FACTORS INFLUENCING ELEMENTS OF STRESS AND AUTONOMY AND CONTROL AMONG SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

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School principals play one of the most important roles in education. Research has consistently confirmed this, stating that a principal's influence is second only to that of teachers in terms of student achievement and the well-being of students and teachers in a building (Devos, Bouckenooghe, Engels, Hooton, & Aelterman, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003; Rodriguez-Campos; Rincones-Gomez, & Shen, 2005). A dynamic, effective, and compelling principal is a critical component in maintaining a successful school. Understanding the factors that contribute to the health, satisfaction, and well-being of practicing school principals is essential because of the impact that principals have on teacher performance and student learning. This study employed a mixed-methods approach and attempted to determine the specific tasks performed by building principals that contribute to their stress. Career trajectories, coping mechanisms, experiences with school leadership training providers, and salary and financial implications are interconnected with the research questions, and were also considered.

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PREFACE

I cannot thank enough the people that have supported me along this journey, which will hopefully lead to a long and productive career as a scholar. First and foremost is my lovely wife Kiara. I feel fortunate that I found someone that completes me as a person, and is supportive in everything I do. She is one in a million, and I am the luckiest man in the world to have her. Next are my mom and dad, LeRoy and Linda Sabina, who have been by my side and sacrificed their entire life to give me opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise. Professionally, no one has meant more to me than Dr. Jennifer Russell. Dr. Russell gave me my first opportunity to research and publish and understand what the life of being a scholar is like. Also, Dr. Maureen McClure, Dr. Michele Langbein, Dr. Sharon Kruse, and Dr. Susan Curtin have been four of the most amazing people that I could have asked for as mentors. I was fortunate enough to find four amazing people from four different institutions that mentored me and helped me to prepare for a career in academia. Each spent countless hours helping me to grow as a person and become the man that I am today. For that, I am truly grateful. I also must acknowledge the help and support that I received from Dr. Francie Spigelmyer, Dr. Nomsa Geleta, Dr. Mary Jo Melvin, and Dr. Sandi Waite-Stupiansky. Your support and mentorship meant a lot to me as I was beginning my academic career, and I can't thank you enough. For those of you reading, thank YOU for taking the time to read what has been my blood, sweat, and tears over the last seven years. I really hope you enjoy the journey!

1.0 INTRODUCTION

School principals play one of the most important roles in education. Research has consistently confirmed this, stating that a principal's influence is second only to that of teachers in terms of student achievement and the well-being of students and teachers in a building (Devos, Bouckenooghe, Engels, Hooton, & Aelterman, 2007; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, & Gundlach, 2003; Rodriguez-Campos; Rincones-Gomez, & Shen, 2005). A dynamic, effective, and compelling principal is a critical component in maintaining a successful school. Understanding the factors that contribute to the health, satisfaction, and well-being of practicing school principals is essential because of the impact that principals have on teacher performance and student learning. This study employed a mixed-methods approach and attempted to determine the specific tasks performed by building principals that contribute to their stress. Career trajectories, coping mechanisms, experiences with school leadership training providers, and salary and financial implications are interconnected with the research questions, and were also considered.

As a principal's role is entrenched with many challenges and responsibilities, it is only natural that it is considered a stressful position. In a recent book that addressed the importance of time management and stress reduction for school administrators, the authors found that 50 to 75 percent of principals believe that the job of building principal is the most stressful job in education (Queen & Queen, 2005). If certain tasks and events cause school principals more

stress than others, identifying those tasks could significantly impact job satisfaction and help to inform current and future principals of the realities of the position. It is important to briefly discuss stress research in order to contextualize the problem in terms of education and school administrative personnel.

Stress research emerged in the mid-1900s from the discipline of experimental medicine and the work of Austrian researcher Hans Selye. Selye (1956) was involved in hormone research in which rats were injected with various drugs and then observed to identify how the rats would adjust to the physiological changes brought about by the injections. While Selye's initial research was focused on changes in rats' behavior after being injected with sex hormones, a significant finding from his study was related to the biological changes experienced by the rats and their reactions to those changes. This finding would lead to the initial theories of stress in mammals. Selye's initial definition of stress (1956) was "the state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the nonspecifically induced changes within a biologic system. Thus, stress has its own characteristic form and composition but no particular cause" (p. 54). His later research (Selye, 1974) would identify stress as a three-stage process consisting of alarm reaction, resistance, and exhaustion, which he likened to the three stages of life: childhood, adulthood, and senility. This would serve as a framework for stress research in other disciplines. Selye found there to be no best way to deal with stress effectively since everyone has different thresholds and responses to stress. Therefore, the key in stress research comes in looking for patterns and events that cause an excessive amount of stress and then focusing on better preparation for when those events occur.

Initial studies that emerged, following Selye's research, were designed to look at stress in terms of the relationship between individuals and their work environment, occupational stress,

and how organizations and different organizational situations can contribute to an individual's stress (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Kahn, 1970; Appley & Trumbull, 1984). This would further be developed to specific organizational settings, such as mental health, industrial labor organizations, office positions, and education. The work in education emerged in the mid-to-late 1970s and would continue to grow in prominence through the 1980s. In 1994, it was reported that over 100,000 studies had been conducted across all disciplines that used the term "stress" as a part of research (Gmelch & Chan, 1994). This further acknowledges the growing literature base on stress, burnout, coping strategies, and pressures that individuals face as employees in organizations.

It should also be mentioned that while stress research was being contextualized as a negative consequence for managers and employees in organizations, researchers were also beginning to report on the positive effects of stress (Morse & Furst, 1982; Cloud, 1991; Gatto, 1993). Morse and Furst (1982) would define the term "eustress" as a healthy stress that an individual faces, which can result in "improved physical and mental functioning" (p. 42). Some have argued that eustress is a necessary characteristic in all individuals who have demonstrated success in their personal and professional lives. Gatto (1993) also commented on this phenomenon and has suggested that the challenge comes in ensuring that the stress is adequately managed so that it does not effect performance.

As stress research was increasing in prominence and visibility throughout different occupational and organizational contexts, it was adapted to education. One researcher, Walter Gmelch, would eventually become one of the most published and cited scholars on stress research related to education. Gmelch built on Selye's work and credited him for being the "foremost authority on stress" (Gmelch, 1988). Much like Selye, Gmlech believed that

prescriptive and scientific approaches could not work to determine a predictable, reoccurring pattern that could lead to stress reduction and that multiple variables must be considered when looking at professionals' stress levels and coping techniques.

Gmelch's first work in stress research dates back to 1977, when Gmelch (and Boyd Swent) developed the Administrator Stress Index (ASI) to determine the types of stress that school administrators experience (Gmelch & Swent, 1977). The ASI utilized four dimensions of stress: task-based, role-based, conflict-mediating, and boundary-spanning stress. Gmelch and Swent's study found that principals experienced stress in all four dimensions to varying degrees. Gmelch would continue using the ASI for teacher leaders and building-level principals throughout the 1980s and occasionally would revisit his research in different contexts (organizational roles and responsibilities and coping strategies) in the 1990s (Gmelch & Swent, 1981; Koch, Tung, Gmelch, & Swent, 1982; Gmelch & Torelli, 1984; Gmelch, 1988a; Gmelch, 1988b; Gmelch & Gates, 1998). He next chose to transition his stress research to focus on school superintendents, higher education faculty members, academic deans, and collegiate department chairs from the mid-1980s to 1990s. During that period, he developed the Deans' Stress Index (DSI) and the Administrator Work Index (AWI) (Gmelch, Lovrich, & Wilke, 1984; Gmelch, 1987; Burns & Gmelch, 1995; Gmelch, 1996; Wolverton, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 1999).

The primary conclusions from Gmelch's work with school administrators were that time management was one of the most effective coping strategies for stress reduction (Gmelch, 1978); gender differences do exist in the ways that men and women approach stress (Gmelch, 1988a); the more years of experience that school administrators have, the less stress they tend to experience (Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent, 1982); and there are multiple modalities in which

educators could seek stress reduction techniques across all four of the ASI's stress dimensions (Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent, 1982; Gmelch, 1988a; Gmelch & Chan, 1994). Gmelch's conclusions present an opportunity for future research on the causes of stress for school administrators, as the role of the school administrator has significantly changed over the last thirty years.

Since Gmelch's studies, very little work has been done domestically to quantify and evaluate the stresses that school administrators face. There is a significant lack of current literature from the United States that looks at school administrator stress; the majority of research studies concerned with this topic come from Europe, Australia, and parts of Canada (Allison, 1997; Devos, Bouckenooghe, Engels, Hotton, & Aelterman, 2007; Earley & Weindling, 2007; Friedman, 1995; Green, Malcom, Greenwood, & Murphy, 2001; Kruger, vanEck, & Vermeulen, 2005; Thornton, Thomas, & Vine, 1996). Studies from the United States are very dated, some having been published as long as thirty years ago and very few have been published during the last ten years (Davis, 1998; Duke, 1988; Cooper, 1988; Roberson & Matthews, 1988; Kottkamp & Mansfield, 1985; Savery & Detiuk, 1986; Schmidt, 1976; Whitaker, 1995; Whitaker, 1996). The role of the principal has dramatically shifted during the past three decades, especially in the last ten years. With shifting expectations come new responsibilities and new potential causes of stress for school principals, therefore, revisiting this important issue has considerable relevance today.

While the ASI was designed to acknowledge the dimensions of stress that school personnel experience, the instrument does not address the current challenges school administrators face such as the rise of instructional leadership (walkthroughs, teacher mentoring, and coaching), 21st Century technology challenges (checking e-mail on a regular basis, carrying

around portable devices, or pressures in training teachers how to use technology), data-driven decision-making, or the rise in quantities of students identified as candidates for special education and the identification process itself. Also, career trajectories ("is becoming a principal a necessary antecedent to later becoming a school superintendent"), and experiences with training providers ("were you adequately prepared for the realities of becoming a school principal") can also help identify challenges with recruitment and retention of qualified individuals to serve as school administrators. By utilizing the indicators in the ASI as a basis for the indicators in the new instrument, and using the tasks that other researchers have determined best represent what a principal does in their day-to-day activities (Spillane, Pareja, Dorner, Darnes, May, Huff, & Camburn, 2010; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010; Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Pareja, & Lewis, 2008) an updated instrument was designed to reflect the current challenges that today's principals face as well as potential challenges that could cause stress.

This study represents a two-tiered, mixed-method, task-analysis of the causes and implications of stress as reported through survey research, and mixed-method data interpretation. This study specifically focuses on task-based occupational stress as it applies to the education context, and will determine the primary causes of stress for schools principals working in today's rapidly changing educational climate.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There were three purposes of this study. This study examined the tasks that school administrators perform on a daily basis as part of their position and determined which tasks, if any, caused the most stress. This study also linked the relationship between stress and

autonomy, by looking at the tasks where respondents reported high and low amounts of control. Finally, this study addressed whether there were any key characteristics or variables of a "high-stressed" principal, in order to help training providers and professional development groups actively communicate this information to current and future principals. Essential characteristics of each type of administrator were presented that could be utilized by professional development groups and training providers to help prepare or develop individuals that currently serve as school administrators or who plan to pursue a position in the future.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE STUDY

This study comes at a time when the role of the principal is changing and continues to become increasingly difficult. Gmelch and Chan (1994) asserted that principals in the 21st Century will face challenges different than those encountered by leaders working during any other period in school administration. These new challenges include "more pressure, more aggression, more change, and more conflict" (p. 1). The majority of published research on stressors, stress management, and burnout for school administrators was conducted in the 1980s and 1990s (Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent, 1982; Kottkamp & Mansfield, 1985; Savery & Detiuk, 1986; Cooper, 1988; Gmelch, 1988; Sarros, 1988; Carr, 1994; Friedman, 1995; Whitaker, 1995; Thornton, Thomas & Vine, 1996; Whitaker, 1996; Allison, 1997; Gmelch & Gates, 1998), therefore, it is worthy to revisit this question using updated methods and criteria for examining stress and burnout among school administrators. The responsibilities of school principals have consistently become more rigorous as a result of several new trends in education, including: a greater number of provisions for accountability (Lortie, 2009; Johnson & Chrispeels,

2010; Firestone, 2009), the expanding presence of 21st century technology in schools (Haughey, 2006; Lortie, 2009; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; Spillane & Hunt, 2010), a growing population of minority and English as Second Language (ESL) students (Leone, Warnimont, & Zimmerman, 2009; Tirozzi, 2001), inconsistencies among school leadership training providers (Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Hess & Kelly, 2005; Levine, 2005; SREB, 2006; Fossey & Shoho, 2006), and the more dominant role that parents and other stakeholders play in education (Glassman & Heck, 1992). Thus, it is important to develop an instrument for measuring stress that acknowledges the above trends and the changes in role expectations for the position.

Today's principals are faced with a myriad of responsibilities. They must be building managers and they must also be effective and efficient in handling the demands of parents and community members. In addition, they must implement a wide array of programs initiated from many different stakeholders including district central administration, boards of education, and both state and federal regulations. They must also be instructional leaders, helping to develop teachers to become better in their daily instructional practice. They must ensure that necessary skills are being taught in all subject areas that will prepare students for either college or workforce development following high school graduation. The argument has been made that principals should be competent in all core curricular areas as well as technology-savvy. Understanding what should be considered "21st Century Skills" and how to implement those skills to provide opportunities for students might be the most critical practice for principals to engage.

The research on stress and burnout has been considerably limited in peer-reviewed journals over the last 20 years when compared with its prominence in the 1970s and 1980s,

making it important to update the literature with a new perspective based on the challenges that today's school principals face.

1.3 CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

The question of principal stress is not a region-specific issue, although different areas of the United States face different challenges than the challenges encountered by principals in Western Pennsylvania. Economists have long cited labor market comparisons as a regional concern with many individuals unwilling to leave their personal commitments to a region to pursue positions outside of a local market. This is especially true for principals, who are less likely to leave a region if it requires residential relocation. Principals are instead more likely to transfer to a neighboring school or request an in-district transfer (Loeb, Kalogrides, & Horng, 2010).

According to a RAND study from 2003, the average age of school principals in the United States is 50-years-old and that less than 12% of new principals in the United States are 40-years-old or younger (Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Ross, & Chung, 2003). The Schools and Staffing Report released by The National Center for Education Statistics (2011) also correlates with the RAND study, stating that the average age of school principals is 49. Under the assumption that in the majority of the United States individuals must have three to five years of experience as a teacher to become a school principal, and that some candidates become teacher leaders and assistant principals for a few years prior to becoming a building principal, the majority of individuals interested in becoming school principals cannot even pursue the position until they reach their late-20s (provided they entered teaching directly out of their undergraduate

training), with a large majority waiting until their mid-thirties to pursue a position. Because of the years of service time required to become a school administrator in the state of Pennsylvania (5 years of full-time experience), an assumption can also be made that most individuals in school districts will have established homes and families anchoring them to the region, making them less willing to transfer to a different location. This makes a strong argument for principal vacancies being a regional concern rather than a national one.

A study conducted in 2004 (Lovely, 2004) found that, on average, principals leave their positions after five years due to the pressures, the complex tasks involving accountability measures, and the lack of adequate preparation to face those challenges. It is important to note that the state of Pennsylvania has local control through school boards at each of the 501 school districts in the state. While state and federal funding are still determined at higher levels, hiring decisions for central administration and building-level administrators (school principals) are made at the local level and school boards ultimately have the voting power to hire or remove an individual from the principalship. This is a critical consideration for this study; if school principals in a particular district feel as though they lack the autonomy and control needed to be successful, they have the option of applying for a position at one of the other 80 school districts in the region. This allows an individual to maintain state retirement plans, pensions, and to remain in close proximity to home and family. This could lead to the retention of school leaders, just not necessarily within the same school districts.

It is important to acknowledge both the regional and national contexts for school administrator stress evaluated in this study. Regionally, the changing workforce and changing demographics of the Pittsburgh area must be considered. The added provisions for localized school district control and the power of unions throughout the state contribute to making

Pennsylvania and the Western Pennsylvania region in particular unique contexts for this study. A protracted national debate has sought to determine whether there is a shortage of individuals qualified to serve as principals, or if many of those with the appropriate certification simply do not want the job. This is an important distinction to make, particularly in regard to this study. Indeed, if individuals do not desire the principalship because it is a high-stress position, identifying the consistent stressors among a sample of school principals is of the utmost importance. Then, it is the responsibility of training providers, principal mentors, and professional organizations to communicate those stressors to individuals in principal preparation programs in order to better prepare those candidates for the realities of the position.

1.3.1 Regional Context

Economists and historians have viewed the Pittsburgh region as unique in terms of employment, education, and labor relations. It could be argued that the modern union was born there during the disputes between industry workers and management in the Homestead Strike of 1892 (Cohen, 1982). Some have argued that this strike was one of the most violent and bitter stand-offs in the history of labor-management relations (Brody, 1960; Wolff, 1965). Notably, it paved the way for the visible presence of unions throughout the state of Pennsylvania, not only in industry, but professional occupations as well.

Some of the defining characteristics of the city of Pittsburgh include the creation of cultural districts based on pocketed immigration, the opportunity for unskilled laborers to obtain training that would lead to careers in industry, and the development of culturally-centered suburbs that emerged from the exodus of industry from the city. Without a doubt, the steel industry is synonymous with the Pittsburgh region of Pennsylvania even to this date.

Acceleration of industry and ample opportunities to find work led many Europeans to the United States and to the Pittsburgh area in particular. The population growth over a 50-year period was staggering. According to Hays (1989), "Between 1880 and 1930, the population of the city nearly tripled, soaring from 235,000 to 670,000, with the greatest gains occurring in the 1890s and 1980s" (p. 7). At this time, it was estimated that over two-thirds of the city were either immigrants or the sons/daughters of immigrants. Steel manufacturing was the most common occupation throughout Pittsburgh and its surrounding areas at this time. In fact, some of the largest plants in the United States were in the Homestead, Southside, and Vandergrift areas of Pittsburgh. In addition, other businesses such as cigar-making, pastry, baking, and restaurants, and garment-making prospered in the city (Hays, 1989) according to the distribution of the immigrant population in the region.

Post-World War I signaled the decline of industry in the city of Pittsburgh. The demand for financial and labor management to supplement the factory workers intensified throughout the city. Technology continued to develop and the need for workers to develop production steadily waned while more personnel were needed to manage and work directly with employees. In short, the labor market was shifting from one focused on manual labor to one that was becoming increasingly professional. It was at this time that families began to leave the city of Pittsburgh, which in turn led to the growth of the suburban areas outlying the city. Multiple autonomous school districts were established, each with their own superintendent, school board, and set of building-level administrators and teachers. While this could be interpreted as a cause for a population decline inside the Pittsburgh city limits, that was not the case. In fact, during this time, a dramatic cultural shift occurred as many immigrant families moved outside of the city and the African-American population doubled in size and remained in the city (Hays, 1989).

The changing demographics left the city of Pittsburgh with different needs and also created an increased presence of second-and-third generation American citizens in the suburbs. This phenomenon was termed the "second-settlement" as families left Pittsburgh for the suburbs in order to preserve their cultural identity. In some cases, the children of elder immigrants would leave the city for the suburbs, while still staying close to their parents, who remained in the city with the political connections necessary to help them obtain employment (Hays, 1989). Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania would then transition into a city focused on white-collar positions such as academia, insurance, and finance instead of the industrial setting that had established the town in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

As the demographics of the urban population transformed and industry throughout the city shifted its focus, the baby boom of the 1950s and 1960s produced a bump of school-aged students born into suburban school districts in the Pittsburgh region. Pittsburgh's "highly localized" control mechanisms caused most of the growth to occur within specific school districts and municipalities of 10,000 or fewer citizens. