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Special and General Education Administrators' Job Satisfaction, Perceptions of Workload, and Prior Expectations

Jimmie L. Brown, Jr.

SPECIAL AND GENERAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' JOB

SATISFACTION, PERCEPTIONS OF WORKLOAD, AND PRIOR EXPECTATIONS

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

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by

Jimmie L. Brown, Jr., M.S.

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Area of Specialization: Exceptional Student Education

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Dedicated to my parents, Jimmie and Vivian Brown, for encouraging me to

pursue my education and modeling a passion for learning.

With much love and admiration.

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I would like to thank the many people who encouraged me and helped me throughout this endeavor.

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ABSTRACT

SPECIAL AND GENERAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' JOB

SATISFACTION, PERCEPTIONS OF WORKLOAD, AND PRIOR EXPECTATIONS

Jimmie L. Brown, Jr., M.S.

Barry University, 2008

Dissertation Chairperson: Dr. Clara Wolman

The purpose of this study was to explore the level of job satisfaction, perceptions of workload, and prior expectations of Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County. One thousand questionnaires were distributed at the Regional Center meetings for principals and assistant principals. From this, 489 questionnaires were returned, representing a 48.9% return rate. Results indicated that males and females did not differ in their level of satisfaction with their job; there was a very low, negative correlation between level of education and job satisfaction; there was a positive low, although significant, relationship between salary and job satisfaction; and there was a low, negative correlation between the proportion of students receiving special education services and job satisfaction. Results also showed that Special Education Administrators were significantly less satisfied with their jobs than General Education Administrators. In addition, Special Education Administrators showed that their workload or perceived difficulty was significantly higher than that of General Education Administrators, and they have slightly more prior expectations about their jobs than the General Education Administrators.

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SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM

Least Restrictive Environment

The "Least Restrictive Environment" (LRE) (Blackhurst, 1993; Siegel, 1994) is one of the most important mandates of Public Law 94-142 (1975). When a child has been diagnosed with a disability, federal legislation requires the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which minimally consists of the school psychologist, the Local Education Agency (LEA), the general education teacher, an administrator, and the child's parents, to consider the placement that is least restrictive for the child; this placement should be the most appropriate setting that will allow the student to achieve satisfactorily, even with the use of supplementary aids and services (Blackhurst). Although in most cases the least restrictive environment is the general education classroom, the law does not mandate the amount of time the child should spend in the general education classroom.

According to the Twenty-Fourth Annual Report to Congress (U.S. Department of Education, 2002), approximately 47% of children with disabilities across the United States are in inclusive classrooms full time; that is, they remain in the general education setting for 80% or more of the school day, and 28% more spend 40% to 79% of their day partially included in the general education classroom. In Florida, this report indicates slightly different percentages: 50% of Florida's children with disabilities spend 80% of their day or more in the general education classroom, and another 26% spend 40% to 79% of their day in the general education classroom. These percentages include students in all categories of disabilities. Students with mild disabilities (specific learning

disabilities, mild intellectual and developmental disabilities) spend a larger portion of their time with students in the general education classroom (U.S. Department of Education). The inclusion movement, the LRE and the Regular Education Initiative (REI), the initial call for including children with mild disabilities in general education classrooms, have significantly increased the numbers and types of special education students served in the regular education setting. Thus, the administrator of today has to deal with issues, laws, and regulations related to special education. The role of the school administrator has expanded.

<div align="center">Inclusion and the Regular Education Initiative</div>

Josh Waitzkin first caught a glimpse of a chess set while 6 years old and walking with his mother in New York City's Washington Square Park. He was going to play on the monkey bars, and instead he fell in love with the art that would dominate much of his young life. Josh's first teachers were down and out street hustlers who took Josh under their wings and cleaned up their acts when Josh came to play. The park guys taught Josh their aggressive, intuitive style of competition, which would remain his trademark for years to come. At age 7, Josh began his classical study of the game with his first formal teacher, Bruce Pandolfini.

Beginning at age 9, Josh dominated the U.S. scholastic chess scene. He won the National Primary Championship in 1986, the National Junior High Championship in 1988 while in the fifth grade, and the National Elementary Championship in 1989. At the age of eleven, he drew a game with World Champion Garry Kasparov in a simultaneous exhibition. At age 13, Josh earned the title of National Master. He won the National

Junior High Championship for the second time in 1990, and the Senior High Championship in 1991, as well as the U.S. Cadet Championship. At 16, he became an International Master. In 1993, Josh was the U.S. Junior Co-Champion and in 1994 he won the U.S. Junior Championship and placed fourth in the Under-18 World Championship. In addition to all his individual titles, Josh led New York City's Dalton School to win 6 National team championships between the 3rd and 9th grades.

In 1993 Paramount Pictures released the film *Searching for Bobby Fischer*, based on the highly acclaimed book of the same title written by Josh's father, Fred Waitzkin, documenting Josh's journey to win his first National Championship. When Josh was 18, Simon and Schuster published Josh's first book, "Attacking Chess." Now a staple in any chess player or fan's library, Josh's book combines autobiographical anecdotes with the strategies that got him to the top of the scholastic chess world. In 1997 Josh released the instructional video "Chess Starts Here," in which Josh and Bruce Pandolfini teach the moves, rules, and essential principles of chess in a series of compelling lessons. The video received excellent reviews and won awards at the *Houston Worldfest*, *The Communicator* and *NY Festivals,* as well as the award for Best Instructional Video from *Videographer Magazine*. To this day it is considered the leading instructional video in chess.

Josh's love for children and his deep belief in the positive effect of chess study on young minds has led him to become an ambassador for chess in America. For years Josh has traveled to chess communities around the country, speaking in schools and inspiring students to follow their dreams. In 1997, while giving a book signing at *The Super*

Nationals, Josh met and became friends with Jonathan Wade, a young chess player with Muscular Dystrophy. Later that year, at the age of 21, Josh became a spokesperson for the fight against Muscular Dystrophy. Josh travels annually to Memphis, Tennessee, where he visits his friend Jonathan and lends his time, emotion, chess skills, and name to this wonderful cause. For his efforts the Mayor of Memphis awarded Josh the key to the city.

Josh is dedicated to teaching privately as well as through large mediums. In his hometown of New York City, Josh successfully coached the children of P.S. 116 to win the New York City Championship, the New York State Championship and second place in the National Scholastic Championship.

In addition to his intense chess life, Josh is also a gifted athlete deeply involved in the study of Tai Chi Chuan with Grandmaster William CC Chen. Josh began studying Tai Chi in the fall of 1998. He was drawn into the art by his love for eastern philosophy and by the desire to begin a learning process anew, as a total beginner, away from the spotlight that constantly followed his chess career. In William Chen, Josh found the teacher that he had always searched for, "A great master with the humility and generosity that true 'Quality' is all about."

Josh's combined 21 National Championship titles, as well as his World Championship titles and rich intellectual life, dedication to causes greater than himself, and charismatic presence in interviews and on screen, have kept him in constant demand. Over the past several years, Josh has appeared in all media venues from *MTV, ESPN*, and *Today* to *People*, *Sports Illustrated*, and *Inside Kung Fu*. Josh now studies Philosophy and East-

Asian Religion at Columbia University. As much as his schedule allows, Josh travels the country giving seminars and keynote presentations on the learning process, performance state, and the psychology of competition.

