supported autonomy and competence needs satisfaction as well as shared internal and external PLOC. Reported experiences within the theme peer relationships after a lateral move supported participants' need for relatedness and shared internal and external PLOC. The combination of these themes is significant due to the positive alignment of all BPN and PLOC.

The finding that all participants experienced positive peer relationships before and after a lateral move may be aligned with extant research related to the phenomenon of effective educator clustering (Feng & Sass, 2017; Podurgsky et al., 2016; Vekeman et al., 2017).

Summary

The frequency of shared experiences suggests commonality across participants. However, frequency cannot indicate the relative intensity or importance between themes across participant experiences related to making a lateral move. Therefore, the motivating potential of each theme remains a matter of subjective interpretation for both the participant and the researcher. Connections between the themes workload and external forces along with the thwarting of all BPN were significant findings related to participants' reported experiences before a lateral move. Overlap of the themes spontaneity, mobility intention, and family/friend push as well as their alignment of supporting the needs of autonomy and relatedness through internal and external PLOC were significant findings related to participants' reported experiences regarding lateral movement. The positive alignment of all BPN satisfaction and internal and external PLOC of the themes peer relationships after a lateral move, professional autonomy, and professional growth outcomes were significant findings related to participants' reported experiences after a lateral move.

Research Question Two

Research question two for the present study was: What emotions are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? Table 12 shows the alignment of the most frequent emergent data related to RQ2 (see Table 6 and Table 7) with components of the present study's theoretical framework.

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Table 12

Alignment of RQ2 Emergent Data with SDT Framework

Emergent Data		Basic Psychological Needs			PLOC	
Category	Theme	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness	Internal	External
Psychological and Physiological Effects before Lateral Move	Family/Friend Observation			F		X
	Stress	F	F	F	X	X
Psychological and Physiological Effects after Lateral Move	Adjustment	F	F		X	
	Positive Wellbeing	S	S	S	X	X

Note. The effect of reported experiences within categorical themes on basic psychological needs satisfaction are indicated as supporting (S) or frustrating (F).

Discussion

Experiential accounts provided by the research participants revealed important insights about RQ2 regarding the PLOC and basic needs satisfaction tenets of SDT. The theme family/friend observation was associated with external PLOC. The theme adjustment was associated with internal PLOC. Reported experiences within the themes stress and positive wellbeing shared internal and external PLOC.

Stress is one of the most reported aspects of negative wellbeing in related research (Bono et al., 2013; Nie et al., 2015). Reported experiences within the theme stress thwarted satisfaction of all the BPN. Teacher 1 said related to stress and autonomy thwarting "I feel like the expectations drove the stress." Administrator 4 said related to stress and competence thwarting "… when you're stressed, it carries over to your staff and that creates discourse …"

Administrator 4 said related to stress and relatedness thwarting "… it was stressful … which was taking away from personal wellbeing and family time." The subsequent observations of family and friends provided an external PLOC alignment and affirmation for participants. Administrator 3 said about stress and observations by family "… my [spouse] got the worst of me and my family hardly got any of me … They were worried about me. They could see the stress …" These findings were significant due to the thwarting of all BPN and the alignment of internal and external PLOC.

A variety of other adverse outcomes related to emotions were reported with less frequency across most participants (see Table 6). This finding suggested complex nuance within participant experiences and how they were affected by those experiences. This finding may also suggest that hedonic wellbeing was motivational in the decision to make a lateral move.

Five of the participants, including three administrators and two teachers, reported experiences related to adjustment and positive wellbeing after a lateral move. Administrator 2 was the only participant who did not talk about experiences related to the themes adjustment and positive wellbeing after a lateral move. It is notable that Administrator 2 also described some significant buffering experiences and reported fewer adverse emotions before making a lateral move. This suggested that Administrator 2 experienced fewer emotions overall related to making a lateral move.

The theme adjustment included participant experiences associated with the thwarting of autonomy and competence needs satisfaction. Reported experiences related to adjustment constituted the only data after a lateral move that were associated with BPN thwarting. Adjustment experiences were described as residual internalized adversity. Although the length of

adjustment periods were not expressed with great specificity, the extent of internalization was considerable. Teacher 2 said regarding their adjustment after a lateral move:

It's like almost PTSD because it's like, literally, you're just constantly. I felt like I was always waiting for the other shoe to drop for somebody to walk in the door. And it took me months before I would finally go, okay, you know, and just kind of start to let that go, you know, let that guard down and feel like I could relax.

This finding was significant because it was the only instance of frustrating BPN satisfaction after a lateral move.

