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"If at First You Do Not Succeed:" A Study of Teacher Resiliency in Sixteen Public Urban Elementary Schools

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"If at First You Do Not Succeed:"
A Study of Teacher Resiliency in
Sixteen Public Urban Elementary Schools

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all teachers who are able to brush off the dirt at the end of the day, get up, and continue walking, though the road is unforgiving. My parents, Hyun Sook and Byung Dae Kim who cried, cheered, and laughed with me every step of the way. You believed in me from the first day of kindergarten until the final day of my doctoral graduation. Even with a limitless word bank, I would not be able to sufficiently describe my gratitude. I also dedicate this to my friends who stuck by me, though I rejected their countless invitations to socialize because I was working on this research study. Finally to Joseph Hong, you did not let me give up on returning to school and you continue to build my resiliency with each passing day.

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ABSTRACT

"If at First You Do Not Succeed:"
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Alarming K-12 nationwide teacher attrition statistics have led reform efforts to focus on teacher retention (Olsen & Anderson, 2007), especially in urban schools where teacher burnout and attrition are high (Darling-Hammond, 1998). It was not until recently, however, that teacher resiliency, a strengths based framework (Henderson & Milstein, 2003), was viewed as an alternate lens of reform in achieving higher teacher retention. This study utilized a Likert survey to quantify if 284 elementary teachers in sixteen, public urban elementary schools in two urban school districts in southern California agree or disagree with the six most significant school factors linked to teacher resiliency. The six school factors known as collegiality/ collaboration, professional development, leadership, shared power, commitment to students, and teacher efficacy were identified by synthesizing the current literature on teacher resiliency and retention. The two most significant predictors of teacher resiliency from the literature, as found by multiple regression analyses, were commitment and values and shared power. This study also investigated whether resilient elementary teachers in urban schools self-reported any additional school factors linked to teacher resiliency, not originally identified in the literature. The significant additional school factors found in this study linked to resiliency were urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community.

CHAPTER ONE

Background of the Study

Introduction

National studies on teachers in the United States find that nearly 50% of new teachers quit the profession after the first five years; and of this percentage, 40% of teachers claim they will never teach again (Bolich, 2001). Therefore, schools must intervene and help foster teacher resiliency to alleviate stark nationwide teacher attrition rates.

The definition of teacher resiliency used in this study is the idea that teachers "can bounce back from negative life experiences and become stronger in the process of overcoming them" (Henderson & Milstein, 2003, p. 2). Since urban schools face the challenge of maintaining stability in the midst of constant change, resiliency is necessary for supporting teachers to persevere in the classroom (Patterson, Collins, & Abbott, 2004). Unfortunately, the bombardment of constant change in urban schools leads to high teacher burnout rates. Ultimately, this burnout then leads to teacher attrition (Friedman, 1991) which threatens teacher resiliency.

Not only do urban schools experience constant change, but teachers in urban schools experience a higher level of stress. Some causes of teacher stress are high teacher and student absenteeism and higher rates of unqualified and inexperienced teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1998). In contrast to these deleterious conditions, resiliency theory offers an alternate paradigm of viewing schools which focuses on positives and strengths. This new paradigm instills hope that, in spite of all the negative factors urban schools face, everyone has an innate capacity allowing them to persevere in negative

circumstances (Patterson et al., 2004). More poignant for teachers is the idea that resiliency-based programs and strategies support schools in nurturing this innate capacity (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). However, school based resiliency programs should focus less on resiliency as a program and more on resiliency as a process. This is due to the fact that resiliency is centered on human interactions (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Moreover, the literature on teacher resiliency states that schools are critical environments for teachers to build the necessary capacity to successfully bounce back from adversity, pressures, and problems (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Therefore, a study identifying school factors linked to teacher resiliency can aid in cultivating school factors which build greater teacher resiliency in urban schools.

Another reason it is important to foster teacher resiliency through schools is because resilient teachers play a key role in positive school reform (Wasley, 1991). Resilient teachers encourage their colleagues to change and take on tasks they normally would not (Wasley, 1991). This encouragement to change has significant implications for resilient teachers who have positional power as mentors, peers, and friends, to influence their colleagues in accepting school reform.

Operational Definition of Resiliency

This study incorporated two separate measures to identify resilient teachers. The two measures were based on Henderson and Milstein's (2003) definition and the current literature on teacher resiliency and retention researched in 2006-2008. These measures included the number of years resilient teachers taught in urban schools and if teaching in an urban school was a teacher's personal choice/preference. The number of years

teachers taught in urban schools was a measure of teacher resiliency because of nationwide percentages of teacher attrition. Since approximately 50% of new teachers leave the profession after the first five years (Bolich, 2001), this study defined teachers who remain in urban schools for a period of six or more years as more resilient than those teaching less than six years. The first measure included the number of years in teaching as a qualifier of teacher resiliency because the extended period of commitment to urban schools demonstrated perseverance. In addition, teachers who taught for 0-5 years were also considered resilient teachers if they claimed they would continue teaching in urban schools.

The study also identified teachers who taught in urban schools out of personal choice/preference as more resilient than teachers who taught for miscellaneous reasons. Personal choice represented teacher resiliency because teachers chose to remain in urban schools despite the exacerbating circumstances they faced. Since teachers were intrinsically motivated by their personal choice/preference, rather than logistically motivated to stay, they bounced back more readily from stress. In this study, reasons for logistical motivation referred to factors such as convenience of job location, lack of teaching opportunities in different areas, and lack of desire to change.

Problem Statement

Until recently scholars did not recognize that in order to narrow the achievement gap for students they needed to focus on the retention, rather than recruitment, of competent teachers (Patterson et al., 2004). This shift in focus from recruitment to retention has important implications for teacher resiliency in urban schools. Even more

significantly, the only hope in moving students from risk to resiliency is a group of supportive and competent resilient teachers (Henderson & Milstein, 2003).

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated whether elementary teachers in urban schools agreed with the six identified school factors (collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, professional development) linked to teacher resiliency, as synthesized from the current literature. This study developed a survey to discover if correlations existed between the six identified school factors from the literature and the self-reported opinions of 284 teachers. The study's 284 teachers were employed in sixteen public urban elementary schools in two urban school districts in Southern California. All sixteen elementary schools shared similar demographics. These demographics included: high percentage of minority students, high percentage of students on free and/or reduced lunch programs, high percentage of English Language Learners (ELL's), and Title 1 and/or Program Improvement eligible schools.

Once the researcher completed and analyzed the school site surveys, the researcher identified school factors significantly correlated to teacher resiliency. Schools can use the teacher resiliency promoting school factors to inform professional development topics, school practices, and classroom strategies. The resiliency focus can also aid the retention of classroom teachers who critically impact student resiliency and achievement (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). In addition, teacher resiliency can help alleviate stark teacher attrition rates in urban schools by catalyzing the capacity in urban teachers to bounce back, instead of burn out, in the face of adversity.

Additionally, this study aimed to collect mixed methods data by including one free response item on the survey, survey item four (Appendix A). The free response item provided a less restrictive space for teachers to express their opinions. The free response item also asked teachers to identify if any additional school factors, not originally identified in the literature on teacher resiliency and retention, contributed to their resiliency.

Study Significance

The significance of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of whether school factors in current research linked to teacher resiliency are generalizable to a larger population of elementary teachers. All too often reform efforts focus on what teachers must do in order to narrow the achievement gap for students in urban schools. Rarely do reform efforts look to reducing excessive lists of responsibilities for teachers. An example of this was the implementation of No Child Left Behind, NCLB, which increased demands with an overwhelming list of responsibilities for new and veteran teachers; and this increase exacerbated growing teacher attrition rates (Patterson et al., 2004).

The exigent levels of teacher attrition and the critical role teachers played in student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1998) influenced this study's focus on the reasons teachers persevere in urban schools. This study also encouraged school staff to collaboratively discuss how the identified school factors were implemented in respective school sites. These discussions can be a practical guideline for schools when initiating reform on how to cultivate teacher resiliency. Although school factors correlated to

teacher resiliency did not provide an exhaustive list of solutions, it could be a stepping stone to initiating reform centered on student achievement. Nevertheless, any teacher reform should take into consideration varying school contexts which affect the relevancy of implementing individual school factors at specific school sites.

This study is also significant because it challenged schools to view reform through a different lens. Since resiliency is a process centered on principles of strengths and positive attributes, it posed a challenge to an American culture fixated on diagnosing risks and problems (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). This study encouraged schools to center school discussions on strengths rather than weaknesses. This strengths-based framework offers a sense of hope for teachers who believe that exposure to risk is a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure (Henderson & Milstein, 2003).

An additional significance of this research study is that a majority of existing literature on teacher resiliency utilized qualitative methods to inform results. Average sample sizes in qualitative studies range from four to twelve teachers. In contrast, this study incorporated a sample size of 284 teachers, with varying degrees of teacher resiliency, in a mixed methods study. This study can potentially broaden discussions on teacher resiliency by testing whether the six identified school factors were predictive of teacher resiliency, as self-reported by 284 elementary teachers in urban public schools.

Furthermore, the researcher hoped to deepen discussions on teacher resiliency. Most studies on teacher resiliency have not identified the school demographics of the study's participants. Studies either reference general school demographics, such as urban or rural, or make no references to school demographics. This study, however, had a

specific focus on Title 1 and/or Program Improvement schools in two urban school districts in Southern California. These schools strategically represented schools with high percentages of students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, high levels of teacher stress, and high percentages of minority students. Therefore, teachers at the participating school sites faced the most pressing need for teacher resiliency to avoid burn out and attrition.

Research Design and Methodology

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study included:

1. To what extent did these six identified school factors: collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development, synthesized from research predict teacher resiliency in public, urban elementary schools?

2. What were the additional significant school factors promoting teacher resiliency as identified by resilient teachers in public, urban elementary schools?

Design and Methods

In order to answer the first research question, the researcher created a mixed methods survey incorporating the six identified school factors synthesized from the current literature on teacher resiliency and teacher retention. On the twenty-one item Likert survey (see Appendix A), the researcher asked teachers to identify whether they agreed or disagreed with the six school factors. The survey also included a free response item, item four in Appendix A, to answer the second research question. This survey item determined

if any additional school factors, not pre-identified by the literature, contributed to teacher resiliency.

Limitations and, Assumptions

The researcher utilized a non-longitudinal survey for this study. Therefore, she could not verify if teachers who taught in urban schools for 0-5 years, who claimed they would continually teach in urban schools, would fulfill their commitments. This study also incorporated a specific type of urban school in which the study's teachers were employed. All participating urban schools were low income urban schools with student populations of over 50% English Language Learners. These findings were not generalizable to teachers in different demographic areas.

This study assumed the information participants provided in the survey was honest and accurate. This study also assumed teachers were the most significant factor influencing student achievement. However, this did not include all teachers, but rather teachers who demonstrated characteristics of teacher resiliency as defined in the operational definition of resiliency.

Theoretical Framework

American culture today focuses on negative labels and diagnoses, and this disparaging ideology permeates to school belief systems (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). The preoccupation with negatives is a long standing tradition originating in the healthcare profession which focuses their research on maladaptation and illness (Richardson, Neiger, Jensen, & Kumpfer, 1990). This healthcare idea is referred to as the "damage model," or the belief that people exposed to stress and trauma will fail in the future (Wolin & Wolin,

1993). Unfortunately, this "damage model" has implications for school systems which focus on analyzing schools and students based on labels of weaknesses, deficits, illnesses, diseases, and negatives (Henderson & Milstein, 2003).

Resiliency, on the other hand, is a relatively new idea challenging individuals to shift their focus away from the self-fulfilling prophesy of failure (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). Resiliency is a belief that everyone has an innate capacity to bounce back from adverse situations (Richardson, 2002). Moreover, "protective factors," which act as buffers against stressful situations normally leading to negative outcomes, strengthen this innate capacity within resilient individuals (Henderson & Milstein, 2003, p. 5). Protective factors also help individuals develop positive coping skills to life's disruptions and counteract the impact of adverse situations (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Protective factors can be external, such as schools or caring people; or they can be internal, such as personality traits (Henderson, 2007). Even more salient for schools is the idea that the most significant protective factor in developing resiliency is the power of one individual who believes in a person's worth, capacity, and strength (Henderson, 2007).

A longitudinal study by Werner and Smith (1992) found 700 at-risk children in Kauai who successfully overcame the odds of family dysfunction, poverty, and prenatal stress. Werner and Smith (1992) studied these children until their thirties and forties through observations and interviews. Their data showed that resilient individuals from the study most frequently identified schools as a protective factor. The schools were safe-havens for the at-risk children in the midst of a tumultuous home life (Werner & Smith, 1992). Resilient individuals in the Kauai study also referenced that outside of family, a

favorite teacher was one of the most significant protective factors. The findings of the Kauai study revealed that schools and teachers are critical factors in fostering resiliency. Therefore, the Kauai findings influenced this study to focus on school factors which enhanced teacher resiliency by studying teachers who enhanced student resiliency. The six identified school factors linked to teacher resiliency were: collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development. This study introduced the six identified school factors according to the significant place it held in the research literature on teacher resiliency and retention. Furthermore, teacher resiliency was the study's focus because if educators themselves are not resilient, it is impossible to imagine an experience of possibility and transformation for students (Fine, as cited in Henderson & Milstein, 2003).

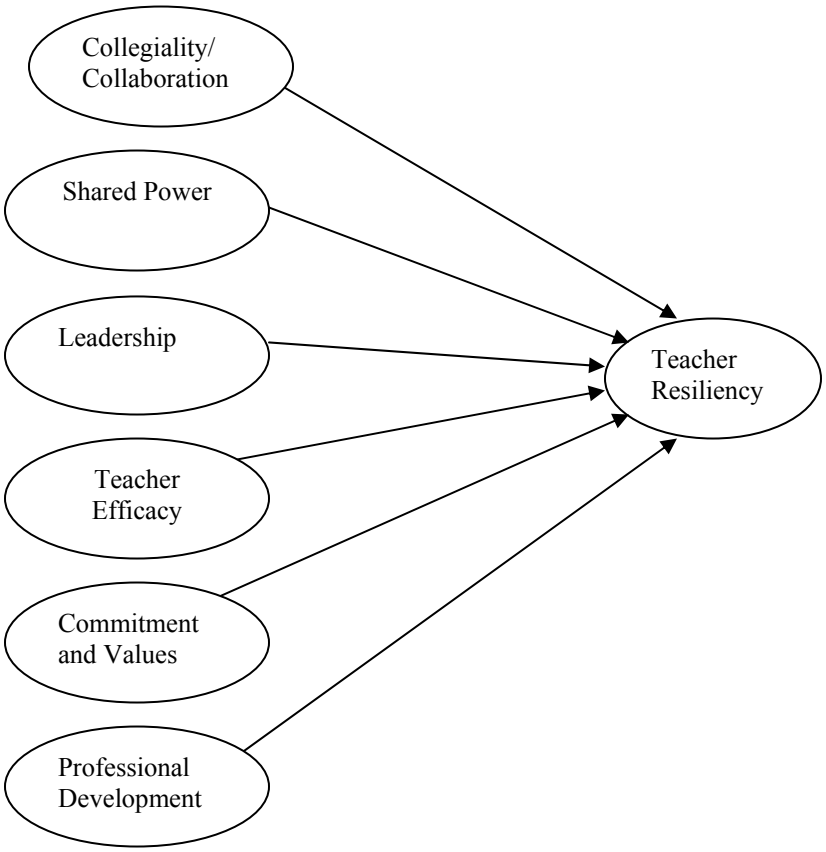
Hypothesized Model

The researcher proposed the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 to communicate her hypothesis that teacher resiliency was correlated to the study's six predictor variables or the six identified school factors from the literature. The six predictor variables are located on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1. The researcher hypothesized all six predictor variables (collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, professional development) would be positively and significantly correlated to teacher resiliency.

As seen in Figure 1, the six variables are connected by arrows to the dependent variable located on the right hand column, labeled in an oval as "teacher resiliency." The oval represents teacher resiliency as a dependent variable while the rectangular boxes in

Figure 1 represent the predictor variables. The arrows following the six predictor variables on the left hand column to the single dependent variable on the right hand column represent the proposed positive and significant correlations to teacher resiliency. If positive and significant correlations exist between the predictor variables and the dependent variable, then the six predictor variables also affect a teacher's perseverance in the classroom. In order to determine which predictor variable/s strongly affect teacher resiliency in urban elementary schools, the researcher created a mixed methods survey of closed and open items.

Figure 1. Hypothesized Model of Teacher Resiliency



The first variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model is collegiality/collaboration. Collegiality/Collaboration is a vehicle to mitigate heightened burnout of teachers in urban areas (Friedman, 1991) and enhance teacher resiliency (Ascher, 1991; Bernard, 2001; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Friedman, 1991; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Kyriacou, 2001; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Patterson et al., 2004; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Sachs, 2004; Stanford, 2001; Weick, 1995; Yost, 2006). The literature claimed that collegiality and/or collaboration enhanced teacher resiliency for various reasons. Some of these reasons included providing emotional and physical support, providing positive feedback, sharing classroom strategies, and collaborating on school wide decisions.

The second variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 is shared power. Shared power also enhanced teacher resiliency (Bernard, 2001; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Henderson, 2004; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Sumison, 2004; Yost, 2006). This study incorporated two separate definitions of power to define shared power. The first definition of power was teachers feeling empowered because they believed their skills and competencies were valuable to the school. The second definition of power encompassed teachers as greater participants of school wide and classroom decisions, explicitly defined as shared power between administration and teachers. Shared power enhanced teacher resiliency because it acts as a protective factor against negative situations (Hammond & Onikama, 1996).

The third variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 is leadership. Leadership enhanced teacher resiliency because leaders affect a teacher's ability to successfully cope in adverse environments (Ascher, 1991; Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Harvey, 2007; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Sumison, 2004). The literature stated that good leadership affected teacher resiliency because good leaders gave teachers a sense of hope, increased teacher job satisfaction, created a positive work environment, and modeled positive attitudes to other staff members.

The fourth variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 is teacher efficacy. A growing body of literature increasingly linked teacher efficacy with teacher resiliency (Bandura, 1982; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Harvey, 2007; Henderson, 2004; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Strunk & Robinson, 2006; Yost, 2005, 2006; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994). The definition of efficacy in this study was a person's ability to judge how well he/she executed a set of actions in order to effectively deal with a situation (Bandura, 1982). Therefore, how skilled an individual believed he/she was at a task correlated to how much effort and persistence he/she was willing to exert to complete the task (Bandura, 1982). Self efficacy also affected teacher resiliency because it helped teachers persevere when more challenging situations arose (Yost, 2005). This completion and perseverance was especially critical for novice teachers in urban schools (Yost, 2005) who were more vulnerable to burnout.

The fifth variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 is commitment and values. Another reason teachers were resilient and remained in urban

schools was their love and commitment to students (Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Patterson, 2001; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim, Dewhurst-Savellis, & Parker, 2000). These commitments stemmed from the value resilient teachers placed on children and their desire to watch students succeed (Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Patterson, 2001; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000). The strong commitment to students built greater teacher resiliency because it helped teachers to focus broadly on what was important, rather than on their immediate deleterious circumstances (Stanford, 2001). Also, their focus on students was a built-in reward system allowing teachers to persevere as they gained renewed motivation watching their students succeed (Sumison, 2004).

The final variable on the left hand column of the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1 is professional development. When teachers participated in professional development it enhanced teacher resiliency (Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000) because it created opportunities for advanced learning, and it allowed teachers to share strategies and lessons which promoted greater classroom competency (Hoffman, 2004). Furthermore, learning in professional development could challenge some teachers' belief systems which were detrimental to student achievement (Bobeck, 2002).

The previously mentioned six identified school factors showed implications for enhancing teacher resiliency in urban schools. The idea of resiliency is a shift in focus from a dominant "damage model" to a strengths-based model (Henderson & Milstein,

2003). It is important that educators take this paradigm shift into consideration because teachers, who are critical in narrowing the achievement gap (Darling-Hammond, 1998), leave urban schools at high rates (Bolich, 2001). Resiliency theory is an alternative paradigm offering hope (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). This hope is pressing for resilient educators who help move their students from the risk of drop out to the hope of resiliency (Henderson & Milstein, 2003)

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify, through a survey and a free response item, school factors positively and significantly correlated to teacher resiliency in sixteen public urban elementary schools in two urban school districts. Chapter One of this study briefly discussed the background, problem, and purpose of this study. Chapter Two provides an analysis and synthesis of the current literature on teacher resiliency and teacher retention. Chapter Two also identifies the six most significant school factors linked to teacher resiliency. Chapter Three describes the mixed methods methodology the researcher utilizes in the study. Chapter Four provides an explicative summary of the major findings within the study through the framework of descriptive statistics, regressions, frequency, and analyses of variance. Chapter Five contains a discussion of future implications for school reform efforts and future research geared at promoting teacher resiliency in hard to staff urban schools.

Definition of terms

Attrition rate of teachers – The rate, or percentage, of teachers leaving the classroom.

Dominant culture – The culture schools promote based on White, middle class values.

English Language Learners (ELL) – Students who learn English as a second language. This includes predominately Latino students in Southern California.

Equitable opportunities – School opportunities that need to be in place for urban students to be successful. Equitable in this case was not defined as equal opportunities for urban students and students from other demographic areas, but rather opportunities to create a more leveled "playing field" for students with a history of underachievement. This equity may include increased funding, alternative curriculum, and/or alternative professional development for teachers in urban areas.

NCLB – Act implemented into law in 2001, officially known as the "No Child Left Behind Act" of 2001 (Dunklee & Shoop, 2006). The overall purpose of the law is to ensure that all children have well qualified teachers, research based curriculum, and a safe learning environment (http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml).

Positional power – The ability of a teacher to influence his/her colleagues based on his/her seniority or relationship with other teachers.

Free or reduced lunch program – Under Title 1 funding, these are students who qualify for reduced lunch prices or free lunches based on their socioeconomic status.

SES – An acronym signifying socioeconomic status. In this study, it refers to the socioeconomic status of parents of students in urban schools, predominately low income families.

Teacher efficacy – The ability of a teacher to feel competent about his/her classroom practice because he/she effectively teaches classroom content to students.

Teacher retention – Teachers who remain in the classroom or at their school sites.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

Introduction

Researchers switch their focus from teacher recruitment to teacher retention when addressing the startling teacher attrition rate (Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Patterson et al., 2004; Yost, 2005, 2006). Current conditions of urban schools facing extreme teacher turnover and dire staffing problems influence the switch in focus for researchers (Olsen & Anderson, 2007). Urban schools are left to hire inexperienced novice teachers who are more likely to leave the field after five years due to the staffing crisis; and this cyclical process only further perpetuates the problem (Olsen & Anderson, 2007). The cycle of teacher turnover affects minority students in low income urban schools who achieve at low proficiency levels (Uline & Johnson Jr., 2005). Some researchers have argued this is because of teacher efficacy, which is statistically linked to student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1998). When teachers have more experience in the classroom, and are competent in teaching their content area, students perform at higher proficiency levels (Darling-Hammond, 1998). However, teachers are leaving the profession at accelerated rates in urban schools (Bolich, 2001). This high turnover rate creates an exigent situation for students who rely on competent teachers to remain in the classroom and narrow the student achievement gap. Therefore, it is important to focus reform efforts on retaining competent teachers in urban schools.

Since teacher retention is a means to narrowing the achievement gap, teacher resiliency is a means to achieving the retention of competent educators. As mentioned in

Chapter One, resiliency is an innate capacity within all individuals, rather than a select few, to persevere (Richardson, 2002). All individuals experience stress, challenges, and disruptions throughout the duration of their lives (Richardson et al., 1990). When individuals experience disruptions their first instincts are to release positive coping mechanisms to return their lives to "homeostasis," their normal state (Richardson et al., 1990). The released coping mechanisms can be appropriate, such as when people exercise, or they can be inappropriate, such as when people become violent (Richardson et al., 1990). A key component in preventing an inappropriate reaction is how individuals negotiate disruptions to return to their normal state (Richardson et al., 1990).

This study discusses three reasons resilient people are more successful at negotiating with life's disruptions. First, resilient individuals have protective factors which act as buffers against negative stress (Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Henderson, 2007; Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Protective factors can also act as "alternate mirrors," which are individuals who reflect positive messages of self-worth and self confidence to others (Henderson, 2007). Second, resilient individuals have a positive perspective when dealing with circumstances. Resilient individuals continuously recover and grow from negative experiences because they know positive outcomes are inevitable (Richardson et al, 1990). Finally, resilient individuals develop effective coping skills to aid their perseverance in negative circumstances (Richardson et al., 1990). Their self confidence in handling life's disruptions pushes them to continuously refine their coping skills (Richardson et al., 1990). In essence, resilient people create efficient systems of coping strategies. This system operates as follows: resilient individuals encounter a problem;

they learn from their problems; and they counteract their problems by refining their coping mechanisms to effectively deal with similar problems in the future (Richardson et al., 1990).

This ability to successfully adapt to negative disruptions is critical for urban school teachers because they experience a significant amount of school stress. Some causes of school stress include low student achievement, inadequate school readiness, low parental involvement, poor access to learning resources, lack of discipline, language barriers, and poor student health (Sachs, 2004). Moreover, urban schools have a larger percentage of teachers who are non-credentialed as compared to schools with a low percentage of minority students (Kemerer, Sansom, & Kemerer, 2005). This under qualified teaching staff can exacerbate already precarious situations. Therefore, teacher resiliency may be a necessary trait, rather than an option, for teachers to persevere in the midst of an adverse environment.

Promoting teacher resiliency is a way to mitigate the challenges presented by urban schools. School factors correlated to teacher resiliency in the literature were as follows: collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development. This chapter introduces the school factors evident in research according to the significant place it held in the literature.

Themes in Literature

Collegiality and Collaboration

It is important for teachers in urban schools to learn how to work together to avoid inevitable burnout from constant school disruptions. Some examples of constant disruptions which heighten burnout in schools are standardization of schools, legal legislation, high stakes testing, and decentralized authority (Friedman, 1991). Additionally, teachers who burnout can exhibit low expectations of students and low competency levels in their practice (Friedman, 1991). Collaboration and collegiality helps alleviate negative repercussions of burnout and induces teacher resiliency (Ascher, 1991; Bernard, 2001; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Friedman, 1991; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Kyriacou, 2001; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Patterson et al., 2004; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Sachs, 2004; Stanford, 2001; Weick, 1995; Yost, 2006). In fact, in most studies involving teacher resiliency, having strong support systems in schools "ranked among the highest on a list of resiliency strengths;" and support from colleagues was one of the most common forms of support listed (Reed & Patterson, 2007, p. 4).

One purported reason collaboration and collegiality promoted teacher resiliency was because collaboration and collegiality provided a vehicle for teachers to deal with stress with their colleagues (Sachs, 2004). Teachers could share their responsibilities and frustrations with other colleagues instead of harboring it in isolation (Friedman, 1991; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Stanford, 2001); and the benefits gained from sharing with colleagues were not a result of extended periods of time (Kyriacou, 2001). Teachers who

shared with colleagues, or engaged in some kind of social activity with colleagues, for even several minutes helped alleviate stress (Kyriacou, 2001). It is effective during short periods of time because it was the connection with other teachers that promoted teacher resiliency (Howard & Johnson, 2004). This connection with others acted as a vehicle for teachers to vent frustrations. In addition, it provided a network of support for teachers as they shared in their trials, reinforced each other's practice, and offered insights on alternative solutions to problems (Bobeck, 2002). Furthermore, this process of sharing and venting helped to lift and renew spirits of discouraged teachers after a hard day's work (Stanford, 2001).

However, this ability to share and connect with other colleagues did not happen automatically nor did it occur through good intentions. Schools must be deliberate about creating a collaborative and collegial environment. Teachers need a tangible space where they can come together to collaborate and network. If people want to collaborate, they need to be in close proximity with one another, hear what others are saying, and hammer out meanings together (Weick, 1995). This closeness in proximity with other teachers creates a physical sense of support. If teachers are physically next to one another while collaborating on school wide issues, perhaps, teachers will feel a tangible sense of support from the physical proximity. Ultimately, this support can affect a teacher's satisfaction with his/her job and motivate him/her to stay in an urban school longer (Certo & Fox, 2002).

A qualitative investigation, with a sample size of twelve teachers, revealed that all teachers in the study equated job satisfaction in their urban schools with the presence

of “friends and like minded peers” (Olsen & Anderson, 2007, p. 24). A study of seven different Virginia school divisions of rural, suburban, and urban areas found similar evidence (Certo & Fox, 2002). The study claimed that a strong presence of supportive colleagues is a reason teachers chose to remain in their perspective school divisions. As previously mentioned, the twelve teachers in the study were employed in three different school demographics (rural, suburban, and urban), but all agreed collegiality and collaboration was a reason they remained at their schools.

Supportive colleagues also provided emotional benefits to other staff members (Bernard, 2001; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Stanford, 2001). Friends and colleagues were a major cause of healthy human development in both successful people and successful schools in high risk settings (Bernard, 2001). This process of successful development was possible because when teachers socially connected with other teachers, it fulfilled the basic human needs of love, safety, accomplishment, and power (Bernard, 2001). It was so closely intertwined with healthy human development that high levels of staff collegiality was a protective factor against teacher burnout, absenteeism, and attrition (Hammond & Onikama, 1996).

Collaboration and collegiality also provided a vehicle for teachers to discuss school wide issues. Since low income urban schools encountered a conundrum of problems in comparison to higher socioeconomic level schools, it was crucial for urban schools to have a forum to discuss these issues (Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Weick, 1995). Although having a discussion forum was important, it did not absolve all barriers to teacher resiliency. A significant component of resiliency was the ability to accept diverse

opinions (Patterson, 2001). Acceptance of diverse opinions prevented school personnel from believing there was only one solution to a problem, which could cause resentment and blame when solutions failed. Rather, listening to other school members and accepting more effective alternative solutions helped build greater teacher resiliency (Patterson, 2001).

This acceptance of diversity promoted teacher resiliency in schools, and it also had implications for increasing resiliency in the natural environment. An environmental example of resiliency was seen in forest life. The forest was more resilient when it had a significant amount of diverse species in its surroundings (Wilson, as cited in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). This was possible because the diverse species, which remained after natural disasters, help replenish damaged areas and left the forest more resilient to withstand fires, floods, blight, and pests (Wilson, as cited in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). The amount of species in the environment was proportional to the resiliency of the species. Therefore, the more species there were, the more resilient the environment became because of higher productivity levels of the species and greater resilience toward environmental stress (Wilson, as cited in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

Even more salient was the fact that "the shrinkage of diversity places species, ecosystems, and all of life itself in jeopardy, for the less biodiversity we have, the more fragile in all its forms becomes" (Wilson, as cited in Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 160). Diversity plays a critical role in maintaining environmental resiliency, and it also has ramifications for school practice. How much more imperative is it for schools to involve diverse people to replenish damaged parts and better withstand negative stress, if even the

ecosystem is more resilient through diversity? Therefore, although providing a space to discuss school issues is necessary for building teacher resiliency, schools must also be accepting of diverse opinions from other school members.

In addition to creating a space to discuss school wide issues, collaboration also provided opportunities for teachers to work together on planning for lessons and unit studies, sharing materials and teaching strategies, and discussing student work (Certo & Fox, 2002). When teachers came together for practical, as well as emotional reasons, they had colleagues to think out loud and talk with; and this communication provided a source of support in times of adversity (Reed & Patterson, 2007). Teachers needed a strong network of support to foster teacher resiliency because urban schools face constant school disruptions.

Shared Power

Shared power, in the context of this literature review, focused on two main areas of power. The first area involved teacher empowerment. When teachers believed the school administration and staff valued their work, they were more inclined to be successful. The second area of power included teachers having more power by allowing them greater participation in school and classroom decisions. Literature on teacher resiliency and retention connected both concepts of power to teacher resiliency, but also included implications for student and novice teacher resiliency (Bernard, 2001.; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Henderson, 2004; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Sumison, 2004;

Yost, 2006). This section only briefly discusses implications for student and novice teacher resiliency because the study's main focus was teacher resiliency.

Literature on teacher resiliency revealed one way teachers overcame risk factors associated with urban schools was through the belief that their skills were valuable to school success (Bernard, 2001; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Sumison, 2004; Yost, 2006). In a qualitative study of resilient childcare teachers, resilient teachers equated their ability to persevere in the classroom with their ability to contribute as professionals to their work (Sumison, 2004). Although the study did not elaborate on the kinds of contributions these teachers made, the relevant point was the connection between teacher contributions and teacher resiliency.

In addition, resilient teachers experienced similar situations to teachers who burned out, but persisted in the profession longer because of the positive attributes they contributed to their work place (Yost, 2006). Some of the attributes which led to teacher resiliency included, "being persevering and patient, showing enthusiasm, having a positive attitude, and being organized, creative, and personable" (Yost, 2006, p. 6). These characteristics contributed to teacher resiliency because they increased a teacher's sense of value in his/her work place.

Although teacher contributions to the work place encompassed different ideas for different schools, this study defined teacher contributions as the process of "career advancement" (Bobeck, 2002). Teachers experienced career advancement by acquiring more school responsibility. One form of acquiring more school responsibility was when teachers had greater positional power in schools. This positional power came from

official and/or unofficial leadership titles or through participation in shared decision making with administration.

Greater teacher participation in school wide and classroom decisions also fostered teacher resiliency. Increased teacher participation and teacher autonomy acted as protective factors against risk factors in urban schools (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). Teachers felt more in control of their work, and they were more prone to producing positive outcomes when they had the power to make school decisions (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). Moreover, greater teacher participation in decision making led to a collaborative environment and overall school improvement (Harris, 2001).

The positive effect teacher participation in shared decision making had on teacher resiliency was mirrored in student resiliency (Henderson, 2004). This was due to the fact that power through participation was a basic human need (Henderson, 2004). When students participated in the classroom and in schools, schools met students' basic needs of love and acceptance. Increased student participation also led to healthy emotional development, enabling students to successfully cope with other challenging events (Bernard, 2001). Since the process of student resiliency mirrored the process of adult resiliency (Henderson, 2007), it can be inferred that teachers experienced similar benefits when they were greater participants in schools.

Resilient teachers maintained a healthy emotional state because they developed positive coping strategies to deal with strenuous situations (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001). This healthy development occurred because resilient teachers knew they had an important shared decision making role in schools. Healthy development was important

for teachers because their emotional state affected their students' emotional states (Ryel, Bernshausen, & van Tassell, as cited in Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001). Furthermore, allowing teachers to be significant participants in decision making was a non-negotiable component of teacher resiliency (Bernard, 2001). The concept of resiliency required people to work from a platform of shared power through participation (Bernard, 2001). Since participation was seen as a basic need, it was a natural outgrowth of teacher resiliency. Therefore this study assumed that power, outside the boundaries of shared power and participation, was a hypocritical practice if working from a resiliency framework.

Leadership

The school leader, or more specifically the principal, was the single most influential person who could change a school's culture (Fullan, 2003). As a result, it could be tempting for a principal to exercise his/her power in an absolutist fashion because he/she had a commanding role. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) state that "[l]eadership confers power" (p. 84). Power makes most leaders feel alive and invincible, and leaders enjoy this "limelight" and rarely want to give up the attention (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Most leaders even secretly wanted their successors to fail, to deter their successors from surpassing their own brilliance (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Although many may argue this is an extreme example, the implication is that the temptation to gain absolute power is a naturally existing temptation. Power is the most natural phenomenon that exists in all types of relationships (Norte, 1999). Power is neither good nor bad but, rather, is a given. However, how a dominant figure understands concepts of power and

views his/her primary role affects the organization and the relationships within (Pepper & Thomas, 2002). Unfortunately today, dominate and subordinate relationships in schools, also known as "top down" power (Pepper & Tomas, 2002), define traditional leadership roles (Norte, 1999).

A "top down" model of leadership, where one individual holds all the power, is ineffective in schools (Pepper & Thomas, 2002). When an authoritarian leader holds teachers strictly accountable, this can lead to low teacher morale, low teacher productivity, high teacher burnout, and high work stress levels (Pepper & Thomas, 2002). In addition, when a school leader exercises sole authority it is inevitable he/she will receive backlash from school members who need an outlet to exhibit their own leadership capacities (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Therefore, without shared power, these groups can aggressively thwart the principal's school goals as a means to retain some power for themselves (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006).