Josh was raised in a two parent middle income home. His father was a sports reporter and his mother was a stay at home mom who cared for Josh's younger sister. He was raised in a loving home by parents who were active in his life. Josh attended the local public school in New York but was later moved to a private school. It appeared that Josh was a good student; however, after becoming involved in chess he seemed to lose interest in school.

Josh's primary role model was a street smart chess player named Vinnie. Josh learned his aggressive style of play from Vinnie and was always told to "play the person, not the board." Another role model would be Bruce. He taught Josh a much more conservative and calculating style of play. Bruce taught Josh to think before playing and to anticipate his opponent's moves. A great contributor to Josh's success as a chess player was his ability to combine the skills that Vinnie and Bruce taught him.

Josh increased his talent as a chess player when his father assured him that no matter what happened he still loved him. Once the focus was on Josh being a child and enjoying what children his age enjoy, his chess game improved.

As a teacher it is extremely important to balance a child's interest and his educational needs. I would allow Josh to teach the class to play chess or to discuss with

the class how he uses his higher order think skills when playing chess. I would encourage Josh to start a chess club at the school.

<p style="text-align:center">The Special Education Administrator</p>

Jonathan Kozol was born in Boston in 1936 into a middle class Jewish family. Kozol's mother was a social worker and his father was a neurologist. Kozol is a graduate of Harvard University and lived in Paris for several years.

Kozol has made a practice of leaving comfortable surroundings for more challenging, impoverished areas. He enjoyed teaching young children, and in 1964 got a job in the public school system in Roxbury Massachusetts teaching fourth grade. This school was very different from the school Kozol had attended as a child growing up in the wealthy Boston suburb of Newton. Shortly after he began teaching in the public school system, Kozol was fired for reading from a book of poetry by Langston Hughes that was not on the approved curriculum list. Shortly after his firing, he wrote his first work of nonfiction, *Death at an Early Age: The Destruction of the Hearts and Minds of Negro Children in the Boston Public Schools*, based on his teaching experiences in Roxbury. The book won the National Book Award in 1968.

Kozol's books usually involve firsthand accounts of his experiences. His books focus on social problems such as segregated and unequal schools, illiteracy, and homelessness. Many times Kozol succeeds in humanizing abstract social issues by involving the reader intimately with particular individuals who are directly affected by these issues.

In his most recent book, *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*, Kozol addresses the issues of race and poverty by exploring the lives of inner-city residents in the South Bronx.

Kozol has said, "Of all my books, *Amazing Grace* means the most to me. It took the most out of me and was hardest to write because it was the hardest to live through those experiences. I felt it would initially be seen as discouraging but, ultimately, sensitive readers would see the resilient and transcendent qualities of children and some mothers in the book-that it would be seen as a book about the elegant theology of children. That's what happened finally. The most moving comments about it also pointed to its moral and religious texture."

The additional chapter that I have chosen to read is chapter 2, "Other People's Children: North Lawndale and the South Side of Chicago." North Lawndale is described by a local resident as "an industrial slum without the industry." This neighborhood has one supermarket, one bank, 48 state lottery agents, and 99 bars and liquor stores. Fifty-eight percent of the adults in North Lawndale are unemployed. All of the factories are gone and have been replaced by gangs.

The schools are in terrible shape also. The salary scale is too low to keep exciting, young teachers in the system. This leads the city to rely on low paid subs, which represent more that one quarter of the teaching force. Many teachers only bother to come in three days a week. One teacher was asked how she can expect the kids to care about their education if she doesn't care. She said, "It makes no difference. Kids like these aren't going anywhere. The school board thinks it is saving money on the subs. I tell them pay now or pay later." With this type of teacher apathy it is no wonder that the

dropout rate averages 81 percent and that 27 percent of those who do graduate from high school read at the eighth grade level or below. Of the 6,700 ninth grade students entering Chicago area schools each year, only 300 of these students will both graduate and read at or above the national average.

The one exception in the Chicago area is the situation that exists for children who can win admission into a magnet school. Magnet schools are highly attractive to the more sophisticated parents who have the ingenuity and political connections to obtain admission for their children. These families are disproportionately white and middle class. These schools have adequate supplies, newer textbooks, and better teachers. Slow readers in an eighth grade history class in a low performing school were being taught from 15-year old textbooks in which Richard Nixon was still the president. There were no science labs, no are or music teachers. Soap, paper towels and toilet paper were in short supply.

East Saint Louis, Illinois is a city that is 98 percent black. One third of the families in the city live on less than $7,500 per year and 75 percent of its population lives on welfare. This city has been described as the most distressed small city in America. Financially, the city is broke. In 1989, East Saint Louis was more than $40 million in debt. The mayor proposed selling the city hall and all six fire stations to raise cash to by heating fuel and toilet paper. That plan had to be scrapped after the city lost its city hall in a court judgment to a creditor. Ironically, East Saint Louis has the highest property tax rate in the state.

One of the most horrific conditions in the school was the raw sewage that kept backing-up in the local high school. This sewage back-up occurred in the food

preparation areas causing students to get sick. Another thing I thought was horrific was the teacher's salaries. One teacher reported a salary of $38,000 after 30 years of teaching. If this teacher taught in one of the areas wealthy high schools she would receive a salary of at least $60,000.

The school where I work is in Perrine, Florida. Perrine, like East Saint Louis, is a very poor city. Most of the residents are on some type of public assistance and are either unemployed or employed in very low paying jobs. The community is very close knit and the families are involved in their children's education, especially at the elementary level.

Individuals who help others early in life and then change later in life loose sight of reality according to Kozol. These individuals tend to think that those who need the most help are in other communities and that they have enough work to do in their on community.

Many of the bright students from poorer neighborhoods in New York do not benefit from the magnet schools due to a lack of information, a lack of counseling, and a lack of political influence. Rather than encouraging black students to select a magnet school to attend, these children are encouraged to select a non magnet school.

In chapter 2 on page 53 there is a statement that Lathrop Elementary School in North Lawndale has been without a library for the past 21 years. Library books, which have been abandoned in the lunch room of the school, have sprouted mold. To me this is compelling because it goes against what should be the hub of any school; the library. The message that this sends to the students is that books are not important. The bright children who attend this school should have access to up-to-date books, in a modern

library. These bright children leave homes that probably do not have books only to go to a school that doesn't either.

When Kozol speaks of systemic, he means that the problems of inequality are a part of the educational system. One systemic factor that influences the differences between rich and poor schools is funding. While on paper the funding may appear to be equal, the reality is that it is not. A school in a wealthy neighborhood is more likely to have a large gifted and/or magnet program while schools in poorer neighborhoods probably will not have these types of programs. Schools that have gifted and magnet programs receive additional funding that can be used to purchase textbooks, supplies, equipment, or additional instructional staff. Another systemic factor is politics. I find it very interesting that politically connected families have very little difficulty getting their children into the best public schools, even if they do not live within the attendance boundaries of that school.

The three recommendations I would make to improve education of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds are to reduce class sizes, provide additional funding for the neediest schools, and hire highly qualified teachers for the neediest schools.

Students who are deficient academically need as much one on one attention as possible. There are several was to reduce class size. First, the schools administration can assign fewer students to each teacher. I would recommend not more than 15 students per teacher. The down side of this is finding enough teachers for the students. Second, each teacher can be assigned a full time paraprofessional. I use this approach at my school with my third grade retention class. There are 15 students in the class with a full time

teacher and a full time paraprofessional. The paraprofessional reinforces the lessons taught by the teacher and works individually with the students.

School districts must provide additional funding to the neediest schools. In many instances these schools have been neglected for so long that it will take a great deal of money to bring them to the level of the wealthier schools. These funds should be used for capital improvements, instructional materials, technology, supplies, and teacher salaries.

The neediest schools should be staffed with the most highly qualified teachers. Highly qualified teachers should be offered incentives to teach in the neediest schools. These incentives need not be financial. I think many teachers would be will to work in the neediest schools for enhanced health benefits or the opportunity to earn an advanced degree at the expense of the school district.

The School Principal

One of the main issues addressed in this article is the definition of giftedness. In most educational settings a student is determined to be gifted based solely on his or her intellectual ability. Those students with a very high I.Q., 130 or higher, have the ability to succeed in a gifted classroom setting. While intellectual ability is still the primary method used to identify potentially gifted children, research indicates that a child's leadership ability, thinking ability and visual and performing arts ability should also be considered. Many culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) children are not high academic achievers in the traditional sense but may be gifted based on their creative abilities.

Another issue that must be discussed is the issue of teacher nominations, especially of CLD students. Many teachers have very low standards and expectations for CLD students. These students are not given the same opportunities as their peers. The parents of CLD students generally do not have an awareness of their child's abilities and the educational services that are available to them. Many of our schools that are located in low socio economic areas do not offer gifted programs because so much time is spent teaching basic skills to the students.

A third area that deserves consideration is the cultural influences affecting identification and development. Many CLD children are reluctant to achieve academically because they are often ridiculed by their peers. They are often accused of not "acting their race" or "going to the other side." Rather than subjecting themselves to this ridicule many children choose to underachieve.

The definition of giftedness at my school would be a student who possesses above average intellectual ability, above average natural ability, and above average talent. It is important to note that my school is a creative and performing arts magnet school. Therefore, a majority of the students have talents that are above average.

Potentially gifted students are identified in several ways. Teachers nominate students based on the schools definition of giftedness. Teachers will generally nominate a child they feel needs to be in a more challenging environment. Many parents nominate their children based on their academic and creative abilities.

Once a child has been identified as a potential gifted candidate a Child Study Team meeting is held to review the documentation and determine if the child should be tested by the school psychologist. The psychologist uses an I.Q. test and uses the results to determine the child's placement.

After looking at and reflecting on the paradigms discussed in this article the one that my school practices the most often is the identification of students from various socio economic backgrounds. The gifted population at my school is made up largely of minority students.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

This research examines the levels of job satisfaction of Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County Public Schools along with demographic data to investigate if these variables are related to job satisfaction. For that purpose, a survey was developed for this study to assess job satisfaction, workload, and prior expectations of Special and General Education Administrators. The study is guided by the motivation-hygiene theory (Herzberg, 1972) of job satisfaction. According to this

theory, job satisfaction is a product of two types of factors; motivating factors (e.g., personal growth, recognition) and the job environment and its conditions (e.g., working conditions, salary).

The primary question to be answered is: What is the level of job satisfaction of the Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County Public Schools? More specific questions to be answered in this study are:

1. Is gender related to job satisfaction in Special and General Education Administrators?

2. What is the relationship exists between the three variables: levels of education, type of administrative job, and job satisfaction?

3. Is the salary of the Administrator related to job satisfaction?

4. What is the relationship between the number of students receiving special education services and the job satisfaction of the Special and General Education Administrator?

5. Is the workload of the Special Education Administrator, compared with the workload of the General Education Administrator, related to job satisfaction?

6. What are the prior expectations of Administrators in Special and General Education?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review selected literature and research related to Special Education Administrators, job satisfaction, and turnover of special education personnel. It will look at the role of the Special Education Administrator, the variables that may make this role more satisfactory and manageable and one in which professionals would like to remain employed.

High ability African American and Native American students are faced with several issues that many times results in their underachievement. For the purposes of this paper I will discuss the issues of African American and Native American students separately.

A major issue facing high ability African American students is culture. African American students generally come from backgrounds that are very different than other students. It is important for teachers to understand that the learning styles of African American students may not match the teachers' teaching style. If teachers do not realize this it may cause their high ability African American students to underachieve. Most teachers begin their classroom experience with very little multicultural preparation. Most of us spend the majority of our time with people that look like we do and that have the same cultural experiences that we have. As teachers we must make an effort to understand the cultural experiences that African American students bring into the classroom so that academic achievement can be promoted among high ability African American students.

Another area that must be considered when discussing underachievement among high ability African American students is social issues. Loyalty and peer pressure have a significant negative impact on many African American students. Unfortunately, many African American students are faced with the decision to achieve academically and not fit in with their own race or to underachieve academically and fit in. Many successful African Americans are accused of being "sell outs" or of "acting White" when they achieve. Because of this many high ability African Americans students choose to underachieve or take the "easy road" rather than reach their academic potential.

One recommendation to help African American students achieve academically involves providing professional development programs for teachers. Teachers need training to work with culturally diverse students. Professional development programs must focus on understanding cultural diversity and raising expectations for diverse students.

Another important recommendation is student counseling. African American students need assistance in coping with negative peer pressure and developing a positive, strong racial identity. African American students should be provided with mentors and role models who are successful and high achieving.

When considering issues of underachievement among high ability Native American students differences in language stand out. Many Native American students speak English as their second language. The English language that is used in school is totally different than the English language that Native American students use on the playground. When instructing Native American students, teachers must focus attention on the positive aspects of speaking more that one language.

Native American families are often reluctant to enroll their children in special programs. This reluctance is due to their fear that their children will develop strong loyalties to the United States rather than to their on Native American culture. In the 1800's Native American students attending American schools were forced to sing patriotic songs, speak only in English, and celebrate all national holidays. This led to the creation of strong loyalties to the United States.

Native American students must feel that they belong and that they can achieve academically. They must be given reasons for staying in school. These reasons may be for economic advancement or for the enhancement of the tribal Nation. The talents of Native American students can not be neglected and must become a part of the process of enabling them to reach their potential.

Working Conditions

When looking at gifted education programs nationwide CLD students continue to be excluded from gifted and talented programs. This exclusion is especially true in the Latino population. Latino families, just as any other socio-cultural group, value education and want their children to have the same access to educational programs as children from other socio-cultural groups.

In an effort to address the issues that result in the exclusion of Latino students in gifted and talented programs, Kloosterman, conducted a study to examine teachers' and parents' perceptions of the Latino culture. The study focused on the abilities of 12 Latino elementary students and focused on the following questions. "What factors in the home and school environment appear to support academic achievement, talent development, and bilingual acquisition in Latino bilingual students in an urban environment? What are

teachers' perceptions of the socio-cultural background, bilingualism, and talents in Latino bilingual students in an urban elementary school?" This study was conducted over a period of two years and data was obtained from interviews, observations, document review, and photographs.

The results of the study indicate that the emotional support received from family members and the Latino legacy had a strong influence on the academic achievement and talent development of the 12 students in this study. This influence was from the home not the school. This strong family support may be the result of the teacher's perceptions of the Latino students talents. Many of the teachers in the study had little knowledge of the Latino culture. They were unable to discuss in detail what their students liked to do at home or the celebrations and traditions of the family. It appears that the teachers made no attempt to bond with their students and their families. The teachers in this school had very little knowledge and training in gifted education. Although most of the children in this study were high academic achievers, the teachers did little to challenge them. In fact, the teacher did not alter the curriculum for these students. Additionally, the teachers were unaware of their students out of school activities like sports and hobbies.

As educators we must have an awareness of the similarities and differences of all cultures represented in our school. If we do not have this awareness, we are very likely to overlook students that may be talented.

My experience with Latino families is that they are very concerned about the education of their children. The want, and expect, their children to excel in school. While many of them do not attend school activities as regularly as other parents, they are supportive of the school and are usually just a phone call away.

Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson address two key points in their article. First, talent is not a personal trait. Second, talent is not a stable trait.

I think the main point that the authors of this article want readers to understand is that giftedness is not something you either have or do not have. Giftedness is based on a person's culture, experience, skills and abilities. A person's capacity for giftedness can change over their life time. The example from the authors is that a 5 year old prodigy may or may not be considered outstanding as an adult.

The General Education Administrator

As the nation seeks significant reforms in education through standards and accountability, it increasingly looks to principals to lead the way. There is a general belief that good school principals are the cornerstones of good schools and that without a principal's leadership, efforts to raise student achievement cannot succeed. Yet, some fear that the role may be expanding beyond what is reasonable in a single job description (Doud & Keller, 1998).

Being an effective building manager was once sufficient to be considered an effective principal. Until recently, principals' jobs were quite clearly defined. Essentially, principals served as building managers and student disciplinarians. Currently, principals are expected to do that and much more (Chen, 2000). Traditional responsibilities of principals such as ensuring a safe environment, managing the budget, and maintaining discipline are still in force (Murphy, 1994; Whitaker, 1998). However, higher expectations for student success have often brought with them increased programming. In successfully implementing new programs, principals hire and supervise more people, enforce new policies, create new procedures, and provide support for the programs and all the associated auxiliary activities. Although programming has been expanding, responsibilities in other areas have not been reduced. In many cases, the resources that principals need to provide the leadership and support expected have not been forthcoming.

The Special Education Administrator

Arick and Krug (1993) analyzed 1,468 special education directors' view on personnel needs, quality of preparation, training issues, and administrative policies/practices for mainstreaming students with disabilities. The researchers indicated that the administrators with special education teaching experience or course work had higher levels of mainstreamed students. The Special Education Administrators disclosed that collaboration between general and special education was the highest training need.

Begley (1982) helped determine the type of pressures a Special Education Administrator might experience. Begley revealed a number of reasons for burnout by surveying 124 Special Education Administrators. Some of the pressures included implementation of P.L. 94-142 (the Education for All Handicapped Children Act), fiscal reductions, role ambiguity and conflict, and a high incidence of staff absenteeism and turnover. The survey used was the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The demographic data collected included current administrative position, length of time in administrative work, and areas of certification. This study focused on the symptoms of burnout in the Special Education Administrators. The symptoms included by the administrators included fatigue and feelings of being physically run down, sleeplessness, increased irritability, and greater professional risk taking. According to Begley, the complex role of the Special Education Administrator requires his/her involvement with due process hearings, audits, reluctant superintendents, and concerned but dissatisfied parents and advocates;

thus he/she becomes a victim of excessive workloads, unrealistic deadlines, and frustrating demands.

<div align="center">Educational Job Satisfaction</div>

Educational researchers have not been remiss in the study of job satisfaction. In the past, researchers have explored the job satisfaction of school psychologists (Ehloy & Reimers, 1986), work education students (Silberman, 1974), women in higher education (Hill, 1984), elementary and secondary teachers (Kreis & Brookopp, 1986), and school custodians (Young, 1982).

There are several things I learned from the reading about twice-exceptional students. First, there was the realization that the child's disability could be physical. When I would think about twice-exceptional students I never considered a child's physical disability to be an exceptionality. Another thing I learned was the ability of gifted children with disabilities to hide or mask their special abilities in order to fit in with non disabled children.

As educators, when we are developing educational programs for twice exceptional students we must focus on their strengths and remediate their weaknesses. This should be accomplished through the students Individualized Educational Plan. The student's educational environment should provide opportunities for the student to be creative, to share interests and knowledge with others, and to be active participants in the classroom. The curriculum should allow for opportunities for higher level, analytical thinking.

The concept of twice-exceptional students is one that is new to me. In my years as an educator I had never participated in any discussions on twice-exceptional students until taking this course.

The purpose of education should be to nurture student's strengths AND to remediate the student's weaknesses. If a student was strong in math but weak in reading, would we as educators focus on one over the other? I do not think we would. Every student we come in contact with has academic strengths and weaknesses. It is our responsibility as educators to develop programs that will capitalize on the strengths while at the same time remediate the weaknesses. In order for this to happen the classroom atmosphere must be relaxed, positive and warm. The students must feel free to take risks and feel that they are valued as individuals. Assignments must be developed that will allow students to strengthen their areas of weakness.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Due to the complexities of the Special Education Administrator position and the history of attrition that has affected the field of special education, it is important to explore the nature of this administrative role to gain information on how to improve the position and retain the Special Education Administrator. By examining the Special and General Education Administrators' level of job satisfaction, perceptions of workload, and prior expectations, this study will give firsthand information on the work experience for Special and General Education Administrators in South Florida.

The overall purpose of this study is to explore the level of job satisfaction, perceptions of workload, and prior expectations for the Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County. Specific questions ask (a) is gender related to job satisfaction in Special and General Education Administrators, (b) what relationship exists among the three variables: levels of education, type of administrative job, and job satisfaction, (c) is the salary of the Administrator related to job satisfaction, (d) what is the relationship between the number of students receiving special education services and the job satisfaction of the Special and General Education Administrator, (e) is the workload of the Special Education Administrator, compared with the General Education Administrator, related to job satisfaction, and (f) what are the prior expectations of Administrators in Special and General Education?

Participants

In order to learn more about the position of the Special and General Education Administrator, one must go to the source and ask the questions of interest to the

administrators themselves. The participants were 489 principals and assistant principals in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), who manage programs for students with educational disabilities and programs for general education students.

Special and General Education Administrators were invited to participate in this study at the six monthly Regional Center meetings (for principals and assistant principals) in May, 2008. There are six Regional Centers in M-DCPS and this researcher contacted the Regional Center Superintendent of each Regional Center (total = 6) prior to the May meeting and requested permission to distribute the survey. Each Regional Center meets with their respective principals and assistant principals, separately, during the first or second week of each month. The director of each meeting was asked to give to the potential participants a cover letter along with a survey. The letter explained the researcher's affiliation with Barry University and the nature of the study. The letter also noted that participation in this study was completely voluntary and anonymous and that their names and the names of the schools in which they are employed would not be known to the researcher. Each Regional Center Director conducting the meeting distributed the survey to each principal or assistant principal in attendance. Each principal and assistant principal who wanted to collaborate with the study was given the opportunity to complete the survey and return it to each Regional Center Director who compiled all the surveys and gave them to the researcher.

There are currently 426 principals and 972 assistant principals in M-DCPS, and most of them attend these meetings. Across meetings, a total of 1,000 questionnaires were distributed. While it was expected that at least 200 principals and 450 assistant

principals would complete the survey, in reality, 219 principals and 270 assistant principals (48.9% response rate) completed the survey.

Instrumentation

To date, a review of the literature revealed no instrument designed specifically to gather information regarding Special Education Administrators' level of job satisfaction, perceptions of workload, and prior expectations in the position. Therefore, the researcher has developed a questionnaire to obtain information pertinent to the Special and General Education Administrator, which included the variables of interest.

Survey research is a tool used to gather information about some defined population by studying a select sample from that population and asking them their opinion. Surveys can discover such things as incidence of positive or negative opinions on issues held by a select population, the distribution of those opinions, and the relationship of particular sociological or psychological information to those opinions (Newman & McNeil, 1998). A second type of information obtained by surveys is demographic data about the respondents themselves. These questions may ask about a person's educational background and gender. Information gathering of both types were included in this survey.

The survey is a widely used technique because it has the advantage of reaching a large sample in a timely and economical manner (Newman & McNeil, 1998). Additionally, surveys are amenable to quantification and subsequent computerization and statistical analysis. They also have the benefit of replicability (Rea & Parker, 1992).

When designing a survey, defining the population is important. The researcher must consider such variables as age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, religion,

occupation, and education. The researcher must also decide the geographic boundaries to work within and these boundaries must be congruent with the stated objectives (Newman & McNeil, 1998). For this survey, the Special and General Education Administrators of M-DCPS composed the population to be surveyed.

The initial questions of the survey were designed to gather descriptive information about the respondents. Respondents were asked to indicate, by selecting the most appropriate response to (a) their position title, (b) school type, (c) type of administrator, (d) gender, (e) age range, (f) ethnicity, (g) highest educational degree, (h) certifications held, and (i) salary range. The respondents were also asked to indicate the approximate number of special and general education students in their school.

Later questions solicited the respondents' opinions about circumstances regarding their position as an administrator. Each question included several items (ranging from 5 to 16) and represented the sub domains of the questionnaire. One question asked for the administrators' reasons for becoming a principal/assistant principal (e.g., *increase my leadership role, increase my career options*). This question (later called reason for becoming an administrator) included a Likert scale with answers in a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, and 4 = strongly agree and consisted of five items. Another question (comfort) asked the administrators about their degree of satisfaction in certain areas (e.g., *managing budgets, using assessments and other data*). The Likert scale for this question was 1 = very unsatisfied, 2 = somewhat unsatisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, and 4 = very satisfied and consisted of 16 items. The next question (workload/difficulty) asked the respondents to indicate the degree of difficulty they have experienced in certain administrative areas

(e.g., *excessive workload, accountability/FCAT*). The Likert scale for this question was 1 = no difficulties, 2 = little difficulty, 3 = some difficulty, and 4 = many difficulties and consisted of 13 items. In the next question (job satisfaction), administrators were asked to indicate the degree that they agree or disagree with certain statements (e.g., *people do not appreciate my creativity, I would like to look for another job*). The Likert scale for this question, which consisted of 21 items, was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, and 4 = strongly agree. The final question asked the respondents about their prior expectations regarding their job (e.g., *I expected I would have more authority that what I have, I expected the job to be much more difficult than it is*). The Likert scale for this question was 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, and 4 = strongly agree and included five items.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The primary question of interest in this study was: What is the level of job satisfaction of the Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County Public Schools? The specific research questions in this study were:

1. Is gender related to job satisfaction in Special and General Education Administrators?

2. What is the relationship among the three variables: levels of education, type of administrative job, and job satisfaction?

3. Is the salary of the Administrator related to job satisfaction?

4. What is the relationship among the variables: number of students receiving special education services and the job satisfaction of the Special Education Administrator?

5. Is the workload of the Special Education Administrator, compared with the workload of the General Education Administrator, related to job satisfaction?

6. What are the prior expectations of Administrators in Special and General Education?

The researcher sought to measure the level of job satisfaction and gain demographic information from Miami-Dade County Public School Administrators who were school site principals or assistant principals. The instrument selected to measure the level of job satisfaction, demographic data, and the perceptions of the Special and General Education Administrator was a survey entitled Education Administrator Survey, prepared by the researcher. The survey was a self-report measure of demographic

information along with perceptions of satisfaction, workload/difficulty, and prior expectations.

A cover letter and a questionnaire were distributed to principals and assistant principals attending one of six Regional Center meetings. One thousand questionnaires were distributed at the Regional Center meetings. From this, 489 questionnaires were returned, representing a 48.9% return rate.

As a measure of internal consistency, cronbach's alphas were calculated for the entire instrument and for the sub domains in the instrument. The reliability coefficients were $\alpha= .703$ for the entire instrument, $\alpha= .950$ for the sub domain job satisfaction, $\alpha= .936$ for the sub domain comfort, $\alpha= .923$ for the sub domain workload/difficulty, and $\alpha= .277$ for the sub domain prior expectations. While most cronbach's alphas indicated high reliability for the entire instrument and most of the sub domains, one sub domain (i.e., prior expectations) showed low reliability.

Demographic Information

The analysis for this study is based on a total of 489 surveys from principals and assistant principals employed in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Table 1 displays the demographic information about the participants, including position, school level, administrator status, gender, age range, ethnicity, highest degree, and salary range. Of the 489 participants, principals represented 44.8% ($n = 219$) of those who responded to the survey, and assistant principal represented 55.2% ($n = 270$). About 37% (n = 183) were Special Education Administrators, and about 63% ($n = 306$) were General Education Administrators.

Table 1

Demographic Information

	n	%		n	%
Position			*Age Range*		
Principal	219	44.8	Under 40	87	17.8
Assistant	270	55.2	40 – 49	232	47.4
School Level			50 – 60	121	24.7
Elementary	211	43.1	Over 60	49	10.0
High	125	25.6	*Ethnicity*		
Alternative Ed	19	3.9	African	128	26.2
Special Ed	8	1.6	Hispanic	130	26.6
Middle	80	16.4	White, non-	203	41.5
K-8	41	8.4	Other	28	5.7
Adult Ed	5	1.0	*Highest Degree*		
Administrator Status			Master's	162	33.1
Special	183	37.4	Master's +30	77	15.7
General	306	62.6	Specialist	111	22.7
Gender			Doctorate	139	28.4
Male	183	37.4	*Salary Range*		
Female	306	62.6	$60,000 -	271	55.4
			$90,001 -	186	38.0
			Above $125,001	32	6.5

Table 2 provides a summary of the information about the participants' areas of certification. Of the 489 participants only .06% ($n = 3$) did not select educational leadership as an area of certification. It was found that 99.4% of the administrators held certification in Educational Leadership. It should be noted that in the State of Florida, certification in Educational Leadership is required; however three administrators did not select this as an area of certification. In addition to certification in Educational Leadership, 48% of the administrators held certification in Mathematics, ESE, ESOL, or Science.

Table 2

Areas of Certification

	n	%
Reading	8	1.6
Math	64	13.1
ESE	53	10.8
Music	2	.4
Ed. Leadership	486	99.4
ESOL	68	13.9
PE	38	7.8
PreK/Primary	32	6.5
Science	50	10.2
English	31	6.3

Note. Percentages may add to more than 100, since a respondent could have had more than one area of certification.

Research Questions

It should be noted that in order to determine the participants' job satisfaction, a new variable called "job satisfaction" was created. This variable consisted of the addition of all survey questions related to job satisfaction (21 items) (e.g., *In my position I feel encouraged to come up with better ways to do things; my work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment*). Of the 21 items, six were considered negative and were transformed to a positive direction. The variable job satisfaction was used in many of the questions addressed in this study.

The following questions were posed in this study:

Question One: Is gender related to job satisfaction in Special and General Education Administrators?

To assess whether gender is related to job satisfaction in Special and General Education Administrators, a *t* test of independent means was conducted to compare male and female administrators. Results indicated that males and females did not differ in their level of satisfaction with their job ($M = 58.62$, $SD = 11.89$ and $M = 58.26$, $SD = 10.99$, respectively), $t_{(487)} = .338$, *ns*.

Question Two: What is the relationship among the three variables: levels of education, type of administrative job, and job satisfaction?

A Pearson *r* product-moment correlation indicated that there was a very low, negative correlation between level of education and job satisfaction, $r = -.10$, $p < .05$. Although significant, please note that both variables did not share almost any variance (1% of their variance). A *t* test of independent means comparing Special Education Administrators with General Education Administrators on their job satisfaction indicated

that Special Education Administrators were significantly less satisfied than General Education Administrators ($M = 45.62$, $SD = 5.95$ and $M = 66.02$, $SD = 5.32$, respectively), $t_{(487)} = -39.164$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size ($ES = -3.8$).

Although not explicitly mentioned in research question two, an additional analysis was introduced to explore whether job satisfaction was related to the school level where administrators worked. No significant differences were found between administrators working in elementary school levels compared with those working in secondary schools ($M = 59.26$, $SD = 10.68$ and $M = 57.63$, $SD = 11.99$, respectively), $t_{(455)} = 1.540$, $p = .124$.

Question Three: Is the salary of the administrator related to job satisfaction?

A Pearson *r* correlation was conducted to assess whether salary is related to job satisfaction. Results indicated that there was a positive low, although significant, relationship between salary and job satisfaction, $r = .275$, $p < .001$. Both variables shared 7% of their variance.

Question Four: What is the relationship among the variables: number of students receiving special education services and job satisfaction of the Special and General Education Administrator?

A Pearson *r* correlation indicated that there was a very low, negative correlation between proportion of students receiving special education services (number of special education students divided by the total number of students in the school) and job satisfaction, $r = -.175$, $p < .01$. Both variables shared very little variance (3%). Another Pearson *r* correlation indicated that the relationship between the proportion of students receiving special education services and job satisfaction among General Education

Administrators was not significant, $r = .10$, $p = .07$. However, when looking at this same relationship among Special Education Administrators, the results were significant, $r = .317$, $p < .01$.

Question Five: Is the workload of the Special Education Administrator, compared with the workload of the General Education Administrator, related to job satisfaction?

In order to determine perceptions of workload or difficulty in the job, a variable called "workload/difficulty" was created. This variable consisted of the addition of all survey questions related to workload/difficulty (13 items), (e.g., *Too much emphasis on procedures, forms, and timelines; Parent complaints/demands*).

To assess whether perceptions of workload (i.e., difficulty) is related to job satisfaction among Special and General Education Administrators, a *t* test of independent means was conducted to compare Special and General Education Administrators. Results indicated that Special Education Administrators indicated that their workload or perceived difficulty in the job was significantly higher than that of General Education Administrators ($M = 43.80$, $SD = 4.31$ and $M = 28.73$, $SD = 2.27$, respectively), $t_{(487)} = 50.49$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size ($ES = 6.63$).

Another variable, called "comfort with administrative tasks" was created to determine the administrator level of comfort with certain tasks. This variable consisted of the addition of all survey questions related to comfort (16 items), (e.g., *using assessments and other data; managing student's discipline; acquiring knowledge of federal requirements for ESE students).* To assess the comfort level with diverse administrative tasks among Special and General Education Administrators, a *t* test of independent means was conducted to compare the two groups of administrators. Results

indicated that General Education Administrators were significantly more comfortable with administrative tasks than Special Education Administrators ($M = 49.13$, $SD = 6.40$ and $M = 35.18$, $SD = 4.42$, respectively), $t_{(487)} = -25.986$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size ($ES = -2.18$).

Question Six: What are the prior expectations of Administrators in Special and General Education?

     To determine Special and General Education Administrators' prior expectations, a variable called "expectations" was created. This variable was created by adding all survey questions related to prior expectations that the administrators may have had before entering their current position (5 items), (e.g., *I expected more acknowledgement that what I am receiving; I expected I would have more authority than what I have*). Two of the five questions were considered negative and transferred to a positive direction.

     To asses the prior expectations of Special and General Education Administrators, a *t* test of independent means was conducted to compare these two groups. Results indicated that Special Education Administrators prior expectations of their job was slightly higher than that of General Education Administrators ($M = 13.03$, $SD = .35$ and $M = 12.47$, $SD = 1.85$, respectively), $t_{(341)} = 5.15$, $p < .001$, with a small effect size ($ES = .30$).

     Finally, five individual items in the survey asked for specific reasons that participants have had for becoming administrators. Table 3 provides the means and standard deviations for the reasons for becoming an administrator by status. It should be noted that in general, Special Education Administrators rated each reason significantly lower than General Education Administrators.

Table 3

Reasons for becoming an Administrator by Status (Special and General Education)

Reasons	Administrator	*M*	*SD*	*t*	*df*	*Sig.*	*ES*
	Status						
Increase my career options	Special Education	3.01	.104				
	General Education	3.19	.419	-7.224	364.783	.000	-1.73
Increase my leadership role	Special Education	3.04	.192				
	General Education	3.28	.500	-7.707	430.418	.000	-1.25
Increase my salary	Special Education	2.08	.346				
	General Education	3.15	.558	-26.124	486.391	.000	-3.09
Increase my power to make important decisions	Special Education	3.04	.243				
	General Education	3.34	.783	-6.322	393.929	.000	-1.23
Increase my contribution to education	Special Education	3.02	.147				
	General Education	3.09	.317	-3.145	463.042	.002	-.476

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate whether the job satisfaction

levels of Special and General Education Administrators in Miami-Dade County Public

Schools are associated with gender, level of education, salary, number of students

receiving special education services, experience, workload, and prior expectations. The

following research questions were investigated: (a) is gender related to job satisfaction is

Special and General Education Administrators; (b) what is the relationship among the

three variables: levels of education, type of administrative job, and job satisfaction; (c) is

the salary of the Administrator related to job satisfaction; (d) what is the relationship

among the variables: number of students receiving special education services and the job

satisfaction of the Special Education Administrator; (e) is the workload of the Special

Education Administrator, compared with the workload of the General Education

Administrator, related to job satisfaction; (f) what are the prior expectations of

Administrators in Special and General Education? Participants were 489 principals and

assistant principals in Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), who manage

programs for students with disabilities and programs for general education students.

Summary and Interpretation of Findings

Special Education Administrators in this study indicated that they were

significantly less satisfied in their present position than General Education

Administrators. It was also found that they believed there was a significantly higher

workload or difficulty of tasks in their position, compared with the perceptions of the

General Education Administrators. Both results had large effect sizes, emphasizing their

importance. A possible cause behind the dissatisfaction with their job and their

perceptions of a heavy workload is that the Special Education Administrators may have

become frustrated with their job. Begley (1982) noted that the ambiguous role of the

Special Education Administrator is a "poorly defined area of administration" (p. 10)

which causes frustration for the Special Education Administrator and all others involved

with him or her. It has been reported that many Special Education Administrators are

frustrated with their broad workload because they know that it has a negative impact

upon the delivery of services to children (Chen, 2000). The results of this study support

the Nussbaum (2000) idea that the position of the Special Education Administrator is one

of the most contentious in education.

The effects of demographic variables, including gender, number of students with

disabilities, level of education, and salary were also examined. Gender was not

significantly related to job satisfaction. Historically, gender has had mixed effects upon

job satisfaction levels. There has been no definitive conclusions regarding the

relationship of job satisfaction and gender and the research has been inconclusive (Lee,

1982; Sell, Brief & Aldag, 1979; Voydanoff, 1980). Thus, it is not surprising that this

study found no gender differences in job satisfaction in school administrators.

The number of students receiving special education services in the schools was

slightly related, although significant, to job satisfaction levels. One might surmise as the

special education student population increased, job dissatisfaction levels would also

increase. This was not necessarily the case, since similar job satisfaction levels were

found, regardless of the special education student population size in each school. It could

be that administrators of schools with larger populations of children with special needs

may have more assistance to share some of the tasks of the job. Interestingly, when the correlations between the proportion of special education students and satisfaction were separately conducted for General and Special Education Administrators, the finding indicated that there existed a correlation between these two variables for Special Education Administrators only.

There was a slight inverse trend in regard to level of education and job satisfaction, in other words, as the level of education increased, the levels of job satisfaction decreased. However, this negative correlation was very low; thus, the results should be interpreted with caution. It is possible that some administrators view themselves as over qualified and develop, overtime, negative feelings about their positions.

Results showed a small, but significant relationship between salary and levels of job satisfaction in the participants. It could be expected that administrators who make higher income levels might be satisfied with their positions, and indeed it was found that there was a low positive correlation. The low correlation between salary and job satisfaction may have been a function of the relatively homogeneous salary range in this population, given that most administrators have a high salary. It should be noted that restriction of range lessens correlations between variables (Maruyama & Deno, 1992).

The level of comfort with administrative tasks was also investigated. Results indicated that General Education Administrators were significantly more comfortable with administrative tasks than Special Education Administrators. This low level of comfort among Special Education Administrators could be because of the additional special education administrative tasks that face Special Education Administrators. It

could also be a result of the heavy workload and the pressure to complete the additional tasks that the General Education Administrator does not have to complete in a timely manner (Stempien & Loeb, 2002).

When looking at the expectations administrators had prior to becoming an administrator, the results of the study indicated that Special Education Administrators had significantly higher a priori expectations. It should be noted, however, that this sub domain of the survey was composed of only five items and had low reliability. When taking into consideration the high expectations of Special Education Administrators prior to becoming administrators and their present low comfort level, one could understand that these administrators could be extremely frustrated. This frustration could lead to Special Education Administrators seeking employment in schools with fewer students with special needs or leaving the field of education altogether (Stempien & Loeb, 2002).

They felt that they would receive acknowledgement for the job they were doing, that they would receive all the support they needed, that they would have the authority to make decisions that were in the best interest of their students, and that they would have a greater degree of professional status (motivation). However, once in their position, they were confronted with the reality that the job of the Special Education Administrator was not what they expected. Their high prior expectations turned into low satisfaction, a high level of difficulty on the job, and a low level of comfort with their day to day administrative tasks (hygiene). The data suggested that as their workload/difficulty increased, their dissatisfaction levels increased. A possible cause behind the dissatisfaction with their heavy workload is that the Special Education Administrators may have become frustrated. The ambiguous role of the Special Education Administrator

is poorly defined causing the administrator to become frustrated (Begly, 1982). Many Special Education Administrators may be frustrated with their positions because they know that it impacts negatively upon delivery of services to children.

Many of the Special Education Administrators who participated in this study do not hold certification in Exceptional Student Education. This lack of certification may be related to the increased workload and higher levels of dissatisfaction among Special Education Administrators.

This is an important time in Florida because special education teachers are now required to hold an additional subject area certification. Thus, if the Special Education Administrator has come up thru the ranks, particularly in secondary schools, he/she would hold an Exceptional Student Education certification, a subject area certification, and certification in educational leadership.

The position of Special Education Administrator is just as important a position within the school system as the General Education Administrator and deserves equally as much consideration for improvement. Ultimately, schools that retain satisfied Special Education Administrators will have more consistently delivered educational services to their students with special needs.

<div align="center">Limitations of the Study</div>

This study was limited to the principals and assistant principals who were employed with Miami-Dade County Public Schools as of May 2008. Findings may not be generalizable to other areas of the country.   Another limitation was that the researcher was not aware of the responses and characteristics of those who chose not to respond to the survey.

An additional limitation to this study that should be taken into consideration is that job satisfaction levels were reported by a researcher created survey with a single overall measure of job satisfaction. It is possible then that the overall satisfaction response for the Special Education Administrators in this study has been overestimated and the dissatisfied responses could be underestimated. Also, caution must be exercised when interpreting results based on one of the sub domains, prior expectations, which had a low reliability, although the other sub domains had high reliability.

Implications

Special Education Administrators have to be well prepared to confront this difficult job. These educators need more courses at the college and university level, and more professional development provided by the local school district and the Department of Education, prior to them assuming such an important position. This will allow the future Special Education Administrator to have more realistic expectations of his/her job and may reduce the level of frustration that many of these administrators experience. Once in the position, the Special Education Administrator must be provided additional personnel and financial resources to assist with the unique needs of their students. Based on the results of this study that Special Education Administrators felt that their workload was higher than the workload of General Education Administrators, school districts must find a way to reduce the amount of paperwork required in special education so that Special Education Administrators are allowed to develop themselves professionally. This is an important area; children with disabilities depend on successful leaders in special education that will lead them and their parents to an effective inclusive environment and an accepting society of people with disabilities. The role of the Special Education

Administrator is of utmost importance in regard to delivery of services to children with special needs. It is imperative that school systems redefine the position of the Special Education Administrator and try to retain these individuals to provide stability and quality services to children with disabilities.

This research on job satisfaction, perceptions of workload and prior expectations has significant implications for educational leadership, management and policy. Educators must be leaders in the reform of the position of the Special Education Administrator so that better services can be delivered to special needs students. Educators can lobby the Florida Department of Education to create specialized training and certification for the Special Education Administrator position, define the job description to include workload related to servicing children with special needs only, and mandate that districts comply. Universities can also be leaders in providing professional development relationships with Special Education Administrators to provide networking opportunities for peer support, collaboration and empowerment.

Another implication could be a possible lack of a sufficient number of educational leaders in general and special education. Fewer administrators, especially in special education, will have a definite impact on education reform and the inclusion movement.

Additionally, this research can assist leaders in schools to be aware of the variables that create more satisfied employees. Good managers provide opportunities for growth and change for all employees. In regard to educational policy, this research suggests that school policies on the delivery of special education services need to be examined and modified.

Recommendations for Future Research

The first suggestion for future research is continued investigation of the lack of or insufficient support the Special Education Administrators may perceive and substantiate if this lack of support is associated with job satisfaction.

Secondly, further examination of the job satisfaction levels of the Special Education Administrators is recommended. If single overall measures of job satisfaction do overestimate satisfied responses, a series of instruments could be administered, including open-ended questions and interviews that will help to clarify their job satisfaction and the variables associated with it.

Also, intervention studies should be conducted to find ways to increase the morale of the Special Education Administrators. By increasing their morale one could in turn expect a decrease in the level of frustration. When frustrated, the Special Education Administrator must realize what is happening, deal with the frustration, and find a different way to solve the problem. Possible intervention studies include: 1) the effect of training administrators to work with parents of students with disabilities, 2) the effect of exposing administrators to in-depth case studies of people with disabilities and the barriers they encounter, 3) the effect of panel presentations of people with disabilities compared with workshops about disabilities and the laws protecting these populations, and 4) the effect of interpersonal and sensitive training on administrators' satisfaction with their jobs.

Finally, a four or five year longitudinal study of Special Education Administrators should be completed to investigate the stability of satisfaction over an extended period of

time. The results of this study may allow school districts to identify the specific areas that over time cause Special Education Administrators to be less satisfied than General Education Administrators.

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Appendix
Researcher Authored Survey
Education Administrator Survey

EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

1. **What is your current position?** *(check one)*
   ○ Principal   ○ Assistant Principal

2. **Which of the following <u>best</u> describes your school?** *(check one)*
   ○ Elementary   ○ Middle
   ○ High   ○ K – 8
   ○ Alternative Education   ○ Adult Education
   ○ Special Ed. Center   ○ Other: _____

3. **Are you <u>MAINLY</u> a:** *(check one)*
   ○ Special Education Administrator
   ○ General Education Administrator

4. **Are you:**
   ○ Male   ○ Female

5. **What is your age range?** *(check one)*
   ○ under 40   ○ 40 – 49
   ○ 50 - 60   ○ over 60

6. **Are you:**
   ○ African American   ○ White, non-Hispanic
   ○ Asian/Pacific Islander   ○ Biracial/Multiethnic
   ○ Hispanic   ○ Other (please specify) _____
   ○ Native American

7. **What is the highest degree you have earned?** *(check one)*
   ○ Master's degree   ○ Specialist degree
   ○ Master's +30   ○ Doctorate degree

8. **What areas of certification do you hold?** *(check all that apply)*

   ○ Reading   ○ Ed. Leadership   ○ Pre K/Primary
   ○ Math   ○ Elementary Ed.   ○ Science
   ○ ESE   ○ ESOL   ○ English
   ○ Music   ○ P. E.   ○ Other (please specify)
   _____

9. **What is your salary range?** *(check one)*
   ○ $60,000 - $90,000   ○ Above $125,001
   ○ $90,001 - $125,000

10. **Approximate number of general education students in your school: _____**
11. **Approximate number of students with disabilities in your school: _____**

12. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. My reason for becoming a principal/assistant principal was to ….. *(check one in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
increase my career options	○	○	○	○
increase my leadership role	○	○	○	○
increase my salary	○	○	○	○
increase my power to make important decisions	○	○	○	○
increase my contribution to education	○	○	○	○
other: _____.........	○	○	○	○

13. To what degree are you satisfied with each of the following areas? *(check one in each row)*

	Very Unsatisfied	Somewhat Unsatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Managing student's discipline..............	○	○	○	○
Managing budgets	○	○	○	○
Working with parents	○	○	○	○
Working with community groups.	○	○	○	○
Being part of an administrative team	○	○	○	○
Maintaining an atmosphere that supports student learning...................	○	○	○	○
Monitoring students' academic progress	○	○	○	○
Using assessments and other data	○	○	○	○
Hiring and monitoring staff.................	○	○	○	○
Retaining qualified staff	○	○	○	○
Implementing action plans (fire drills, lockdown drills, etc.)..............	○	○	○	○
Building positive working relationships with staff	○	○	○	○
Acquiring knowledge of district, state, and federal requirements..........	○	○	○	○
Acquiring knowledge of federal requirements for ESE students	○	○	○	○
Working additional hours to complete tasks	○	○	○	○

Working with teachers ....   ○   ○   ○   ○

14. Please indicate the degree of difficulty you have experienced with each of the following. *(check one in each row)*

	No difficulties	Little difficulty	Some difficulty	Many difficulties
Mandatory meetings away from your school	○	○	○	○
Parent complaints/demands..................	○	○	○	○
Last minute deadlines...........................	○	○	○	○
Excessive paperwork..........................	○	○	○	○
Administrative work..............................	○	○	○	○
After-school hours needed to do the job effectively.....................................	○	○	○	○
Too much emphasis on procedures, forms, and timelines	○	○	○	○
Excessive workload...............................	○	○	○	○
Premium placed on documentation in special education	○	○	○	○
Not enough help	○	○	○	○
IEP Mandates	○	○	○	○
Accountability/FCAT............................	○	○	○	○
Grading of Schools...............................	○	○	○	○

15. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. *(check one in each row)*

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
In my position I feel encouraged to come up with better ways to do things	○	○	○	○
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment	○	○	○	○
My salary is directly related to my experience	○	○	○	○
I am given the opportunity to work on interesting projects	○	○	○	○
Overall I am satisfied with the recognition I receive...........................	○	○	○	○
People do not appreciate my creativity......................................	○	○	○	○
On my job I have clearly defined goals	○	○	○	○

I am satisfied with the information I receive from the District	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with my knowledge of policy concerning general education students	○	○	○	○
I am satisfied with my knowledge of policy concerning students with disabilities	○	○	○	○
My teachers need more training on inclusion	○	○	○	○
I feel frustrated with my job.............	○	○	○	○
I am accessible to my staff during the school day..................................	○	○	○	○
Principals and assistant principals receive adequate training...................	○	○	○	○
I would like to look for another job...	○	○	○	○
Considering everything, I am satisfied with my job	○	○	○	○
I am not satisfied with my involvement in decisions that affect my school	○	○	○	○
Teachers respect my opinion.............	○	○	○	○
Parents respect my opinion	○	○	○	○
I am not being paid enough for the job I am doing.............................	○	○	○	○
I am disappointed with my job..........	○	○	○	○

16. <u>Before</u> I became an administrator: *(check one in each row)*

	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	Somewhat <u>Disagree</u>	Somewhat <u>Agree</u>	Strongly <u>Agree</u>
I expected more acknowledgement than what I am receiving	○	○	○	○
I expected I would have more authority than what I have.................	○	○	○	○
I expected the support of others to implement my own vision/mission ...	○	○	○	○
I expected the job to be much more difficult than it is	○	○	○	○
I had unrealistic expectations about this type of job..................................	○	○	○	○