Reported experiences related to the theme positive wellbeing were associated with supporting the satisfaction of all BPN. Administrator 3 said related to positive wellbeing and autonomy support "… when I go home it's home time … I just have more peace and more joy." Teacher 2 said related to positive wellbeing and competence support "We're not scared all the time. We're not sick to our stomachs at meetings." Administrator 4 said related to positive wellbeing and relatedness "Also, thinking about the long-term impact on my family and me transitioning into this position has been very beneficial …" Participants' transition from adjustment to positive wellbeing is representative of behavioral regulation processes described by SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017)

Summary

The frequency of shared emotions suggests commonality across participants. However, frequency cannot indicate the relative intensity or importance between themes across participant emotions related to making a lateral move. Therefore, the motivating potential of each theme remains a matter of subjective interpretation for both the participant and the researcher. Reported experiences related to stress before a lateral move were significant because they were associated

with the thwarting of all BPN and shared internal and external PLOC. Observations by friends and family of participants' negative wellbeing were affirmational toward participants recognizing the extent and impact of emotional adversity before a lateral move. Most participants described an adjustment period following a lateral move that was required for their perceptive and emotional states to normalize. Most participants described ultimately reaching positive wellbeing after a lateral move. These behavioral regulation processes have been documented by SDT researchers (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Research Question Three

Research question three for the present study was: What superordinate behaviors are associated with the experiences of successful, established educators who make lateral professional moves? Table 13 shows the alignment of the most frequent emergent data related to RQ3 (see Table 8 and Table 9) with components of the present study's theoretical framework.

Table 13

Alignment of RQ3 Emergent Data with SDT Framework

| Emergent Data | | Basic Psychological Needs | | | PLOC | |
Category	Theme	Autonomy	Competence	Relatedness	Internal	External
Perceptions of Superordinate before Lateral Move	Superordinate Lack of Support	F	F	F		X
	Superordinate Turnover	F				X
	Negative Perceptions of Superordinate			F		X
Perceptions of Superordinate after Lateral Move	Superordinate Support	S	S	S		X

Note. The effect of reported experiences within categorical themes on basic psychological needs satisfaction are indicated as supporting (S) or frustrating (F).

Discussion

Experiential accounts provided by the research participants revealed important insights about RQ3 regarding the PLOC and basic needs satisfaction tenets of SDT. All of the discussed findings related to perceptions of superordinate behaviors before a lateral move were associated with external PLOC. This finding indicated that participants did not perceive having efficacy in directly or significantly impacting the behavior of their superordinate. Reported experiences related to superordinate support after a lateral move shared internal and external PLOC. This finding indicated the presence of reciprocal influence on superordinate behaviors through

relatedness and shared autonomy. These findings further suggested that superordinates have great autonomy and efficacy in how they are perceived by subordinates.

The theme lack of superordinate support included participant experiences that thwarted all BPN. Administrator 2 said related to lack of superordinate support and autonomy thwarting:

I would have liked … some more support from the district to … take a look at where you are and … the next three years or next five years to be able to see where we would like us to be rather than just having the expectations of change overnight.

Teacher 2 said related to lack of superordinate support and competence thwarting "No support if you had issues with the same student every week … and you've tried all the tricks you have up your sleeve." Administrator 4 said related to lack of superordinate support and relatedness thwarting "You can't just walk in and say, 'How can I support you?' And then not really listen or try to find ways to be supportive or try to push an agenda that is actually creating more stress than support." Findings related to lack of superordinate support were significant because they were associated with thwarting all BPN.

Participant experiences related to lack of superordinate support were preceded by superordinate turnover. Superordinate turnover was associated with thwarting the need for autonomy. Negative perceptions of superordinate were associated with thwarting the need for relatedness. Participants' negative perceptions of superordinate tended to develop over time in tandem with lack of superordinate support. Findings related in connection to each of these themes were significant as they suggested a cycle of toxicity in the workplace.

All of the participants reported receiving superordinate support after a lateral move (see Table 9). Participant experiences related to superordinate support after a lateral move were associated with supporting all BPN. Administrator 2 said related to superordinate support after a

lateral move and autonomy support "The sense of ownership that I have, and that the teachers have, is great because it's ours. Like, if we make a decision that bombs. … I feel super supported in that if it bombs, it bombs." Administrator 1 said related to superordinate support after a lateral move and competence support through an initiative on providing constructive feedback "But that's where they are doing a lot of professional development for assistants in terms of this [feedback initiative] …" Administrator 3 said related to superordinate support after a lateral move and relatedness support:

> I'm always asked from the highest level at central office, 'What can I do to support you?' And I cannot tell you how much those simple words mean. It makes a big difference in the challenges that administrators face every day to know you're trusted to do your job. And if you ask, you will receive the help.

Findings related to superordinate support after a lateral move were significant because they were associated with supporting all BPN and shared internal and external PLOC.

Summary

The frequency of shared perceptions of superordinate behaviors before and after a lateral move suggests commonality across participants. However, frequency cannot indicate the relative intensity or importance between themes across participant experiences. Therefore, the motivating potential of each theme remains a matter of subjective interpretation for both the participant and the researcher. A common pattern emerged in participant experiences where superordinate turnover precipitated lack of superordinate support and participants' negative perceptions of superordinate. These experiences were cyclical in nature, thwarted all BPN, and were associated with external PLOC. All participants expressed receiving superordinate support after a lateral move. These experiences supported all BPN and shared internal and external PLOC.

Emergent Category Unrelated to Research Questions

The category reflexivity was not directly related to the research questions of the present study. The themes related to reflexivity that appeared most frequently in the data are perceptions of self, sense of purpose, and hindsight (see Table 10).

Discussion

Reported experiences related to the themes perceptions of self, sense of purpose, and hindsight were indicative of reflective and introspective processes outlined by SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Although not directly related to the research questions of the present study, this finding further supports the efficacy of SDT to describe and better understand lived experience and its usefulness in qualitative research designs.

Administrators expressed a greater number and variety of reflexive statements related to making a lateral move than did teachers (see Table 10). Reflexivity was the only category in which emergent data skewed toward either group. This finding may be congruent with extant research unknown to the researcher or provide an area of investigation for future research. This finding could suggest an anecdote about the participant administrators as reflexivity has been identified as a desirable habit for educational leaders (Hoy et al., 2013).

Summary

The category reflexivity emerged in the data analysis of the present study. Participant statements related to reflexivity did not directly answer any research questions of the present study. However, the category reflexivity and its associated themes supported the tenets of SDT. Findings related to the category reflexivity may provide direction for future research.

Conclusion

Teachers and administrators reported similar experiences, emotions, and perceptions of superordinate behaviors regarding lateral movement. The decision to make a lateral move was preceded by experiences related to adverse organizational perceptions, emotions, and perceptions of superordinate behaviors. The pivotal point of participants' mobility intention was reached through a combination of self-determination, perceived spontaneity, and the push of family and friends. All findings suggested positive outcomes for participants related to professional and personal wellbeing after making a lateral move. The narrative design of the present study allowed for broader and deeper investigation of the present study's research questions. Self-determination theory was effective in interpreting the lived experience of participants related to making a lateral move. The findings of the present study supported the tenets of SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Recommendations

Recommendations for Practice

Given that all participants of the present study experienced positive outcomes after making a lateral move, this research may provide some confidence for educators who have reached the point of mobility intention in deciding to make a lateral move. This decision may be particularly important for educators who are experiencing significant adverse effects that are impacting family and friends, in addition to personal wellbeing.

Objective and meaningful approaches to developing an awareness and understanding of educator experiences are needed at the school district level. Local school boards are the most appropriate entity to collect and analyze such information. One recommended method of collecting this type of data is to conduct exit interviews with retirees. Surveys that measure BPN

satisfaction in the workplace should be regularly conducted with current employees. Many such appropriate and reliable instruments exist for usage and adaptation (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The findings of exit interviews and employee surveys should be viewed as a legitimate and actionable platform for educator voice. It is the responsibility of school boards to enact policies that address the needs of educators. School boards will likely require professional development training to be effective in collecting, analyzing, and acting upon information related to educator experiences.

Mindfulness interventions have shown some success in promoting educator wellbeing (Heckenberg et al., 2018; Iancu et al., 2018). It is recommended that school districts investigate the integration of mindfulness practices.

Local education authorities who desire to retain established and successful educators should avoid excessive and unnecessary turnover given that superordinate turnover precipitated all reported participant experiences of the present study related to lateral mobility. Chamorro-Premuzic (2019) used extensive research evidence to emphasize the importance of leader identification and selection based on candidate competence. School board policies should be developed to provide members with the methods and criteria necessary to select competent and effective leaders.

School boards should develop meaningful and effective onboarding processes for all new hires, and particularly for those hired into positions of authority. Onboarding processes should include longitudinal aspects that extend beyond an initial orientation. Effectiveness criteria of onboarding processes should be developed and regularly evaluated by school boards. School district practices documented by Andrews (2017) may serve as positive models for others to follow.

Recommendations for Further Research

Replication of studies like this one should be conducted in different geographical locations to confirm the findings of the present study. Variations of this research design should be conducted to surface themes that may not have emerged in the present study. One potential variation could be to conduct comparative research on the lateral mobility experiences of educators in urban and rural school districts. Longitudinal studies that follow up with educators who make lateral moves are needed to better understand the long term outcomes associated with later mobility experiences. Further research investigating reflexive themes such as perception of self, sense of purpose, and hindsight related to educator experiences may prove beneficial. Future research should include or focus on the experiences of school administrators and the shared experiences of teachers and administrators.

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