The evidence of the negative effects of top down power revealed the need for a different kind of leadership style to foster teacher resiliency. This alternative form of leadership is "moral leadership" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Moral leadership exists when a leader does not deny his/her natural inclinations for power, but rises above this desire for the betterment of others (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). This concept of shared power benefits others because it considers the long term goals of school success after a school leader transfers or retires (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Moreover, large scale studies showed strong associations between shared leadership and effective leadership practices (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Effective practices enable teachers to feel a greater

connection to the school and a greater commitment to seeing their shared goals attained (Muijs, Harris, Chapman, Stoll, & Russ, 2004).

Although research on teacher resiliency did not directly link moral leadership with teacher resiliency, it did discuss general correlations between teacher resiliency and good administration. The research also discussed broad personality characteristics of school principals which were indicative of good leadership. These broad references of character parallel characteristics of moral leadership as described by Hargreaves and Fink (2006). Therefore, this literature review uses good leadership and moral leadership interchangeably to refer to a leadership style encompassing shared power between administrators and teachers.

A good administrator was also described as a moral leader (Fullan, 2003). A moral leader commits to pursuing moral purposes in schools. This moral purpose includes reducing the achievement gap between high and low achievers and promoting positive school change (Fullan, 2003). Not only does a moral leader focus on positive transformation, but he/she does it with a collaborative mindset. Effective moral leaders are those who realize that teachers must work together to better schools; and the principal is pivotal in guiding this collaborative process (Fullan, 2003). The principal is pivotal because he/she is the individual who has the official authority to allocate meaningful responsibilities to other school members (Fullan, 2003). If a leader does not believe in sharing his/her power, increases in school problems will lead to failure because there are not enough teachers invested in the school's moral purpose to see it through (Fullan, 2003).

The research literature provided evidence for the correlation between teacher resiliency in urban schools and the presence of a good administrator (Ascher, 1991; Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Harvey, 2007; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Sumison, 2004). The presence of a good administrator creates positive teacher work ethics such as better teacher attendance, greater teacher effort, higher teacher morale, and greater teacher efficacy (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). All these conditions contribute to teacher resiliency in urban schools because it increases job satisfaction, thereby, motivating teachers to remain in the profession longer.

In a study reported by Brunetti (2006), fifteen teachers who had taught in inner city schools for twelve or more years attributed their teaching longevity to the presence of a good administrator. The fifteen teachers all claimed their administrators supported their work, and this support was a powerful indicator of why they chose to remain in the classroom. A similar study found seven teachers involved in a staffing crisis in Australia spoke very highly of their administrators (Sumison, 2004). The teachers stated that their administrators respected their work and regarded them as professionals. Therefore, the respect and support renewed their commitment to the work place, and it gave them a sense of hope. The teachers believed their schools were capable of making improvements in the midst of a crisis because their school leader was committed to the school and valued their work. In conclusion, the teachers were resilient because the presence of a good administrator renewed their hopes for school improvement, in spite of adverse circumstances.

Administration plays a prominent role in influencing teacher resiliency because administrators have control over school factors which promote or hinder teachers' abilities to positively cope in an urban school (Certo & Fox, 2002). One school factor administrators have control over is providing opportunities for staff members to formally and informally meet together. Meeting together is important because collaborative opportunities provide teachers with a space to evaluate current issues, discuss challenges, and share their triumphs (Hoffman, 2004). Furthermore, these formal and informal opportunities to meet have benefits of relieving stress and resisting burnout when teachers can converse with other colleagues (Kyriacou, 2001).

Additionally, when school administrators model positive attitudes and emotions to teachers, they influence teacher resiliency by creating a positive work environment (Harvey, 2007). Administrators model positive attitudes and emotions when they help school personnel effectively deal with negative emotions (Harvey, 2007). This modeling occurs when an administrator creates an awareness of the negative emotion to the individual, when the administrator values an individual's feelings, and when the administrator creates appropriate solutions to problems (Harvey, 2007). As administrators help teachers effectively manage their emotions, teachers are then better equipped to deal with other stressful school situations (Harvey, 2007).

An administrator's ability to promote teacher resiliency through modeling a positive attitude is also beneficial for novice teachers (Inman & Marlow, 2004); and this is important because novice teachers are more vulnerable to teacher attrition. One strategy to accomplish greater novice teacher resiliency is to accept and incorporate new

ideas novice teachers bring from their teacher education programs (Inman & Marlow, 2004). New teachers feel their accomplishments are valued and respected when schools incorporate their ideas as classroom strategies and/or topics for school discussions (Inman & Marlow, 2004). This helps novice teachers feel greater acceptance from their colleagues.

Efficacy

A growing body of research linked teacher self efficacy with teacher resiliency (Bandura, 1982; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Harvey, 2007; Henderson, 2004; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Strunk & Robinson, 2006; Yost, 2005, 2006; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994). The study of self efficacy used in this study is defined by Bandura (1982) as a person's ability to judge how well he/she executes a set of actions in order to effectively deal with a situation. Judgments of efficacy determine how much effort or persistence a person exerts to finish a task (Bandura, 1982). Persistence is necessary if individuals want to successfully complete new and increasingly challenging tasks. If teachers do not believe they can overcome a situation or task, teacher burnout is inevitable (Kyriacou, 2001). This inevitability of burnout is even more detrimental for urban schools constantly inundated with new and challenging situations (Sachs, 2004).

Although self efficacy is important for all teachers, it is especially important for novice teachers. During the first few years of teaching, a novice teacher's ability to successfully cope with surmounting classroom problems determines his/her longevity in the profession (Yost, 2005). Novice teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy are a greater variable in determining teacher success than a positive school climate (Yost, 2006). This

is because a positive climate is not enough to sustain a teacher (Yost, 2006). If teachers are unable to find appropriate solutions to the problems they face, even with the right amount of support, teachers will fail. This failure is due to a teacher's inability to handle urban school stress. As a result, it is necessary for novice teachers to learn to increase their self efficacy to promote teacher resiliency.

Schools can use various strategies to promote teacher efficacy. The main strategy this study discusses is problem solving (Harvey, 2007; Howard & Johnson, 2004; Yost, 2005, 2006). An effective problem solving process enhances a teacher's confidence to better meet students' needs (Yost, 2006). Teachers who are effective at problem solving use it as a protective factor against negative stress from students, parents, and the work environment (Howard & Johnson, 2004). This study discusses three main problem solving strategies resilient teachers practice to strengthen their resiliency. First, resilient teachers are confident they can overcome problems, and therefore, they do not feel overwhelmed by problems (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Second, resilient teachers do not agonize over their problems even if they believe they could have made better decisions. Rather, they move on quickly and learn from their experiences (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Finally, resilient teachers talk themselves through unpleasant circumstances by determining the cause of their problems. Resilient teachers are reflective of their circumstances in order to build greater compassion for others; this prevents resilient teachers from harboring discouragement and bitterness towards the situation or people involved (Howard & Johnson, 2004).

Resilient teachers have a strong sense of teacher efficacy because they are successful at problem solving (Howard & Johnson, 2004). A key problem solving strategy used to effectively cope with negative surroundings is to "depersonalize the unpleasant or difficult events" (Howard & Johnson, 2004, p. 409). For example, after a negative situation occurred, resilient teachers took the time to analyze their problems and determine if their actions were appropriate (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Afterwards, resilient teachers chose not to feel guilty or blame themselves for their misfortunate situations. This depersonalizing process encourages teachers to detach their worth from their surroundings and increase their resiliency.

In addition, teacher efficacy has implications for enhancing student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Kupermintz, 2003). Student achievement is more significantly influenced by a student's teacher than other classroom components, such as class size and composition (Kupermintz, 2003). When teachers have greater expertise and confidence in their subject area, students, in turn, learn more; and this efficacy is most prevalent after a teacher's probationary period, roughly after the second or third year of teaching (Strunk & Robinson, 2006). Therefore, it is important for teachers to be resilient so they remain in urban schools long enough to develop their efficacy and positively impact student achievement.

Research links student efficacy with teacher resiliency because children develop an internal self-concept of themselves, and this self-concept is produced by people in their environment (Henderson, 2004). If children grow up receiving negative self messages, such as "I am not wanted," their chances of failure increase. However, when

children receive positive images of themselves, especially from an influential adult such as a teacher, they are more likely to be academically resilient in school (Henderson, 2004). A student's perceived efficacy plays a role in determining whether a student stays in school or is at risk of dropping out (Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994). Resilient students, like adults, believe if they make an attempt they will succeed. These positive emotions can act as a buffer against negative circumstances that students and teachers in urban schools may encounter (Harvey, 2007).

Commitment and Values

The growing attrition of teachers after the first five years (Bolich, 2001) produces a dire staffing crisis in urban schools (Olsen & Anderson, 2007). As a result of this crisis, the wave of reform changes its lens from teacher recruitment to teacher retention (Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Patterson et al., 2004; Yost, 2005, 2006). The ability to retain "good teachers" in urban schools is a means to improve the staffing crisis (Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Patterson et al., 2004; Yost, 2005, 2006).

One factor teachers attributed to their resiliency in urban schools was their love and commitment to students (Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Patterson, 2001; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000). "There is so much reward in them that you get up the next morning and come back" (Certo & Fox, 2002, p. 4). This teacher statement was representative of many resilient teachers who stayed in distressing schools because of their students. These commitments stemmed from the high values resilient teachers placed on children and the desire to watch their students succeed (Brunetti, 2006; Certo

& Fox, 2002; Patterson, 2001; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Reed & Patterson, 2007; Stanford, 2001; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000). This strong value system helps resilient teachers focus on student success and overcome negative situations (Patterson, 2001).

Commitment to students was one of the top three reasons teachers remained in schools in rural, suburban, and urban areas according to a study by Certo and Fox (2002). This is the only study which included all three (rural, suburban, and urban) school areas and found commitment to students as a recurrent factor linked to teacher resiliency. This strong commitment to students helped teachers persevere because teachers could "consistently and persistently operate from a clearly articulated set of core personal and organizational values" (Certo & Fox, 2002, p. 2). In short, commitment to students gave teachers a positive focus (Patterson, 2001), a focus which allowed teachers to overcome negative distractions that deterred them from a broader, more important, school vision.

Focusing on a sanguine vision is even more urgent when considering urban school dynamics. In distressed urban schools, good teachers identified their love and commitment to children, especially urban children, as the most prominent reason why they stayed (Stanford, 2001). In Stanford's (2001) study, a good teacher was defined as a teacher who taught for ten or more years in urban schools and teachers who matched Stanford's criteria of a "High Moral Profile." Although Stanford's (2001) research only focused on urban schools, her findings are relevant to this study because she connected commitment to students to urban teacher resiliency.

Teachers exhibit a strong commitment to students because teachers see great rewards in putting their purpose into action when they work towards student success (Sumison, 2004). This is a key factor in promoting continual motivation of teachers to work in a challenging environment. In fact, teachers held commitment to students in such high regard that they considered it part of their moral purpose for teaching. Also, "when people have a passion and a purpose that is theirs, not someone else's…there are no limits to what they can achieve" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 255). Since urban schools can present challenges for teachers (Sachs, 2004), it is important that a teacher's passion for students act as a "protective factor" in an otherwise challenging setting.

This strong passion for students is also aligned with a resilient teacher's broader purpose in schools. In some instances, a resilient teacher's purpose is what leads him/her to choose his/her work site. Five out of seven resilient teachers in Australia's study stated that one criterion for finding the right school included finding a site where their values aligned with the school's moral stance (Sumison, 2004). Therefore, commitment and values to students is a strong indicator of why good teachers remain in schools with stressful working conditions.

Professional Development

Research linked teacher participation in professional development to teacher resiliency (Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000). This was especially true for new teachers who recently left a teacher education program surrounded by supportive supervisors, colleagues, and cohorts (Certo & Fox, 2002). The abrupt transition into an isolated classroom followed by the

removal of necessary support systems shocked new teachers when they graduated from preparation programs. This change often led to dampened spirits, low self confidence, and abandonment of sanguine goals (Certo & Fox, 2002). Furthermore, the common school practice of requiring novice teachers to teach a subject they were not legitimately qualified to teach only exacerbated deleterious effects on a novice teacher's confidence (Bobeck, 2002). More insidiously, however, this practice was a disservice to students who participated in classes where teachers were ill prepared to teach content and lacked mastery to carry out classroom assignments (Bobeck, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 1998). In spite of this adverse cycle for novice teachers, professional development is a practical medium for improvement.

Research linked a teacher's ability to overcome harmful working conditions in urban schools to professional development (Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Parsad, Lewis, & Farris, 2001; Sumison, 2004; Wilheim et al., 2000). This is due to the fact that professional development provided opportunities for advanced learning to help teachers feel more competent about their practice (Hoffman, 2004). A national survey of more than 5,000 full and part time elementary, middle, and high school teachers conducted by Fast Response Survey System of the National Center for Education Statistics outlined this idea (Parsad et al., 2001). This survey found a teacher's competency to effectively teach content varied according to his/her amount of participation in professional development. The Fast Response survey measured all content areas and found that teachers who participated in more than eight hours of professional development, as compared to teachers who spent one to eight hours, reported

their "teaching improved a lot" because of professional development (Parsad et al., 2001, p. 8).

Professional development also encouraged teachers to change their current practices by challenging their existing belief systems (Bobeck, 2002). This need for change is pressing for urban schools which predominately serve minority students. In a multiethnic student population, imposing school practices designed for a dominant, white, middle class group is alarming (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2003). In order to effectively meet the needs of a widening achievement gap for multicultural student groups, schools and teachers need to adequately assess and incorporate practices that are most appropriate for their students (Krovetz & Arriaza, 2006).

Despite positive implications of professional development on teacher resiliency, there is criticism about its effectiveness on teacher learning. Several researchers who studied the effects of professional development found little to no improvement in teacher learning and behavior (Borko, 2004; Dana & Silva, 2003; Knapp, 2003; Wilson & Berne, 1999; Weinbaum, Allen, Blythe, Simon, Seidel, & Rubin, 2004). This was partially due to the limited access researchers had on professional development and the learning that occurred within these sessions (Weinbaum et al., 2004). Although it is challenging to ascertain the effects of professional development on teacher learning, the main criticism came from the kind of teacher learning that takes place in professional development.

Since the induction of No Child Left Behind (United States Department of Education, 2007), NCLB, in 2001, schools received several new mandates to meet federal and state education objectives. One, among many, was to require states to provide

schools with “high quality” professional development (Borko, 2004). Yet, NCLB (United States Department of Education, 2007) did not provide practical guidelines for addressing how high quality is defined, what states should focus on in professional development, or how states may keep schools accountable for providing “high quality” professional development (Borko, 2004). As a result, professional development for teachers became fragmented and superficial (Borko, 2004). It is fragmented because there are several groups, such as schools, districts, states, and the federal government, who are issuing professional development policies that divert and contradict one another (Knapp, 2003). Professional development is also superficial because of the common practice of outside experts, with little or no knowledge of school sites, presenting obligatory or irrelevant information to teachers (Wilson & Berne, 1999).

As a result, teachers in professional development have become “technicians,” wherein they absorb knowledge taught by outsiders and implement practices based on ideas that are foreign to their schools (Dana & Silva, 2003). The technician based dynamic places a heavy emphasis on learning as an informative process, in which teachers acquire and implement knowledge into their classrooms. Although informative knowledge has value, it can be ineffective because teachers absorb knowledge as factual information rather than creating new understandings (Weinbaum et al., 2004). In transformative learning, however, teachers can change their behaviors and beliefs because they are sharing with colleagues instead of with outsiders (Weinbaum et al., 2004). Transformative learning also helps teachers create new understandings by encouraging teachers to deal with hidden assumptions that cause them to resist change

(Weinbaum et al., 2004). This process requires teachers to expose and voice their most central beliefs that hinder teachers from accepting new beliefs (Weinbaum et al., 2004). This vulnerable time of exposure requires teachers to engage in professional learning with colleagues instead of outsiders (Borko, 2004; Dana & Silva, 2003; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

Greater interaction with colleagues is a call for greater teacher ownership over professional development. If it is a common practice for outside experts to lead professional development, hope of lasting change and reform is dismal. Old beliefs which can promulgate ineffective classroom practices and reject new goals will remain unscathed. Ineffective teaching practices are one of the reasons for the widening achievement gap (Darling-Hammond, 1998). Therefore, the impetus of school reform in professional development is to provide teachers with greater autonomy over their professional learning. When teachers have ownership over their professional learning, it promotes teacher resiliency because of the change it creates in teachers. Moreover, new solutions can not arise without questioning old practices and changing old behaviors; therefore, it becomes increasingly important for urban school teachers to constantly create deeper understandings of their practice through collaboration because urban schools are often forced to hire novice teachers, who lack the experience to interact with a diverse student group (Olsen & Anderson, 2007).

Research linking teacher resiliency with professional development also revealed that resilient teachers, motivated by continuous opportunities to learn, were more likely to take on leadership roles. When resilient teachers took on leadership roles they supported

the implementation of new initiatives and led colleagues in a direction of change (Bobeck, 2002; Sumison, 2004). This direction of change is a necessary step in incorporating reform for continued school improvement (Krovetz & Arriaza, 2006). It also influences the impact resilient teachers have on new teachers as they create an enriched environment of ongoing learning for all school members through continuous dialogue (Hoffman, 2004).

Conclusion

A review of literature on teacher resiliency found there are six school factors correlated with teacher resiliency. The six school factors identified in the literature are collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development. Since most of the research on teacher resiliency included qualitative interviews with a sample size of four to twelve resilient teachers, these findings are not generalizable to a larger population of teachers. Therefore, this study relied on a mixed methods survey to test if the six school factors were positively and significantly correlated to teacher resiliency as self-reported by teachers in urban elementary schools. The next chapter, Chapter Three, discusses the specificities of the survey which the researcher used to collect data on teacher resiliency in urban elementary schools.

CHAPTER THREE

Methods

Introduction

This study focused on whether the six school factors, found in research studies conducted from 2006 to 2008, are factors elementary teachers in urban schools agreed contributed to their resiliency. The six significant school factors the researcher identified in the literature are collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development. The six school factors are also the predictor variables the researcher measures in the study.

To reiterate from Chapter One, the purpose of this mixed methods study is three fold: first, to verify to what extent teachers agree with the six identified school factors; second, to see if any additional school factors promoting teacher resiliency emerged from the data; and third, to create generalizability to a larger audience of elementary teachers in urban schools.

This study also hoped to frame topics of professional development, school wide discussions, and classroom discussions in urban schools through a resiliency lens. The resiliency lens is divergent from the predominant societal framework of discussions, and more specifically divergent from school discussions centered on diagnosing weaknesses, problems, and/or illnesses (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). This is in large part due to the medical model of research's influence. The medical model focuses on illness and risk factors which permeate society's framework of analyzing people and situations (Richardson et al., 1990). This negative framework is also known as the "damage model"

(Wolin & Wolin, 1993). The resiliency framework, however, shifts attention away from weaknesses and risks towards strengths and positives in an attempt to create longer lasting change in schools.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent do these six identified school factors synthesized from research: collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development, predict teacher resiliency in public, urban elementary schools?

2. What are the additional significant school factors promoting teacher resiliency as identified by resilient teachers in public, urban elementary schools?

This study hypothesized that the six identified school factors, the predictor variables, are positively and significantly correlated to the dependent variable of teacher resiliency.

Methodology

Research Design

The process for quantitative research is usually as follows: a researcher selects a topic for investigation, and then creates a hypothesis based on current research around the selected topic before variable and population selection (Griffin & Phoenix, 1994). Information about variables is usually recorded in quantitative terms on standardized measures or through questionnaires/surveys. The quantitative process which Griffin and Phoenix (1994) outline is parallel to the researcher's process for designing the Likert survey for the first portion of the study. Initially, the researcher designated teacher

resiliency in urban elementary schools as the topic of investigation. After a yearlong review of literature on teacher resiliency and teacher retention, the researcher identified six prominent school factors correlated to teacher resiliency. The six identified school factors were tabulated through a quantitative method of rote counting of the number of times a researcher referenced a specific school factor. The six most significant school factors were the study's predictor variables. The researcher then formulated the predictor variables into a survey to determine if empirical evidence existed linking the predictor variables with opinions of teachers from urban elementary schools.

The researcher tried to uncover additional school factors linked to teacher resiliency, not originally identified in the research literature, through mixed methods. The researcher first identified emerging themes of additional school factors promoting teacher resiliency from resilient teachers' responses to the survey's free response item four (see Appendix A). Once compiled, the researcher created frequency tables of the identified themes to determine which themes resilient teachers most frequently referenced. Since a majority of the research literature on teacher resiliency incorporated qualitative methods, this study attempted to add to existing literature by contributing mixed methods findings.

Participants

Sixteen elementary schools in two public urban school districts and 284 elementary teachers employed at these schools were the focus of this study. This study used three separate categories to qualify elementary schools where participating teachers were employed. The first category of schools included low performing schools, as identified by their Program Improvement (PI) or recently removed PI eligibility status.

Program Improvement is a response from the state to create a comprehensive assessment system for schools with large percentages of students from low income households and students who perform in the lowest percentiles on standardized tests (Kemerer et al., 2005). A result of this large scale standardized system is the California Standards Test, CST. The CST assesses student progress in grades two through twelve and publicly reports all results (Kemerer et al., 2005). Schools which do not show sufficient academic progress for two consecutive years automatically become PI schools (Kemerer et al., 2005). If schools demonstrate inadequate or non-progress each consecutive year, they are automatically transitioned into the next PI year. PI years begin at year one and continue to year five. School officials have two years to push their schools out of PI status. Failure to meet achievement benchmarks results in increased state sanctions and, ultimately, state takeover of schools (Kemerer et al., 2005).

The PI program is a result of the 2001, NCLB Act. This act was an attempt by the federal government to pressure states to implement a plan to raise achievement levels of all student groups and increase teacher quality (Dunklee & Shoop, 2006). Through the implementation of NCLB, the federal government changed its focus from equal opportunities to learn to equal outcomes of achievement (Dunklee & Shoop, 2006). Eight of the sixteen elementary schools in this study are qualified using PI eligibility status. Of the eight participating elementary schools, two schools were PI year two, two schools were PI year three, one school was PI year four, two schools were PI year five, and one school had a non-verifiable PI year.

The second category of schools the researcher includes in this study was schools in lower income areas. This study identified schools receiving Title 1 funds as lower income elementary schools. Title 1 is a state funded program in which 40% or greater of the student population are identified from low income households. Schools with a high percentage of low income school children are eligible for extra state funding. These funds are known as Title 1 funds. Title 1 funds are given to schools to equalize academic opportunities for students in lower income areas to meet achievement benchmarks. Another indicator the researcher used to measure whether a school qualified for Title 1 was the percentage of students who were eligible for a free or reduced lunch plan.

In all sixteen elementary schools surveyed the percentage of students who qualified for the free or reduced lunch plan ranged from 80% to 96%. One of the sixteen schools identified had a student percentage of 80% on a free or reduced lunch plan. All remaining fifteen elementary schools had percentages ranging from the high 80^{th} to the mid 90^{th} percentile. Furthermore, all participating school sites ranged within the high 80^{th} percentile for having students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

The final category of participating schools in this study consisted of schools identified as both lower performing (PI) and lower income schools (Title 1). Eight of the sixteen elementary schools, or 50% of the elementary schools, qualified under this category. In addition to low academic achievement and/or low socioeconomic levels of students, all sixteen elementary schools from the study had a significant percentage of ELL's. The ELL ranges were from 43% to 82%. Out of the sixteen elementary schools in this study, five elementary schools had ELL populations within the 40% range, six

schools within the 50% range, two within the 60% range, and three within the 70% range and above.

In addition to the sixteen elementary schools, 284 urban elementary teachers were the study's focus. The participating teachers had varying years of teaching experience: 11% of the teachers in the study had taught in urban schools for zero to two years; 22% from three to five years; 41% from six to ten years; 40% from 11-15 years; and 34% with fifteen or more years experience. Moreover, of these 284 teachers, 192 teachers were identified as "resilient" based on the operational definition of resiliency as described in Chapter One. The 192 "resilient" teachers were also identified by the teacher resiliency Guttman scaled score which is further discussed in the chapter's "Study Variables" section. According to the Guttman scaled score, resilient teachers receive the four highest consecutive Guttman scores: n=28, n= 27, n= 26, n= 25, n= 24.

The link between urban schools and teacher resiliency was another consideration for why urban elementary schools and teachers were the study's focus. Since resiliency deals with the ability to positively cope with challenging circumstances (Patterson et al., 2004), given the demographics, the schools in this study were what the researcher identified to be "challenging." Urban schools are located in urban areas often complicated by circumstances that exacerbate teacher burnout and attrition (Sachs, 2004). Moreover, being an urban school educator herself, the researcher experienced the deleterious effects of urban school dynamics on the attrition and burnout of her colleagues. The researcher's connection to urban communities also fueled her desire to study urban school teachers. In an era where the gap between lower SES students and

higher SES students is widening (Uline and Johnson Jr., 2005), it is pivotal that reform efforts focus on the classroom teacher who has the greatest perceived impact on narrowing this gap (Darling-Hammond, 1998).

Measures

This study develops a mixed methods survey to offer a disparate approach to finding data which verified or nullified the correlation between the six predictor variables to the dependent variable of teacher resiliency. Additionally, this study used a mixed methods survey for practical purposes. Some of these purposes included substantially reducing time or costs for the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

The researcher determined a survey was an appropriate method for data collection because the most common use of surveys is to gather facts, opinions, and attitudes about a sample; and the main purpose of surveys is to describe, explain, and explore (Babbie, 1973). The six school factors, or predictor variables, were the gathered "facts" on teacher resiliency. The survey is a tool the researcher used to gather the opinions of urban elementary school teachers through self-reported items on the survey. The opinions of urban elementary school teachers were advantageous because their opinions created correlations with the six identified school factors from the literature.

This survey was predominately an "explanatory survey" because "if the reasons for the existence of certain facts or opinions are of interest to the researcher, then the survey can serve as an explanatory function" (Hackett, 1981, p. 600). The existing facts of this study were the six school factors identified in the literature. The researcher's interest included using the existing facts as a comparative tool in analyzing if any

significant statistical relationships existed between the findings from the literature and the opinions of teachers in the field.

The survey is "cross-sectional" because it gleaned information about a population at a set point in time (Babbie, 1973). Although longitudinal surveys, surveys taken at more than one point in time, are valid and more reliable for data collection, the researcher used a cross-sectional survey for practical purposes (Hackett, 1981). Some practical considerations included efficiencies in time and reduction of costs to the researcher (Hackett, 1981).

The type of survey in the study is a questionnaire, in conjunction with a free response section. One of the main advantages of surveys are to gather information and make statements about a larger group or population based on inferences drawn from a smaller sample size (Rea & Parker, 2005). "In fact surveys are often the only means of being able to obtain a representative description of traits, beliefs, attitudes, and other characteristics of the population" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, p. 233). In order to ensure a valid representation of participant opinions, the researcher utilized a random sampling method. Random sampling "[is] the only a priori assurance one has of the representativeness of survey results" (Hackett, 1981, p. 602). The sample size in this study included 284 teachers with varying degrees of teacher resiliency.

This survey also incorporated an "open question," or free response item, to allow teachers to provide insight (Rea & Parker, 2005; Rossi, Wright, & Anderson, 1983) regarding any additional school factors linked to their resiliency. Open questions are advantageous because they allow respondents to answer according to their own "frames

of reference" (Rossi et al., 1983, p. 206). Respondents can answer based on what is most important to them or what is in the forefront of their minds, rather than being subjugated to the researcher's prescribed categories (Rossi et al., 1983).

The survey also included a series of twenty-one "closed questions" (Rea & Parker, 2005; Rossi et al., 1983) to test if teachers agreed with the predictor variables. Although closed questions present disadvantages, there are also arguments pertaining to their positive function in survey research. Due to the fixed nature of answer choices in closed questions it makes it plausible to compare responses from different participants (Rea & Parker, 2005). Since this study attempted to discover if any statistical correlations existed between school factors from the literature and responses of elementary teachers in the field, it was imperative that comparability was viable. Furthermore, fixed or closed answer choices helped clarify the intention or meaning of a survey item as respondents previewed the set of answer choices (Rea & Parker, 2005).

Study Variables

This study included two types of variables to measure teacher resiliency for data analysis. The first variable type encompassed the six predictor variables (collegiality/ collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, professional development). These variables were discussed in detail throughout Chapter Two. The six predictor variables were also represented hierarchically, according to the significant place they held in the literature, for the Hypothesized Model in Figure 1. The predictor variables were also used to test for correlations, regressions, frequency, and analyses of variance by years taught.

The second type of variable in this study was the dependent variable of teacher resiliency. The researcher measured the dependent variable by the Guttman score computed by a Guttman scale (see Table 7). The researcher used three items from the participant survey (see Appendix A) to compute the Guttman score. The items included question one, "how many years have you taught in an urban school?," response scale: (1= 0-2 years, 2= 3-5 years, 3= 6-10 years, 4= 11-15 years, 5=15+ years). The second survey item on the Guttman scale measured whether teachers who had taught for 0-2 years and 3-5 years planned to continue teaching in urban schools (item 1a on the participant survey), response scale: (0= no, 1= yes). Teachers in the category of 6-10 years, 11-15 years, and 15+ years did not have a response scale because the question did not apply to them. By default their response scale was scored as a "0." Item two was the third item that made up the resiliency Guttman score on the participant survey. Item two, of Appendix A, identified the four reasons why teachers chose to continue teaching in urban schools, response scale (1= I would prefer to work in another area, but there has not been an opportunity for me to, 2= It is a job and provides a steady income, 3= I have been teaching in urban schools for a long time and do not have a strong desire to look for another site or job, 4= It is my personal choice/preference and I find satisfaction in it).

The researcher calculated the Guttman score by scoring the teacher resiliency Guttman scores from twenty eight to one. The researcher calculated the numerical values of Guttman scores by compiling the three teacher resiliency subscale items. The resulting Guttman score for the subscales comprised the overall composite of the teacher resiliency score, as seen in Table 1.

Table 1

Teacher Resiliency Guttman Scale

Guttman Scale Component						
Item 1: Years[1] Taught		Item 2: Continuation[2]		Item 3: Reasons[3]		Guttman Score Calculated
5	+	0	+	4	=	28
4	+	0	+	4	=	27
3	+	0	+	4	=	26
2	+	1	+	4	=	25
1	+	1	+	4	=	24
5	+	0	+	3	=	23
4	+	0	+	3	=	22
3	+	0	+	3	=	21
2	+	1	+	3	=	20
1	+	1	+	3	=	19
5	+	0	+	2	=	18
4	+	0	+	2	=	17
3	+	0	+	2	=	16
2	+	1	+	2	=	15
1	+	1	+	2	=	14
5	+	0	+	1	=	13
4	+	0	+	1	=	12

3	+	0	+	1	=	11
2	+	1	+	1	=	10
1	+	1	+	1	=	9
2	+	0	+	4	=	8
1	+	0	+	4	=	7
2	+	0	+	3	=	6
1	+	0	+	3	=	5
2	+	0	+	2	=	4
1	+	0	+	2	=	3
2	+	0	+	1	=	2
1	+	0	+	1	=	1

Note. [1]Teacher self-report survey item, Years Taught in Urban Schools, scored 1= 0-2 years, 2= 3-5 years, 3= 6-10 years, 4= 11-15 years, 5= 15+years.

[2] Teacher self-report survey item, teachers of 0-2 years and 3-5 years plans to continue teaching in urban schools, scored 0= No (or N/A for teachers who have taught 6-15+ years), 1= Yes.

[3] Teacher self-report item, Reasons for staying in urban schools, scored 1=I prefer to work in another area, but there has not been an opportunity for me to, 2= It is a job and provides a steady income, 3= I have been working in urban schools for a long time and do not have a strong desire to look for another site or job, 4= It is my personal choice/preference and I find satisfaction in it.

Procedures

The method of data collection in this study was the distribution and collection of surveys, Appendix A, through direct school site visitations and mail-in surveys. The data collection process began in early September 2008 and continued until the end of November 2008. Before the researcher collected the surveys, however, she contacted various principals to provide them with clarification on survey measures, obtained informed consent, ensured protection of site and participant anonymity, and scheduled meetings for survey collection. Once the researcher gained access to school sites for survey distribution, she conducted a field test study to make appropriate survey modifications. The responses of the field test participants were not considered in the data analysis portion. Therefore, the responses were not pertinent to the validity of the data analysis portion. Rather, the field test participants' interpretation of the questions and their feedback on the structure of the survey were of relevance to the study.

Once the researcher modified the survey, the finalized surveys were taken directly to participating school sites on dates the researcher coordinated with school administrators. The researcher administered the survey during teachers' regularly scheduled staff meeting days. Teachers spent approximately five to ten minutes during one staff meeting to complete the survey. During survey procedures, the researcher gave teachers all relevant study materials to complete the survey. The researcher also informed teachers that participation was voluntary, and at any given time teachers could opt out of participation without any penalties. Additionally, the researcher informed teachers that surveys were anonymous and participant anonymity would be protected at all times.

In order to increase participation, the researcher also gathered approximately forty five mail-in surveys from teachers. The surveys were mailed and/or hand delivered to three different principals and four different teachers who acted as liaisons to the researcher. Each recipient, or liaison, of the mail-in surveys agreed to distribute the survey to voluntary participants at respective school sites. The researcher gave all participants approximately two weeks to complete the survey. The four elementary teachers collected all the completed surveys and mailed them directly to the researcher; and the researcher went directly to three school sites to pick up surveys from participating administrators. The three administrators and four elementary teachers participated in mail-in surveys, rather than direct school site visitations, due to scheduling conflicts.

The researcher used a two page survey for this study. The first page included a series of twenty-one closed items, based on a Likert scale (1= disagree, 2= somewhat disagree, 3= neutral, 4= somewhat agree, 5= agree), in which teachers self-reported their opinions on how highly they agreed/disagreed with the six predictor variables. The second page of the survey included a free response item within a demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire included items measuring how many years teachers have taught in urban schools, whether teachers planned to continue teaching in urban schools, different factors that were/were not characteristic of their teaching experience, and reasons teachers continued to teach in urban schools. The free response item elicited any additional reasons resilient teachers continued teaching in urban schools, not originally identified in the literature on teacher resiliency and retention.

Ethical concerns

In order to uphold ethical standards of data collection, informed consent and protection of participant and site anonymity were adhered to. The researcher obtained informed consent prior to the distribution and completion of surveys at school sites. She also pre-informed teachers that participation in the research study was voluntary. If teachers chose to participate, they could demonstrate consent by completing the survey. The completion of the survey, however, was not automatic grounds for participation. Teachers could withdraw their surveys at any time without receiving negative penalties for non-participation. Finally, the researcher informed teachers that the purpose of the survey was for research and identification of topics for school discussions based on school factors linked to teacher resiliency. In addition to informed consent, to further protect participant anonymity, the researcher recorded and managed teacher information using numeric codes for all survey measures. No administrators were given access to participant surveys. Only the primary researcher had access to individual teacher surveys to uphold participant confidentiality.

Furthermore, throughout the data collection and reporting process the researcher adhered to the guidelines of ethical conduct set aside by Loyola Marymount University. The researcher also upheld legal and ethical responsibilities set aside by the Institutional Review Board, IRB.

Limitations

The survey research method the researcher developed in this study, to answer the proposed research questions, had three main limitations. The limitations included: poor

design, lack of validity of responses, and low return rates (Hackett, 1981). Despite these limitations, the researcher implemented additional measures to counteract the compromises to a valid and reliable method of data collection and analysis.

An initial field test study mitigated the limitation of poor design. A small group of five teachers participate in the initial field test, all of whom had various teaching experiences, ranging from one to ten years. One of the field test participants worked as a pre-school teacher, two as elementary school teachers, one as a middle school teacher, and one as a high school teacher. The purpose of the initial field test was to create a preliminary screening of the survey. The field test measures factors such as ambiguity of survey language, time for completion of survey, and clarification of survey questions. The feedback from field test participants assisted the researcher in making modifications.

Another limitation to survey research is the lack of validity of responses (Hackett, 1981). In this study there was an assumption that what participants claimed to be true, in reference to their attitudes and beliefs about teaching in urban schools, was indeed true. This assumption could limit the validity of the study. Therefore, the researcher reminded teachers that their participation was anonymous, the survey only served research purposes, and the survey was non-evaluative of a teacher's character. These reminders were set in place to elicit a higher percentage of honest responses, based on the premise that teacher identities were protected and non-verifiable.

Another limitation to survey research is low return rates (Hackett, 1981). This study incorporated two additional methods to increase survey return rates. The first measure was direct school site visitations to distribute, complete, and collect surveys to

most participating school sites. The direct visits reduced the amount of wait time between distributing and collecting surveys. Direct visits also increased survey return rates by reducing any excess responsibilities for teachers to return surveys at a separate time or location. Secondly, participating teachers received small incentives to increase teachers' extrinsic motivation to participate in the study. A final limitation in the data collection and analysis process concerned the researcher's role. This study contained an a priori bias based on the researcher's preconceived notions and operational definition of resiliency.

Timeline of the study

This study involved a year-long process of data collection, analysis and dissertation writing.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between the characteristics of urban elementary teachers and the study's six predictor variables in addition to the dependent variable of teacher resiliency. This chapter reports data on teacher resiliency from 284 teachers in sixteen public urban elementary schools in two urban school districts. This chapter is organized into four main sections. The first section restates the purpose of the study as previously mentioned in Chapter One. The second section reports general findings for all study variables utilizing descriptive statistics and alpha coefficients. Furthermore, the second section reports the study's findings for one free response item in the survey, item four (Appendix A). The researcher analyzed the survey items by generating themes for the responses from 121 resilient teachers and inputting the themes into frequency tables. Finally, section two contains information regarding the six demographic factors which teachers self-reported to be characteristic or non-characteristic of their experience in urban schools.

The third section contains findings of the hierarchical predictor variables from the Hypothesized Model, found in Chapter One. This section contains the multiple regression analyses to test the relationship between the six predictor variables and the one dependent variable of teacher resiliency. The fourth section contains information regarding the one way analysis of variance of the six predictor variables by the demographic variable "years taught" by elementary teachers in urban schools.

Section One – Purpose of the Study

Restatement of Purpose

This study investigated whether teachers with varying degrees of teacher resiliency in public urban elementary schools agreed with the six identified school factors synthesized from current literature on teacher resiliency and teacher retention. The school factors elementary teachers strongly agreed with could inform topics of school reform and help schools implement school factors that build teacher resiliency. The focus on teacher resiliency could aid the retention of classroom teachers impacting student resiliency (Henderson & Milstein, 2003) and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 1998). This focus was critical when considering the persisting achievement gap for minority students (Uline & Johnson Jr., 2005) and high rates of teacher attrition nationwide (Bolich, 2001).

This study collected mixed methods data through the use of a teacher survey including the analysis of one free response item on the survey. The free response item reported what 121 resilient elementary teachers identified as additional school factors leading to resiliency. Responses from resilient elementary teachers confirmed two existing school factors from the literature and introduced six new school factors not identified on teacher resiliency and retention.

Section Two – Descriptive Statistics

Mean, Standard Deviations, Assumption Tests

The researcher evaluated the six predictor variables (collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional

development) using descriptive statistics. The N=284 teachers in the study self-report their opinions, based on a Likert scale (*1=disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=neutral, 4=somewhat agree, 5=agree*) on the survey. Subscales of the six predictor variables were created by summing survey items intended to measure each variable and calculating an overall mean score for each variable. In addition, an overall resiliency composite was created by summing resiliency scores of all teacher participants, originally created by the Guttman scale, and by calculating an overall mean resiliency score. Table 2 presents means, standard deviations, and tests of normality and homogeneity of variance for all study variables by reporting each variable's skewness and kurtosis.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Normality, and Variance for All Study Variables

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis	M	SD
Predictor Variables				
*Collegiality/Collaboration	-1.72	3.73	4.40	.70
Shared Power	-.82	.51	3.88	.90
Leadership	-.87	-.09	4.04	.90
*Teacher Efficacy	-1.37	3.32	4.40	.52
*Commitment and Values	-3.43	19.87	4.75	.44
Professional Development	-1.00	.92	4.14	.77
Dependent Variable:				
*Resiliency	-1.89	3.39	23.48	5.47

* indicates non-normal variables.

The assumption tests indicated that shared power, leadership, and professional development do not violate the homogeneity of variance assumption. Table 2 also showed teachers in urban elementary schools evaluated all six predictor variables with an above average mean of agreement with teacher resiliency, mean values above 4 on the Likert scale (4= *somewhat agree*), with the exception of shared power (*M= 3.88, SD= .90*). Moreover, Table 2 indicates that the mean resiliency composite score of teachers in the study is high (*M=23.48, SD= 5.47*). The higher mean resiliency composite revealed that the average teacher in the study was "resilient," based on the operational definition of resiliency and the Guttman scale resiliency score.

Alpha Coefficients

The Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient measured the strength of reliability for the six predictor variables using a twenty-one item survey, as listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Reliability of Predictor Variables of Teacher Resiliency

Variables	α	Items Per Scale
Predictor Variables		
Collegiality/Collaboration	.74	3
Shared Power	.69*	2
Leadership	.87	3
Teacher Efficacy	.82**	3
Commitment and Values	.64*	3
Professional Development	.73	3

*slightly below an acceptable level of reliability. **one item was deleted to increase the level of reliability.

As seen in Table 3, all but two of the variable measures had alpha coefficient above a minimally acceptable reliability level, α=.70. The exceptions in this study were shared power, α=.69, and commitment and values, α=.64. Low alpha levels for shared power could be due to the limited number of survey questions the researcher used to measure the item, N=2. These questions included items six and eighteen on the participant survey, see Appendix A. A few teachers reported conflict in answering the latter question because their experiences differed depending on school site. Low alpha levels also occurred for commitment and values. Furthermore, for the category of teacher efficacy, the researcher deleted one item to increase the scale reliability. Instead of the original four items on the survey to measure "teacher efficacy," only three were kept to measure the teacher efficacy scale and increase statistical reliability.

Construct Validation Evidence

To establish the construct validity of the participant survey, the researcher collected the constructs from several different theories. The constructs were derived by synthesizing the research literature on teacher resiliency and teacher retention. Each time a researcher referenced a construct, the researcher marked it with a tally. The researcher then tabulated the total number of tallies to identify the six most significantly occurring constructs from the literature. The constructs were found in the Hypothesized Model of resiliency as determined by six school factors. Since all but one latent construct, commitment and values were found to be normally distributed, maximum likelihood estimation was used for the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with AMOS 16.0. The data came from eighteen items on a Likert-type scale teacher questionnaire measuring

teacher resiliency in accordance with the six identified school factors identified in the literature. The sample size of N=284 was determined to be large enough to establish a minimum of ten cases per latent variable.

The Hypothesized Model with standardized parameter estimates and squared multiple correlations is presented in Figure 2. It was hypothesized that a six-factor model would be confirmed in the measurement portion of the model. Normality assumptions were verified through SPSS 16.0 (Nie & Hull, 2006), and the variable, commitment and values, did not violate the normality assumption. However, the deviation from normality of this variable was slight. Therefore, as all statistical procedures applied in this study, was robust to slight normality variations (Hays, 1994). As a result, this slight normality deviation for this one variable was not deemed to be a problem. The few cells of missing data in this study (eighteen data points) were left as is.

The researcher used AMOS 16.0 (Arbuckle, 2008) to perform a confirmatory factor analysis, based on data from N= 284 teachers. A confirmatory factor analysis provided an excellent fit to the data (CFI= .95, RMSEA= .06, independence model X^2= 2182.74 with 153 degrees of freedom; default model X^2= 212.55 with 100 degrees of freedom). These values indicated a good fit between the Hypothesized Model and the observed data.

Standardized parameter estimates are indicated in Figure 2; unstandardized estimates are given in Table 4. The squared multiple correlation values are also provided in parentheses and indicate (lower limit) the reliability of the observed variable in relation to the latent construct; observed variables TR8 and observed variable TR16 have the

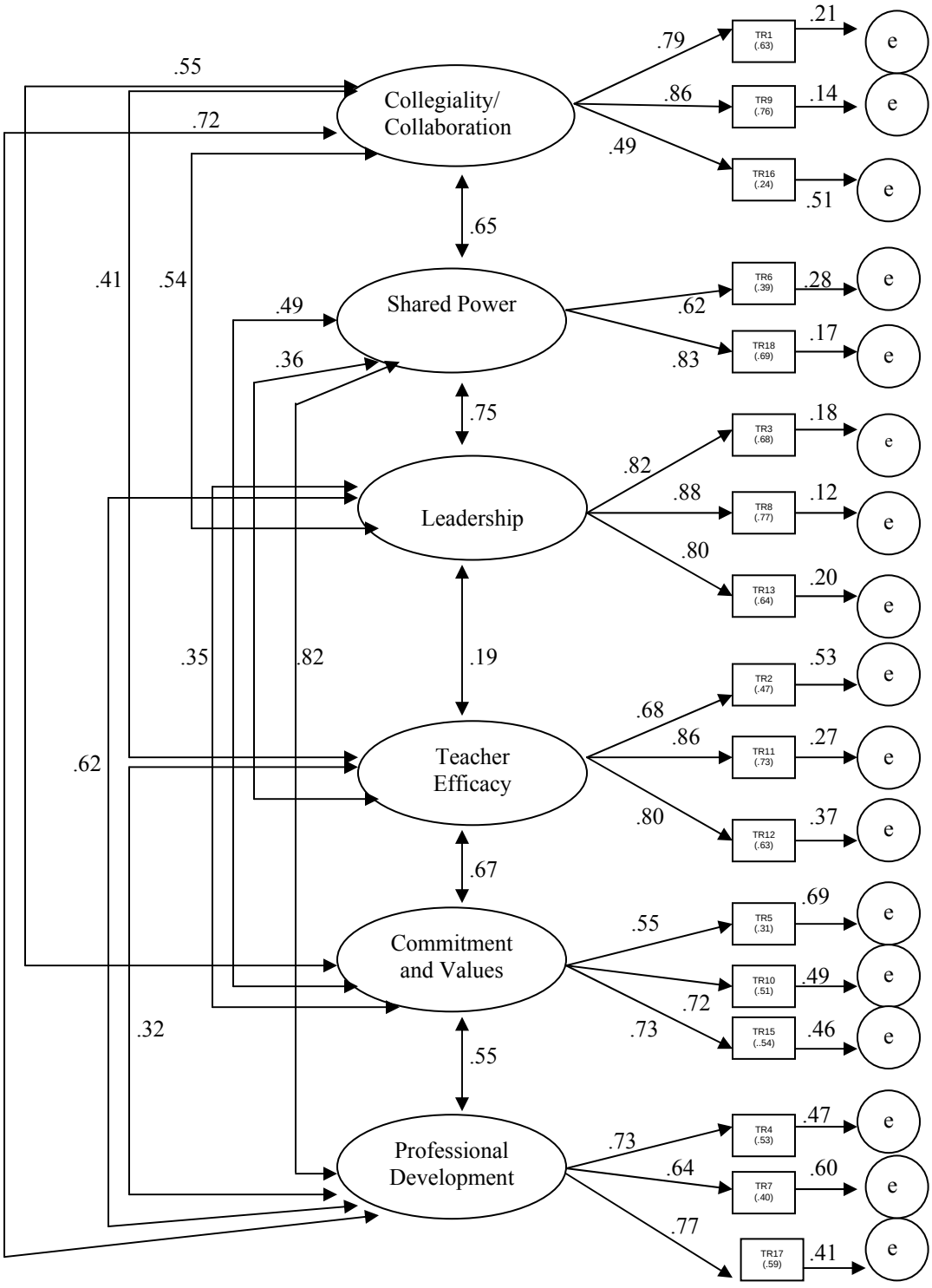
Table 4

Standardized and Unstandardized Estimates and Standard Errors for Observed Variables and Latent Constructs

Observed Variable	Latent Construct	β	*B*	*SE*
TR1	Collegiality/Collaboration	.79	1.00	
TR9	Collegiality/Collaboration	.87	1.27	.12
TR16	Collegiality/Collaboration	.49	.62	.10
TR6	Shared Power	.62	1.00	
TR18	Shared Power	.83	1.29	.13
TR3	Leadership	.82	1.00	
TR8	Leadership	.88	1.08	.07
TR13	Leadership	.80	1.17	.08
TR2	Teacher Efficacy	.68	1.00	
TR11	Teacher Efficacy	.86	1.25	.11
TR12	Teacher Efficacy	.80	1.19	.11
TR5	Commitment and Values	.55	1.00	
TR10	Commitment and Values	.72	.75	.10
TR15	Commitment and Values	.74	1.00	.13
TR4	Professional Development	.73	1.00	
TR7	Professional Development	.64	1.16	.13
TR17	Commitment and Values	.77	1.27	.12

Note. TR represents teacher resiliency. Numbers corresponding to TR represent the survey item on the Likert survey, found in Appendix A.

Figure 2. Theoretical Model for the Hypothesized Model of Teacher Resiliency with Standardized Parameter Estimates and Squared Multiple Correlations



highest and lowest squared multiple correlations, respectively (see Figure 2). A sample interpretation of the squared multiple correlation were, for example, the construct leadership accounted for 77% of the variance in observed variable TR8 in these data. No post-hoc modifications were indicated from the analysis due to good-fit indices results, and the residual analysis do not indicate any need for further modifications of the model.

Free Response

The researcher analyzed the one free response item on the survey, item four (Appendix A), using a mixed methods approach to answer the following research question: What are the additional, significant school factors promoting teacher resiliency as identified by resilient teachers in public, urban elementary schools? The free response analysis only reported the responses of resilient teachers' surveys. Of the 284 total surveys, 192 teachers were identified as resilient according to the study's operational definition of resiliency. Of the 192 resilient teachers, 121 provided a response to survey item four.

The study's resilient teachers were identified as teachers with the highest resiliency score on the Guttman scale, ranging from twenty four to twenty eight. Only resilient teachers' surveys were incorporated to report findings from a base of highly resilient teachers. Moreover, only findings from highly resilient teachers were used to avoid inputting data of school factors reported by teachers demonstrating non-resiliency. Non-resiliency, in this study, is defined as teachers self-reporting they teach in urban schools for job convenience, lack of desire for change, or preferring to teach in non-urban areas but have not had such opportunities.

To begin the data analysis portion, the researcher typed individual responses from resilient teachers' surveys onto a Word document. Once completed, the researcher created themes from the responses. During this phase, the researcher compiled word phrase repetitions and word similarities to generate themes. Nine broad themes emerged from the data. These themes included: colleagues, students, urban school product, urban school dynamics, teacher efficacy, parents/families, community, intrinsic motivation, and miscellaneous. In addition, nineteen sub-themes emerged within the theme "miscellaneous." Therefore, the researcher limited sub-themes in "miscellaneous" to include only those which more than three resilient teachers identified as an additional school factor leading to resiliency. Using this filter, three prevalent sub-themes emerged within "miscellaneous:" commute, salary, and benefits. After the researcher finalized themes, she loaded the coded results into SPSS 16.0 Statistics Software (Nie & Hull, 2006) to create frequency tables, as seen in Table 5.

According to frequencies in Table 5, 27.27% reported they taught in urban schools because they enjoyed the specific dynamics of urban schools; 23.14% reported they taught in urban schools because they were intrinsically motivated; 23.14% reported they taught in urban schools because they enjoyed working with students; 20.66% reported they taught in urban schools because they felt an affinity with the community; 19.83% reported they taught in urban schools because of how they perceived their efficacy in the classroom; 17.36% reported they taught in urban schools because of miscellaneous reasons; 15.70% reported they taught in urban schools because they liked the parents and/or families; 14.88% reported they taught in urban schools because they

were a product of urban education; and 13.22% of teachers reported they taught in urban schools because they liked their colleagues.

Table 5

Additional School Factors Linked to Resiliency

	Frequency of Responses	Percent (%)
Urban School Dynamics	33	27.27%
Intrinsic Motivation	28	23.14%
* Students	28	23.14%
Community	25	20.66%
* Teacher Efficacy	24	19.83%
Miscellaneous	21	17.36%
Parents/Families	19	15.70%
Urban School Product	18	14.88%
* Colleagues	16	13.22%

* factors already reported in the literature on teacher resiliency.

Out of the nine emerging additional school factors linked to teacher resiliency, three factors are not discussed separately in Chapter 5. These three factors are students at 23.14%, teacher efficacy at 19.83%, and colleagues at 13.22%. Students, teacher efficacy, and colleagues were not considered significant because they were not additional school factors. They are school factors already identified in the research literature on teacher resiliency as commitment and values, teacher efficacy, and collegiality/collaboration. The researcher analyzed and reported these factors through the Likert survey results.

The resilient teachers who report "urban school product" as an additional school factor claimed they continue to teach in urban schools because they are a product of urban schools, communities, and/or low income families themselves. The teachers in the category enjoyed working with students, specifically with urban students. These teachers found enjoyment in teaching English Language Learners, students from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds, and recent immigrant students.

Resilient teachers also reported parents/families as an additional school factor leading to their resiliency. These teachers claimed they enjoy the parents and families of urban school communities. They mentioned that parents and families in urban communities are more appreciative and care deeply about their children. Teachers who reference parents/families as an additional school factor also enjoy the connection they have with families from second language backgrounds.

Resilient teachers also said they continue to teach in urban schools because of the community. Similar to urban school product, resilient teachers felt they could relate to urban school communities because they grew up in urban communities. In addition, teachers in this category frequently mentioned "wanting to give back to the community" as a significant reason they continued teaching in urban schools.

Finally the theme of "intrinsically motivated" refers to teacher sentiments such as teaching in urban schools "is fulfilling," "is meaningful," and "is rewarding." Teachers identified as intrinsically motivated enjoy working in urban schools, not for logistical reasons, but for internal, self-motivated reasons. These teachers "love teaching" and "love what [they are] doing."

Of the nine identified additional school factors leading to teacher resiliency, urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community were discussed further in Chapter Five. These three additional school factors were considered significant because more than 20% of resilient teachers referenced them as additional school factors leading to their resiliency. The three factors were not originally identified from the research literature, but were significant responses of the study's resilient elementary teachers.

Demographic Information

The survey asked N= 284 teachers in the study to self-report whether they believed a list of six demographic factors were characteristic of their experience in urban schools. The six demographic factors the researcher measured in the survey included: high teacher turnover, student/family poverty, poor student health, low student achievement, student discipline issues, and high levels of teacher stress. Teacher responses to question three were opinion based. The researcher asked teachers to bubble in the school factor/s characteristic of their experience in urban schools. The researcher then numerically scaled teacher responses in order to create percentages of frequency. A bubble left blank, meaning that teachers did not believe the factor was characteristic of their experience in urban schools, received a value of "0." A bubble that was filled in, meaning teachers did believe the factor was characteristic of their experience in urban schools, received a value of "1." The researcher took the culminating sums for each factor, i.e. high teacher turnover, and divided it by the total number of responses possible, N=284, to get a percentage total. The values are reported in Table 6.

Table 6

Demographic Factors of Urban Schools

Demographic Factors	Frequency of Responses	Percent (%)
Student/Family Poverty	253	89.08%
Low Student Achievement	216	76.06%
Student Discipline Issues	188	70.07%
High Levels of Teacher Stress	187	65.85%
Poor Student Health	134	47.18%
High Teacher Turnover	113	39.79%

Table 6 lists frequency results for the demographic factors urban elementary school teachers self-report were characteristic of their experience in urban schools. Of the N= 284 teachers reporting, 89.08% self-reported student/family poverty was characteristic of their experience in urban schools; 76.06% self-reported low student achievement was characteristic of their experience in urban schools; 70.07% self-reported student discipline issues were characteristic of their experience in urban schools; 65.85% self-reported high levels of teacher stress were characteristic of their experience in urban schools; 47.18% self-reported poor student health was characteristic of their experience in urban schools; and 39.79% self-reported high teacher turnover was characteristic of their experience in urban schools.

Section Three – Regression Analysis

Hypothesized Model

The researcher used hierarchical multiple regression analyses to measure the six predictor variables continuously from the Hypothesized Model in Chapter One. In order to test if the six predictor variables explained the outcome of teacher resiliency, the researcher regressed teacher resiliency on the set of six predictor variables. The results of the summary of findings are presented in Figure 3 and Table 7.

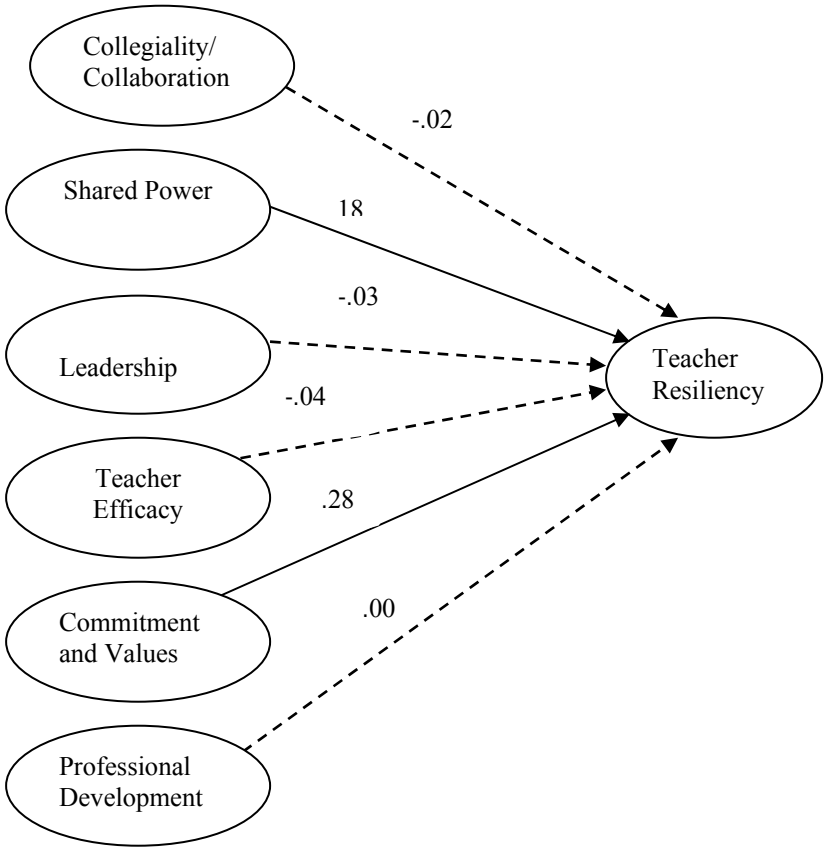
Table 7

Multiple Regression Analyses for the Six Variables

	Dependent Variable	
	Resiliency	
Predictor Variables	*F(6, 277)*	*β*
Collegiality/Collaboration	.11	-.24
Shared Power	3.99*	.18
Leadership	.10	-.03
Teacher Efficacy	.33	-.04
Commitment and Values	15.53*	.28
Professional Development	.00	.00

* $p<.05$.

Figure 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regressions for the Hypothesized Model of Resiliency



Overall Path Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results for the Hypothesized Process Model of Resiliency. Solid Lines Represent Significant Model Paths while Dotted Lines Represent Non-Significant Model Paths.

Teacher Resiliency

The six predictor variables, collectively, had a significant effect on teacher resiliency, $F(6,277)=5.44$, $p<.001$, $R^2= .10$. In addition, the predictor variables which had individually significant effects occurred for shared power, $F(2, 281)= 3.99$, $p<.001$, $b=.175$, and commitment and values, $F(5, 278)=15.53$, $p<.001$, $b=.275$. The results of these findings are reported in Table 8.

Table 8

Intercorrelations Among all Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Resiliency	__	.15**	.22**	.17**	.14*	.29**	.19**
Collegiality		__	.44**	.47**	.43**	.45**	.55**
Shared Power			__	.72**	.39**	.33**	.61**
Leadership				__	.37**	.34**	.57**
Teacher Efficacy					__	.48**	.35**
Commitment and Values						__	.44**
Professional Development							__

Note.1= Resiliency, 2= Collegiality/Collaboration, 3=Shared Power, 4=Leadership, 5= Teacher Efficacy, 6= Commitment and Values, 7= Professional Development. *$p < .05$, two-tailed. **$p < .01$, two-tailed.

Predictor Variables

Moreover, each predictor variable was significantly intercorrelated with other predictor variables from the study. The results of these findings are presented in Table 8. As seen from Table 8, the resiliency composite variable was significantly and positively correlated to collegiality and collaboration, $r(277)=.15$, $p<.01$. According to the researcher's hypothesis, as expected, the resiliency composite score correlated positively and significantly to shared power, $r(281)=.22$, $p<.01$. As expected, the resiliency composite score correlated positively and significantly to leadership, $r(280)=.17$, $p<.01$.

As expected, the resiliency composite score correlated positively and significantly to teacher efficacy, $r(279)= .14$, $p<.01$. As expected, the resiliency composite score

correlated positively and significantly to commitment and values, $r(278)=.29$, $p<.01$. As expected, the resiliency composite score correlated positively and significantly to professional development, $r(277)=.19$, $p<.01$. In conjunction with the correlation findings on the resiliency composite score and the predictor variables, the six predictor variables were positively and significantly intercorrelated with one another.

Collegiality/Collaboration was positively and significantly correlated to shared power, $r(284)=.44$, $p<.01$, leadership, $r(284)=.44$, $p<.01$, teacher efficacy, $r(284)=.43$, $p<.01$, commitment and values, $r(284)= .45$, $p<.01$, and professional development, $r(284)=.55$, $p<.01$.

Shared power was positively and significantly correlated to the resiliency composite and collegiality/collaboration (values already reported). Shared power was positively and significantly correlated to leadership, $r(284)=.72$, $p<.01$, teacher efficacy, $r(284)=.39$, $p<.01$, commitment and values, $r(284)=.33$, $p<.01$, and professional development, $r(284)=.61$, $p<.01$.

Leadership was positively and significantly correlated to the resiliency composite, collegiality/collaboration, and shared values (all values reported). Leadership was positively and significantly correlated to teacher efficacy, $r(284)=.37$, $p<.01$, commitment and values, $r(284)=.34$, $p<.01$, and professional development, $r(284)=.57$, $p<.01$.

Teacher efficacy was positively and significantly correlated to the resiliency composite, collegiality/collaboration, shared power, and leadership (all values reported).

Teacher efficacy was positively and significantly correlated to commitment and values, $r(284)=.48$, $p<.01$, and professional development, $r(284)=.35$, $p<.01$.

Commitment and values was positively and significantly correlated to the resiliency composite, collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, and teacher efficacy (all values reported). Commitment and values was positively and significantly correlated to professional development, $r(284)=.44$, $p<.01$. Professional development was positively and significantly correlated to all study variables (all values reported).

Section Four – Analysis of Variance

Variance by Years Taught

The researcher conducted a one-way analysis of variance to test the demographic variable of "years taught" on the hypothesized process model. The years taught variable, or the demographic variable, was measured by a self-report item (*1=0-2 years taught, 2=3-5 years taught, 3=6-10 years taught, 4= 11-15 years taught, 5= 15+years taught*) on the survey, question one (Appendix A). The results for all study variables on the one-way analyses of variance, by years taught, are listed in Table 9.

Results indicated there was a significant effect on the predictor variable of teacher efficacy, $F(4, 279)= 5.19$, $p<.001$. Post hoc tests for years taught using the Tukey Honestly Significant Difference procedure revealed that teachers who have taught in urban schools for 11-15 years exhibited significantly greater teacher efficacy than teachers who had taught for 0-2 years, 3-5 years, and 6-10 years, but were not significantly different from those who had taught for 15+years (Ms, $4.14=4.23=4.31<4.49=4.56$).

Post hoc tests for the demographic variable "years taught" also indicated a significant effect on the resiliency composite, $F(4, 279)= 11.53$, $p<.001$. Teachers who had taught in urban schools for 11-15 years exhibited significantly greater teacher resiliency than those who had taught for 0-2 years and 3-5 years, but not for those who had taught for 6-10 years and 11-15 years (Ms, 23.18=24.96=25.26>21.33= 18.05). Additionally, teachers who had taught for 6-10 years were not significantly different from those who had taught for 3-5 years, but were significantly different from those who had taught for 0-2 years (Ms, 18.05< 21.33=23.18=24.96=25.26).

Table 9

One-Way Analysis of Variance by Years Taught

df=(4,279)

	0-2 years (n=21)		3-5 years (n=43)		6-10 years (n=78)		11-15 years (n=76)		15+years (n=66)		
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
R	18.05[a]	8.41	21.33	6.35	23.18[b]	4.81	24.96	3.93	25.26	4.34	11.53*
CC	4.30	.95	4.29	.71	4.32	.78	4.00	.63	4.49	.58	1.33
SP	3.76	1.12	3.88	.81	3.75	.91	3.91	.84	4.04	.88	1.03
L	4.01	.86	3.97	1.05	3.92	.88	4.13	.84	4.10	.91	.67
TE	4.19[a]	.62	4.22[a]	.55	4.31[a]	.58	4.56[b]	.36	4.49	.48	5.19*
CV	4.76	.48	4.70	.42	4.72	.58	4.81	.36	4.76	.34	.55
PD	4.34	.67	4.12	.78	4.03	.87	4.20	.64	4.12	.81	.86

Note. R= Resiliency, CC=Collegiality/Collaboration, SP= Shared Power, L= Leadership, TE= Teacher Efficacy, CV= Commitment and Values, PD= Professional Development. Significant mean differences between year taught are indicated by superscripts a, b, and c.

Conclusion

Of the six hypothesized predictor variables linked to teacher resiliency, two are discussed further because the school factors were individually significant predictors of teacher resiliency, at $p < .05$. The two predictor variables were commitment and values and shared power. Of the nine additional school factors leading to teacher resiliency, four were significant based on their frequencies. However, only three school factors are further discussed in Chapter Five. The four school factors discussed include: students, urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community. Since "students" is synonymous with the study's predictor variable of "commitment and values," it is not discussed separately.

Moreover, intrinsic motivation and commitment and values were identified as internal factors which schools have less influence in cultivating to promote teacher resiliency. Recommendations for the two school factors will be more challenging to promote at school sites because the factors are internal. In Chapter V, the researcher provides recommendations on how to cultivate the two significant predictor variables and the three additional school factors leading to teacher resiliency, in order to build greater resiliency of teachers who face an alarming rate of burnout (Friedman, 1991).

CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction

The importance of cultivating teacher resiliency in urban elementary school teachers who face a high risk of attrition is the focus of this chapter. This chapter presents findings of school factors linked to teacher resiliency as identified in current literature on teacher resiliency and retention. The school factors are then tested for correlations against the self-reported opinions of 284 public, urban elementary school teachers. This chapter is organized into three main sections. The first section briefly restates the purpose of the study and connects it to the study's two research questions. The second section discusses the summary of findings as first introduced in Chapter Three. The final section discusses the researcher's recommendations for the five school factors significantly correlated to teacher resiliency and recommendations for future research studies on teacher resiliency. The five school factors are introduced, first, by the significant predictors of teacher resiliency as identified by the Likert survey. The two significant predictors were commitment and values, and shared power. The research introduces the three additional school factors, not identified in the literature, according to the significance of frequency as self-reported by 121 resilient teachers in the study. The three additional school factors were urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community.

Purpose and Questions

The resiliency framework was a shift in focus from weaknesses to strengths (Richardson et. al, 1990). This shift is critical when considering the rate of teacher attrition nationwide. If teachers are leaving the field at accelerated rates, what will

become of students whose resiliency is largely influenced by the classroom teacher? This simple, yet poignant question partially drove this research study. The pivotal impact teacher resiliency has on student resiliency (Henderson & Milstein, 2003), as well as on teacher retention, influenced the researcher to focus on significant school factors linked to teacher resiliency. The five significant school factors were identified in a twenty one item Likert survey and one free response item on the survey.

To test for statistical correlations between the six predictor variables and teachers' opinions, the Likert survey was completed by 284 teachers with varying degrees of teacher resiliency in sixteen, public, urban elementary schools in two urban school districts to answer the study's first research question:

1. To what extent do these six identified school factors: collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, and professional development, synthesized from research predict teacher resiliency in public, urban elementary schools?

In addition to the Likert survey, this study incorporated a mixed methods approach to analyze the survey's one free response item. The free response item was answered by 121 resilient teachers, identified by the operational definition of resiliency, to answer the study's second research question:

2. What are the additional significant school factors promoting teacher resiliency as identified by resilient teachers in public, urban elementary schools?

Findings

This study found all six predictor variables (collegiality/collaboration, shared power, leadership, teacher efficacy, commitment and values, professional development), collectively had a significant effect on teacher resiliency, $F(6,277)=5.44$, $p<.001$, $R^2= .10$. The six predictor variables accounted for 10% of the variance teachers were motivated to remain teaching in urban schools. The remaining 90% variance of why urban teachers persevere in urban schools was not explained in the study. The 90% could have included reasons such as, but not limited to: personality traits, salary, commute, etc. Given the limitless number of possibilities which contribute to teacher resiliency, the researcher could not unequivocally determine what accounted for 90% of the variance teachers stay in urban schools. Therefore, this study focused on the six predictor variables found in research literature on teacher resiliency and retention. The synthesis of the factors from research studies conducted in different regions and utilizing different methods could be a reason the variables have a 10% significance on teacher resiliency.

In addition to the collective effect on teacher resiliency, the researcher discovered two of the predictor variables were individually significant predictors of teacher resiliency. The two predictor variables were shared power and commitment and values to students, which answered the study's first research question. Commitment and values to students can be a significant predictor because the core of teaching is the student-teacher relationship. It was not unusual to find working with students, watching students learn, seeing students grow were significant reasons why teachers remained in the classroom. It

was this constant interaction with students that supported a teacher's drive to persevere in the urban classroom and in the profession.

The focus on students also builds greater teacher resiliency because teachers are able to put their purpose, the students, into action as they watch students succeed (Sumison, 2004). This positive focus on students can also distract teachers from some challenging factors urban schools face, such as high levels of student poverty, low academic performance, and high levels of teacher stress. In fact a significant percentage of urban school teachers self-reported the three demographic factors were characteristic of their experience in urban schools, see Table 5; yet commitment to students was a reason teachers chose to remain in teaching despite the conditions. Commitment and values to students was also a significant reason why resilient teachers self-reported they remained teaching in the classroom. Therefore, commitment and values was a school factor reported both in the literature and by opinions of resilient teachers in urban schools in Southern California.

Shared power was a significant predictor of teacher resiliency as determined by multiple regression analyses. Teachers in the study agreed shared power is a reason they remained teaching in the classroom at an average mean of 3.88. According to the Likert scale in Appendix A, this average mean score was above the category of neutral and slightly below agree. In this study, shared power was a significant predictor of teacher resiliency because shared power acted as a protective factor against negative risk in schools (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). Although teachers in urban schools may encounter negative risk, such as student discipline issues, they are better equipped to

handle the risks because shared power acts as a buffer. It buffers the risk because when teachers are greater participants in decision making, they feel more in control of their circumstances (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). This sense of calm and control in the midst of hardships can affect a teacher's ability to persevere in the classroom, a teacher's resiliency.

In addition to individually significant predictors of teacher resiliency, this study unexpectedly found that all study variables are also positively and significantly intercorrelated with one another. The researcher believes this was a result of the intertwined nature of the six predictor variables. The school factors, or the predictor variables, were school factors that constantly intersected or complimented one another. For example, the predictor variables of leadership and shared power directly affected one another. A good leader is able to promote teacher resiliency by exercising shared power. Shared power promotes teacher resiliency because it acts as a protective factor against negative school stress (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). Power, through participation, is a basic human need (Henderson, 2004) which needs to be fulfilled in order for teachers to acquire a stronger capacity to persevere through challenges. Shared power also affects professional development. Without having the power to be greater participants in making decisions, teachers have less autonomy in leading professional development topics. The intertwined nature of leadership, shared power, and professional development is one example of the interconnectedness of the six factors, and this affinity could have affected the significant intercorrelations between the study's variables.

The researcher also discovered three additional significant school factors linked to teacher resiliency. The three additional factors were not originally identified in the literature, but were identified by utilizing mixed methods to analyzed the survey's one free response item and to answer the study's second research question. The researcher analyzed the free response item by generating themes from responses of 121 resilient teachers. The researcher then assigned numerical values to the themes in order to create frequencies. The mixed methods analysis concluded urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community were additional school factors linked to teacher resiliency as self-reported by the study's resilient teachers.

It was interesting to discover urban school dynamics was an additional school factor linked to teacher resiliency as self-reported by 121 resilient teachers. As mentioned in Chapter Four, the 20.66 % of the study's resilient teachers reported that factors such as students of poverty, minority students, and English Language Learners were all compelling reasons they remained teaching in urban schools. Ironically, these same factors were also viewed as negative reasons for teachers who remained in or entered teaching in urban schools. English Language Learners, students of poverty, and minority students carry certain stigmas and assumptions for people. One stigma is that because minority students perform at academic levels below their white peers (Uline & Johnson Jr., 2005) it is more challenging to teach minority students. Despite this stereotypical ideology, resilient teachers in the study demonstrated a shift in paradigm when perceiving urban school dynamics. To others what is a negative aspect of urban schools, the study's resilient teachers viewed urban school dynamics as a positive.

Resilient teachers in the study also self-reported they were intrinsically motivated to teach in urban schools. Reasons such as believing in what they were doing, making a difference, being passionate about teaching, and doing something meaningful were all reasons identified under "intrinsically motivated." This category can be a significant school factor because urban schools are presented with challenges that increase teacher burnout (Sachs, 2004). Nevertheless, when teachers overlook immediate stressful circumstances and focus on the larger vision of teaching, this supports teachers in resisting burnout. The researcher inferred that intrinsically motivated teachers viewed their career from a positive framework. Believing in what they were doing, making a difference, doing something meaningful, and being passionate all described positive sentiments resilient teachers believed they were contributing to their workplace. Perhaps this positive framework was what aided resilient teachers in resisting burnout because their perspective buffers the effects of work related stress.

Finally, community was an additional school factor resilient teachers' self-reported contributed to their resiliency. Resilient teachers enjoyed giving back to the community, understood their communities, and appreciated the parents living in the communities. These reasons revealed that resilient teachers viewed their school community positively. Although some people described urban school communities as having negative attributes, such as higher rates of crime and poverty as compared to higher socioeconomic communities, this was not the focus for resilient teachers. Their positive view of the community and the satisfaction they gained from making a positive contribution to the community were reasons they remained in the profession.

Fostering teacher resiliency in urban schools is imperative because teachers foster greater student achievement. Narrowing the achievement gap between high and low performing students influences today's reform initiatives and initiatives from the past several decades (Krovetz & Arriaza, 2006). Yet, despite continuous efforts to narrow this gap, it still plagues schools in America and to even greater degrees in urban schools. One purported reason the gap persists is the large percentage of minority students who comprise a majority of urban school demographics (Uline & Johnson Jr., 2005). In conjunction with the demographic percentage is the fact that, historically, minority children in a pluralistic society perform at levels below their "White" peers (Ogbu, 1992). In a national assessment, Latino and African American students performed at proficiency levels of approximately 10% in math and language arts, as compared to 40% of White students (Uline & Johnson Jr., 2005). This statistical evidence revealed a need to reevaluate institutions where some minority students fail academically. In addition, institutions should create more equitable opportunities for minority children to alleviate discrepancies in their proficiency levels.

The need to create more equitable opportunities to narrow the achievement gap of minority students is at the core of a higher purpose of schooling, a moral or socially just purpose as Fullan (2003) described. One way to achieve the moral or socially just purpose in schools is to work with classroom teachers who are the single most influential factor in narrowing the achievement gap (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Krovetz & Arriaza, 2006). Teachers play a prominent role in influencing student achievement because their competency in the classroom directly correlates to increased learning for students

(Krovetz & Arriaza, 2006). A study by Ferguson (as cited in Darling-Hammond, 1998) found that the discrepancy in achievement of Black and White students was almost entirely due to a teacher's competency to successfully teach content. The study's only control variable was socioeconomic status (SES). Arguably, this is one reason why school reform must focus on building greater resiliency of classroom teachers through the resiliency lens rather than through the lens of the damaged model (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). Most schools are accustomed to diagnosing risks and weaknesses in order to create solutions. The resiliency framework challenges individuals to shift their paradigm from negatives to positives (Wolin & Wolin, 1993). The significant school factors identified in this study through Likert survey results and self-reported opinions of resilient teachers encourages schools to focus on positive school factors. Commitment and values, shared power, urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community are five positive school factors which can be used to lead professional development topics, collegial discussions, school projects, site based councils, and university preparation programs through a resiliency framework. If years of reform centered on the damaged model (Wolin & Wolin, 1993) have not shown significant results for urban schools, why not try an alternative method? The focus on positives, instead of negatives, can help deconstruct the defensive barriers teachers have had through countless reform efforts which focus on what teachers are doing wrong. The following recommendations are introduced to offer practical strategies and school wide policies to promote greater teacher resiliency.

Recommendations

The recommendations are presented, first, by the two individually significant predictors of teacher resiliency from the Likert based survey. The significant predictor variables were commitment and values and shared power. The researcher then presents recommendations for the three additional significant school factors as identified by self-report item four on the participant survey, see Appendix A. The three additional significant school factors are introduced according to the significance of frequency as seen in Table 5. The additional school factors were urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community.

Commitment and Values

Commitment and values was a significant predictor of teacher resiliency as identified by multiple regression analyses and as originally identified in the literature on teacher resiliency and retention. However, since commitment and values is an internal factor within teachers, schools can experience difficulties in cultivating it to promote teacher resiliency. Nevertheless, schools should not negate the role they play in cultivating greater commitment and values in teachers to positively affect teacher resiliency.

Commitment and values in this study refer to teachers' strong commitments to watching students learn, succeed, and grow. Although individuals can assume commitment, and values to students should be an absolute value for teachers, in their constant interactions with students, this is not always the case. There are teachers who remain in the profession for a number of logistical reasons such as salary, commute,

vacation time, benefits, etc. Although these are legitimate benefits to teaching, these benefits should not circumvent commitment to students. In addition to these reasons, there are also teachers who start teaching because they are committed to students. However, due to burnout, their commitment becomes misplaced, wavers, or disappears. If teachers are burnt-out or experience misplaced commitments, the researcher offers recommendations for supporting teacher resiliency through renewed commitment and values.

In the case of misplaced commitment and values, i.e. teachers who do not enjoy or are indifferent towards working with students but remain in teaching for logistical reasons, schools should encourage these teachers to seek different professions. In fact, on and offsite counselors should be available to help guide teachers to pursue professions that are more compatible with their strengths. Searching for different professions should not be stigmatized as a negative process. It can be viewed as an opportunity to place teachers in a profession which maximizes their unique strengths and talents. Although training counselors is a costly expenditure, in the long term, it is far less costly for schools to release a teacher who is not committed to students than to maintain that teacher's position. Moreover, the emotional damage on students who are being educated by a negative "alternate mirror" is far more costly when considering student achievement and resiliency.

Aside from counselors, schools can incorporate teacher sabbaticals for teachers who have misplaced commitment and values. It can be a sensitive process for schools to discern which teachers they identify to have misplaced commitment and values.

Therefore, there should be sufficient and legitimate evidence from parents, school administrators, and other school personnel to assess that a teacher does not enjoy working with students. Sufficient evidence implies negative teacher behavior and attitude towards students is consistently occurring or has occurred frequently; and legitimate evidence implies a reasonable person would judge a teacher's behavior as negative towards students. It is understandable that even teachers who are highly committed to students can occasionally exhibit a negative attitude and/or behavior towards students out of frustration and/or miscellaneous personal issues. Therefore, individuals must be careful in judging whether a teacher's negative attitude and behavior is situational or permanent. With ample, sufficient, and legitimate evidence, teachers under investigation should be encouraged to take teacher sabbaticals.

Teacher sabbaticals would be designed to help teachers re-evaluate whether they should or should not remain in the classroom. During teacher sabbaticals, counselors should be available for alternate job searches and/or redirecting teachers to focus their commitment and values on students. Ultimately, teacher sabbaticals and alternate job searches should assume that consistent and permanent misplaced teacher commitment and values should be grounds for dismissal.

Not only are misplaced teacher commitment and values detrimental to teacher resiliency, teacher burnout also deleteriously affects teacher resiliency. In cases of teacher burnout, professional development opportunities can be implemented. Districts can create an instrument, or adopt a pre-existing instrument, to test for teacher burnout. If the percentage of teacher burnout is high at a particular school site, schools can

incorporate professional development centered on alleviating burnout. The researcher recommends professional development topics on resiliency or strengths based frameworks for school sites.

However, professional development does not have to be limited to topics on resiliency presented by experts. If, and when plausible, schools can and should cultivate a culture of resiliency. Schools can encourage a culture of resiliency through collegial discussions centered on resiliency. These discussions do not have to be on formal topics, nor do they require long periods of time. Teachers who share in social interactions with their colleagues for several minutes can affect teacher resiliency (Kyriacou, 2001). Teacher resiliency is fostered during even short periods of time because sharing creates stronger connections with others (Howard & Johnson, 2004; Kyriacou, 2001).

Sharing with colleagues can also include informal topics centered on discussing daily struggles, accomplishments, and/or inquiries about classroom practice. Schools can divide teacher discussion groups by grade level or any other predetermined effective grouping system. Most importantly, however, is that a culture of resiliency is created when teachers shift their frame of thinking from a damage model to a strengths based model. This shift should be evident in the language teachers use on site, how teachers interact with their students, and how teachers discuss classroom and school wide issues. Is the predominate focus of discussions on prescribing solutions to diagnose problems; or, are teachers focused on cultivating the positives in their schools and in their work with students? This question can help asses whether schools are in the process of, or do not have a culture of resiliency.

Shared Power

Shared power is a significant predictor of teacher resiliency as determined by the multiple regression analyses in the study. Shared power is also a school factor linked to teacher resiliency as identified by the literature on teacher resiliency and retention (Bernard, 2001; Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001; Bobeck, 2002; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Henderson, 2004; Patterson et al., 2004; Petty, 2007; Sumison, 2004; Yost, 2006). When teachers have greater power in shared decision making, they are better equipped to withstand hardships and produce more positive outcomes in schools (Hammond & Onikama, 1996). Therefore, the researcher offers four recommendations to cultivate greater shared power in schools to promote teacher resiliency.

One practical means to implement shared power in schools is to allow teachers to be active participants in school wide and classroom decisions. More active teacher participation promotes a collaborative environment and leads to overall school improvement (Harris, 2001). Also, shared power in the form of shared decision making is a non-negotiable aspect of teacher resiliency (Bernard, 2001). Shared power is a basic human need that, when met, acts as a protective factor against negative stress (Bernard, 2001). However, when shared power is non-existent in schools this can lead to teacher burnout. For some schools, allowing teachers to be significant participants in shared decision making requires no additional resources. Many schools have committees and councils set in place allowing for teachers to be important shareholders in school wide decisions. It is not the existence of these groups that is critical, but rather the level of

participation and accountability. If councils and committees do exist to promote shared power, how much power do they exercise in actuality? Are the decisions made by these groups implemented at school sites or are they ignored by school personnel?

Schools should implement accountability measures to ensure genuine shared decision making takes place at the end of each school year. Group members can have an evaluation to reflect on issues such as what decisions are made, whether the group's decisions are honored, and whether changes need to be made to improve the decision making process. The end of the year evaluation should be open for all interested school members, including parents, to participate. If conflicts arise districts can provide necessary mediators, approved by the district and relevant teacher representatives, to negotiate a compromise.

Another area in which teachers should have greater shared decision making power is in classroom curriculum. If a uniform school curriculum is a requirement of the district, then teachers should have the freedom to choose from a set of programs rather than a single program. A single absolute program implies a "one size fits all" philosophy of teaching which is ineffective for teachers and students. Teachers should be allowed to collaborate on curriculum programs which effectively meet the needs of their unique student population. Moreover, the process of collaborating with colleagues helps induce teacher resiliency as teachers build greater connections with others (Howard & Johnson, 2004). Often in urban schools, the demands of district accountability systems place limitations on the freedom to choose school wide curriculum. Given this situation, if schools exhibit little to no improvement in student achievement for five consecutive years,

then districts should offer mandated programs proven to show results in student achievement. Furthermore, teachers should have freedom in deciding how classroom curriculum is delivered to students. Oftentimes, curriculum delivery in schools is tightly monitored and regulated. This practice leaves little to no room for teacher creativity and innovation. If teachers have strategies and practices that best meet the needs of their student population, as determined by student achievement, teachers should have the freedom to implement these practices. More importantly, teachers need to share these best practices with their colleagues.

An additional recommendation for shared power is that teachers should also be leading and choosing topics for 50% of professional development sessions. Some districts have policies set in place for teachers to lead an allotted amount of professional development. However, these policies are not always honored at school sites. Who ensures that teachers do have authority in choosing and leading professional development topics? In other words, are there existing accountability measures to ensure teacher ownership in choosing and leading professional development?

It is critical for teachers to lead professional development sessions because it promotes teacher resiliency and leads to lasting change. When teachers feel more competent about their practice in the classroom, they are more prone to overcome negative stress in the work place (Hoffman, 2004). However, most professional development is led by outsiders who present unfamiliar ideas to the classroom which teachers are asked to absorb; this process is known as "technician based learning" (Dana & Silva, 2003). Although technician based learning has value, it does little in building

new understanding which leads to lasting change (Weinbaum et al., 2004). Transformative learning, however, occurs when teachers engage in reflective dialogue with their colleagues, rather than outsiders; this process of learning is more conducive to promoting lasting change (Borko, 2004; Dana & Silva, 2003; Wilson & Berne, 1999).

Many of the aforementioned recommendations of implementing shared power to increase teacher resiliency are not possible without the presence of a good leader or a moral leader. It is the school leader, or school administrator, who plays a significant role in deciding whether he/she is willing to share his/her power with teachers. Unfortunately for schools most dynamics of power are "top down" (Pepper & Tomas, 2002). Not only is this power dynamic ineffective in leadership, it has negative repercussions of low teacher morale, low productivity, high teacher burnout, and high teacher stress (Pepper & Tomas, 2002). Leadership in the presence of shared power, however, leads to positive teacher work habits (Hammond & Onikama, 1996) and teachers feeling a stronger connection to schools (Muijs et al., 2004). Therefore, a good leader exercises power from a platform of collaboration, and he/she believes without shared power schools will fail (Fullan, 2003).

As consistently mentioned throughout this chapter, accountability is necessary in assuring the presence of a good school administrator to increase teacher resiliency. Ironically, schools have accountability measures set in place for assessing teachers, i.e. formal yearly teacher evaluations. There are also accountability measures set in place for student achievement, i.e. state testing. However, there are few to no accountability measures to assess school administrators. This lack of accountability for school

administrators ignores the compelling fact that the school leader is the most influential figure in changing the culture or dynamics of a school (Fullan, 2003). Furthermore, it is the school leader who has an impact on teacher resiliency (Ascher, 1991; Brunetti, 2006; Certo & Fox, 2002; Hammond & Onikama, 1996; Harvey, 2007; Hoffman, 2004; Holloway, 2003; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Sumison, 2004). Therefore, it is necessary to ensure a good administrator is leading a school when considering a teacher's longevity in the profession is vulnerable to an administrator's style of leadership.

In order to implement greater accountability for school administrators, the researcher recommends administrators solicit and receive evaluations by teachers at the end of each school year. The district and appropriate teacher representatives can decide the areas in which administrators are evaluated. Consistent unsatisfactory administrator evaluations should lead to school transfer, or dismissal, in extreme situations. Due to the fact that higher teacher morale, positive work ethics, and higher teacher efficacy are connected to the presence of a good school administrator (Hammond & Onikama, 1996), the consistent accountability measures for administrators are necessary to promote teacher resiliency.

Urban School Dynamics

Urban school dynamics is an additional significant school factor promoting teacher resiliency not originally identified in the literature on teacher resiliency and retention. Of the 121 resilient teachers in the study who responded to survey item four, 27.27% self-report urban school dynamics is a significant additional school factor leading

to their resiliency. Although the study's resilient teachers also self-report high percentages of low student achievement, teacher stress, student/family poverty, and student discipline issues, as seen in Table 5, they still remain in the classroom. The specific dynamics of urban schools including English Language Learners, students of poverty, students from different cultural backgrounds, and immigrant students are all compelling reasons for why public, urban, resilient elementary teachers remain resilient.

Moreover, within the response of urban school dynamics, 14.88% of resilient teachers' state being a product of urban schools and communities themselves is a significant reason these teachers remain resilient. Although this percentage seems low, the researcher considers it significant because resilient teachers are free to identify any additional reasons affecting their desire to continue teaching in urban schools. Out of the limitless number of reasons resilient teachers could have identified, 14.88% of the responses specifically reference being a product of urban schools and communities as linked to their resiliency. Therefore, the researcher recommends two practical applications to promote greater teacher resiliency which nurtures those who are products of urban schools and communities.

First, stronger teacher education programs should exist in high schools. If being a member of an urban community and attending an urban school is a poignant reason that resilient teachers remain resilient, then universities should implement programs to help guide high school students early on in their career. Although stronger teacher education programs would initially have a more prominent effect on novice teacher resiliency, if teachers remain in the profession longer because of their affinity to urban communities

this would ultimately affect teacher resiliency. Therefore, universities should work collaboratively with high school students who show a strong commitment to becoming urban educators. For these students, volunteer programs to become teaching assistants in nearby high schools, junior highs, and/or elementary schools should be instituted as an elective course. Then, high school students can gain exposure and clarity as to whether they want to pursue urban education in the near future.

High school students who show a strong commitment to teach in urban schools should also have a teacher mentor in high school. This mentor can serve as a resource in outlining the job search process, provide teaching exposure, and address students' questions and concerns. Finally, high school students should receive extra financial aid or separate scholarships to enter urban teacher education programs. In the current national financial crisis it may seem unlikely schools will have the resources to provide these financial luxuries for high school students. However, in the long term, urban high school students who pursue urban education show promising benefits for teacher resiliency. It will be far less costly for schools to employ teachers who will remain resilient in the workforce and have strong connections to urban students because of their personal background, rather than employ teachers who stay in urban schools for logistical reasons. The benefits prospective urban high school students will have on education in urban schools cannot be measured by a price tag. As a result, additional financial incentives provided to these students should be regarded as a high priority investment for urban schools.

The second practical recommendation is in the area of loan forgiveness programs for teachers teaching in urban communities. Most loan forgiveness programs are offered to teachers, and/or students, prior to their employment in urban schools. In some instances this creates an obligatory rather than voluntary commitment to teach in urban schools. Four teachers in this study self-reported they teach in urban schools to fulfill their loan forgiveness obligations, even though they prefer to teach in a non-urban area. Loan programs set up to pay off a certain percentage of school loans in exchange for a predetermined commitment to teach in urban schools may not be a beneficial way to recruit teachers. Novice teachers who enter these loan forgiveness contracts do so without realizing they are unprepared to teach in urban schools. This can lead to heightened teacher burnout and an inability to leave urban schools because of contractual obligations.

In order to avoid this dynamic of novice teacher attrition, loan forgiveness programs should be offered to urban school teachers after they have already taught in urban schools for an allotted period. This way, novice teachers will not feel bound to pursue a profession for which they are not suited. The researcher recommends that loan forgiveness programs require a six year commitment to urban schools as a minimum requirement. Since teachers nationwide leave the profession at high percentages after the first five years (Bolich, 2001), six years demonstrates a higher degree of teacher resiliency.

Furthermore, loan forgiveness and/or financial aid programs for urban school teachers can be more stringent in their acceptance of qualified applicants. Programs can require recommendation letters from school site administrators, fellow colleagues, and/or

parents. Recommendation letters should indicate the applicant's strong commitment to urban schools. Program qualifications can also require applicants to demonstrate community service in urban school communities. As will be mentioned in the community section of this chapter, community service can include a variety of creative projects. Some project ideas are organizing school and neighboring business collaborations for school events, bringing in community members for book readings or lectures, or serving on school community committees/councils. Recommendations for loan forgiveness programs may have more prominent effects on novice teacher resiliency than on teacher resiliency. However, if novice teachers are not suited for urban schools but are contractually bound to remain teaching in urban schools, this can ultimately affect teacher resiliency. This is due to the fact that burnt-out novice teachers can leave the profession sooner and create more teaching opportunities for teachers who are better equipped to persevere in the classroom.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is an additional school factor linked to teacher resiliency not originally identified in the literature on teacher resiliency and retention, but was self-reported by 23.14% of the resilient teachers in the study. Intrinsic motivation is a challenging school factor for schools to promote in order to increase teacher resiliency. This is largely due to the fact that intrinsic motivation is an internal and individualistic factor within teachers. Although intrinsic motivation is internal, schools still have a role in cultivating intrinsic motivation for urban school teachers to promote their resiliency. The following recommendations are not an exhaustive list, nor an absolute list of

recommendations for school sites to incorporate. Rather, the recommendations are a list of potential practical applications to cultivate intrinsic motivation to increase teacher resiliency.

One practical application to cultivate teacher intrinsic motivation is for schools to implement practices that recognize teacher accomplishments. Teacher accomplishments do not have to be formal or grandiose in order to receive recognition. The kinds of teacher accomplishments schools choose to recognize should be decided at the school site. In addition, nominating teachers to be recognized can be decided staff wide or by a school administrator. It is not the act of rewarding individual teacher accomplishments that is most important. Rather, the value comes from creating a habit of recognition. Oftentimes, schools have programs set in place to recognize students for outstanding behavior, high achievement, and perfect attendance. These programs and recognitions are designed to continually motivate students to achieve at high levels of expectation set by schools. These programs are also designed to motivate other students to achieve at high standards set by peers. Arguably, these programs can create a competitive culture. Nevertheless, this largely depends on how equitably teachers are nominated and the types of recognition teachers are receiving.

As previously mentioned, the purpose of recognizing teacher accomplishments is to build a habit of recognition. All too often teachers are faced with a conundrum of hardships and negative stress in schools. This negative stress is even more apparent in urban schools, in which teachers experience the highest rates of attrition (Darling-Hammond, 1998). In a toxic environment it is critical for schools, and school personnel,

to act as “alternate mirrors” (Henderson, 2007) to buffer against school stress and build greater teacher resiliency. The assemblies in which teacher accomplishments are publicly recognized can act as this alternate mirror, since the assembly functions as a voice of positivism. The importance of these assemblies is to consistently search for the positives and strengths within individual teachers and affirm those characteristics. Ideally this consistent recognition can serve as a shift in paradigm from a damage model to a resiliency model.

Moreover, the consistent recognition serves as a practical means to build greater intrinsic motivation for teachers. Although public recognition is viewed as an extrinsic reward, the recognition is implemented to extrinsically affirm the positive behaviors, attitudes, and contributions teachers make to the workplace. This affirmation can help build teacher perseverance in the classroom through encouragement. Most often, all it takes is one voice to consistently recognize a teacher’s hard work to build the long term capacity to persevere in a setting that presents challenges.

If schools experience hesitation in incorporating public teacher recognition for reasons such as lack of resources, insufficiencies in time, disagreement with public recognition, etc., there are other viable options to recognize teachers. Schools can choose to incorporate teacher recognition through school newsletters, if available. Recognition can also come from informal cards, letters, and memos from school personnel recognizing teacher accomplishments. As reiterated, the emphasis is placed on recognition becoming a habit or a culture of the school. However, schools should be cautious of ingenuous recognition which can come from over recognizing teachers and/or

recognizing teachers for ambiguous accomplishments, i.e. working hard. Schools or school administrators should be specific in teacher recognition. Schools should also continuously dialogue about the kinds of attitudes and behaviors which are important to schools and search for teachers exhibiting those qualities. In this way, schools reinforce important values and validate teachers who are responsive to those values.

Community

Although community is not a school factor linked to teacher resiliency in the literature, it is an additional school factor linked to teacher resiliency as self-reported by 20.66% of resilient teachers in the study. Community referenced two disparate categories according to the responses of 121 resilient teachers in the study. First, community refers to the actual community in which a school is located. Secondly, it refers to parents or families who are living in the community. The researcher discusses both categories in this section. In reference to community as the actual community in which the school is located, the researcher recommends school committees centered on fostering stronger community relationships. It is common for school sites to have committees which are in charge of different school functions, such as social committee, safety committee, and technology committee. Schools do not need to expend extra funding to create school based committees if these committees already exist.

Community committees could be focused on creating partnerships with existing community businesses interested in collaborating with neighborhood schools. These partnerships could include sponsoring schools for funding extra expenditures, using community members to share information about what they do in the community, and

inviting community members to participate in school events. A specific type of event in which schools can incorporate community involvement is nutrition fairs. To organize a nutrition fair, schools can ask local medical centers, dental offices, or fire stations to participate in educating local children about nutrition and safety. If schools can create strong and lasting relationships with different community centers, perhaps schools can implement loftier school plans. Schools can collaborate with dental offices to provide free services to students and/or parents on campus. This same idea can be incorporated for medical centers. Medical centers can work with the school site, or school nurse, to provide flu vaccinations for students and parents, tuberculosis tests for parents who want to volunteer in schools, and general preventive care for community members. In this way, schools can be the hub of community interaction, rather than a separate piece of the community.

In addition, districts could offer community service as an incentive to gain salary credit/s. As a salary credit/s, teachers can work individually or in a group to devise community based projects centered on school and community collaboration. Teachers should be given the choice to be as creative as possible in deciding specific projects. Along with receiving salary points for community based projects, teacher education programs could incorporate community inquiry projects. Students who enroll in teacher education programs can engage in community inquiry projects designed to build stronger partnerships between schools and communities.

Teacher involvement with parents/families in the community is also an additional significant school factor promoting teacher resiliency. To build a stronger connection

between parents/families and teachers, schools need to create more frequent opportunities for these groups to interact. Schools have one pre-existing opportunity for promoting parent/family and teacher interactions through parent conferences. Parent conferences are an opportunity for teachers to meet with students' parents and family members. However, not all parents are able to participate due to time conflicts, child care issues, and work obligations. Schools should place a high premium on parent conferences and create the least amount of barriers to parent meetings with their child's teacher. One practical application to dismantle barriers would be having parent conferences later in the evening for working parents and compensating teachers through incentives.

Additionally, parent conferences should not be limited to parents meeting with their child's teacher. Schools could host open house events in which parents could visit different classrooms and meet with their child's potential future teacher, meet with other grade level teachers, and visit past teachers. The purpose of this open house would be to remind parents that the school encourages relationships with the staff as a whole, rather than as an isolated connection with their child's teacher.

Parent conferences are a practical and important way to cultivate greater teacher resiliency because connection with parents is a reason why resilient teachers self-reported they remained in urban schools. Yet, parent conferences should not be the sole avenue to promote stronger relationships. As mentioned earlier, the stronger connection between parents, families, and teachers comes from frequent opportunities to interact. Another practical means to build stronger connections is for schools to host family nights centered on topics schools identify as imperative to student achievement. Some examples for

hosting family nights can include math night, literacy night, technology night, and/or health fairs. These nights are designed to give families a chance to interact with their child and other teachers at the school. With appropriate execution, family nights can provide parents with tools to help their child with school subjects at home. These nights can also provide an opportunity for families to familiarize themselves with other school members.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was the normality assumption for commitment and values. The mean for commitment and values is high, *M= 4.75*, and due to this fact the curve for the predictor variable was strongly positively skewed, i.e. to the right. As a result, the normality assumption for this variable was violated. Despite the violation of normality, correlations, t-tests, linear regression, confirmatory factor analysis are all robust to relatively minor violations to the normality assumption (Hays, 1994). Skewness for normal variables fell within the -2 to +2 range, commitment and values had a skewness of -3.43. This skewness value is relatively close to a normal skewness value of -2 (Hays, 1994).

A second limitation of the study was the low reliability levels of commitment and values, α= .64, and shared power, α= .69. The reliability level of shared power, α=.69, is .01 below an acceptable minimum of Alpha Coefficient. Low alpha levels could have occurred for shared power because of the limited number of survey items to measure this variable, n=2. In future studies, at least one more variable should be added to this survey in measuring the variable of shared power. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter Four,

participants reported confusion about the wording of survey items to measure shared power; in future studies, this item should be reworded to more clearly represent the construct of shared power. Nevertheless, a commonly acceptable minimum level of reliability for the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient is .70. Commitment and values also had a lower Alpha Coefficient reliability. Similarly to commitment and values, low reliability could have occurred because participants experience confusion in the wording of the survey items. Future studies should be careful to provide clearer wording for this item when measuring this construct.

In addition to commitment and values and shared power, teacher efficacy also had a lower reliability level, α=.64. In order to increase reliability the researcher omitted survey item fourteen (See Appendix A); by omitting this item, the reliability level increased to α=.82. Participants reported confusion about the wording of item fourteen. Furthermore, teachers in the study did not equate survey item fourteen to measure their efficacy. Rather, participants believed it measured how they dealt with stress at the workplace. Future studies should omit survey item fourteen and create a new item which is clearly linked to teacher efficacy, such as "My classroom skills can lead to higher student achievement."

A third limitation of the study was that the researcher did not conduct teacher interviews. Teacher interviews could potentially have provided an in depth look into the significant school factors linked to teacher resiliency. The study's Likert and free response results, rather, were identified as the most appropriate method to answer the study's two research questions.

Future Research

This study had a selective base of participants. It surveyed 284 teachers in sixteen public urban elementary schools in two urban districts in Southern California. The researcher proposes four alternative recommendations for future studies on teacher resiliency and retention.

The first recommendation is to distribute the study's survey, or a similar survey, to high school teachers. The purpose of this is to discover whether the school factors identified in the literature, and additional school factors identified by the study's resilient teachers, produce similar findings when researching responses from teachers at the secondary level.

The second recommendation is to reproduce this study in a different state, and/or city, with teachers from a similar demographic of schools to verify if the findings are generalizable to different areas.

The third recommendation is to conduct a study using teacher interviews with resilient teachers to discover the reasons why teachers remain resilient in urban schools. The interviews can be followed up with classroom observations to research a more detailed picture of how and why resilient teachers remain resilient. Resilient teachers can be identified by the number of years they teach in urban schools, by recommendations from a school administrator, or by teachers who match an alternative operational definition of resiliency. The stories captured in the interviews would add depth to the research on the school factors that increase teacher resiliency in urban settings.

The fourth recommendation is to survey teachers in schools from different socioeconomic levels, i.e. suburban schools. The findings can be used to compare with the findings from an identical study on urban schools. Researchers can use the data to determine if similarities and/or differences exist in school factors that promote teacher resiliency for urban and non-urban schools.

Conclusion

Commitment and values, shared power, urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community are significant school factors which promote teacher resiliency as identified in this study. If schools want to stop nationwide teacher attrition rates plaguing schools (Bolich, 2001), schools need to view reform through a resiliency model. Resiliency theory calls for a shift in paradigm from people's weaknesses to their strengths (Richardson et al., 1990). Despite potential challenges schools may receive in resistance to this paradigm shift, it is important to note the reasons for this much needed change. Teachers are leaving the profession at rates higher than 50% after the first five years in urban schools (Bolich, 2001). Urban school teachers are plagued with high rates of stress, as presented in the research (Darling-Hammond, 1998) and in the study (see Table 5). Yet, it is these same teachers experiencing burnout that are expected to motivate students to move from the risk of drop out to the hope of resiliency; and this ability to motivate students to change seems dismal when teachers are burnt-out.

The hope of resiliency, on the other hand, is that it is an innate capacity which exists in all individuals (Richardson, 2002), but is more prevalent in individuals with strong protective factors (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Commitment and values, shared

power, urban school dynamics, intrinsic motivation, and community all serve as protective factors to increase teacher resiliency. It is the responsibility of schools and districts to take these school factors into consideration when supporting educators to move from risk to resiliency.

Moving teachers from risk to resiliency was the focus of this study because I, the researcher, witnessed friends, colleagues, and acquaintances leaving the field embittered and burnt-out; and these teachers did not enter the profession feeling this way. They began with dreams of success, ideal visions of social justice, admirable work ethics, and a passion for urban schools. It was disheartening to watch these same, once resilient educators, leave the classroom with the conviction to never return. It has been disheartening to see the tears, to hear the stories, and to watch the farewell footsteps of teachers who swore they would live out their careers in the classroom. They left, not because they were no longer committed to students, but because they felt underappreciated and overworked by school systems. Even more disconcerting was that the most significant loss in the attrition of these teachers was the students. Students deserve the opportunity to be in a classroom with a teacher committed to their success. Injustice occurs when students are not given the basic right of having a quality, caring teacher in the classroom. This injustice motivated me, the researcher, to discover the reasons why teachers persevere in the classroom, in hopes of sharing this knowledge and retaining the teachers schools can not afford to lose.

APPENDIX A

Survey Questionnaire to Teachers

Teacher Experience in Urban Elementary Schools

DIRECTIONS: Below are some statements concerning your experience as a teacher in an urban, elementary school.

- **Carefully read all statements.**
- **Circle the number under the heading that most accurately describes you.**
- **For example, if you disagree circle a number near 1, if you agree circle a number near 5, and if you are neutral circle the number 3.**

The reason I teach in an urban school is because…….

	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Somewhat Agree	Agree
1. I have colleagues who support me……..	1	2	3	4	5
2. I am good at my job……..	1	2	3	4	5
3. The administration respects me as a professional…….	1	2	3	4	5
4. There are opportunities for me to improve my teaching	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am committed to teaching students in urban schools	1	2	3	4	5
6. I participate in making decisions that affect the school….	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can attend conferences that better my practice……	1	2	3	4	5
8. The principal values my work as a teacher……	1	2	3	4	5
9. I have opportunities to collaborate with my colleagues….	1	2	3	4	5
10. I find satisfaction in watching students learn……...	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel I am a competent teacher with knowledge of good classroom skills and strategies…….	1	2	3	4	5
12. I have personal strengths that positively affects my work	1	2	3	4	5
13. The principal helps me positively deal with school stress	1	2	3	4	5
14. I do not take negative situations at work personally…….	1	2	3	4	5

15. I enjoy working with students in the classroom..……..	1	2	3	4	5
16. I have colleagues with whom I can vent my frustrations..	1	2	3	4	5
17. My school provides professional development opportunities to improve my practice……..……	1	2	3	4	5
18. I feel empowered at my school to positively contribute as a teacher…….1		2	3	4	5
19. I feel physically safe working at my school……..	1	2	3	4	5
20. The parents respect the work I do at this school……1		2	3	4	5
21. It is in a convenient location for me to commute home…	1	2	3	4	5

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gain a deeper understanding of why elementary teachers choose to stay or choose to leave urban schools.

Although your participation would be greatly appreciated and beneficial to this study, it is completely voluntary. Turning in a blank questionnaire is sufficient to show non-participation. Your responses are also completely anonymous, and they will only be used for research purposes. If you have any concerns or questions please contact Jinny Kim at Genie360@aol.com. Your concerns/questions will be addressed promptly.

DIRECTIONS:

- **Please carefully read each statement on both pages of this questionnaire.**
- **Fill in the bubble next to the response that most accurately describes you.**
- **When a question requires a short answer, your honest responses would be greatly appreciated**
- **Again, this survey is anonymous**
- **There is no right or wrong answer.**

Teacher Background

1. How many years have you taught in an **URBAN** school?

○ 0-2 years ○ 3-5 years ○ 6-10 years ○ 11-15 years ○ 15+years

a. If you have been teaching in urban schools for 0-5 years, do you plan to continue teaching in urban schools?(If you are unsure, please select the response which **MOST CLOSELY** represents your future plans in teaching)

○ Yes ○ No

2. Please fill in **ONLY ONE** bubble below that **BEST** describes your reason for teaching in an urban school:

○ it is my personal choice/preference and I find satisfaction in it

○ it is a job and provides a steady income

○ I have been working in urban schools for a long time and do not have a strong desire to look for another site or job.

○ I would prefer to work in another area, but there has not been an opportunity for me to.

○ Other (please explain):_____

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3. Please fill in **ALL** the bubbles below that apply to the following statement: Which of the following factor/s below do you believe are characteristic of your experience in urban schools?

○ high teacher turnover
○ student/family poverty
○ poor student health
○ low student achievement
○ student discipline issues
○ high levels of teacher stress
○ All of the above

4. What are 1-3 **ADDITIONAL** (not mentioned in the survey) reasons that you remain teaching in an urban school?

a. _____

b. _____

c._____

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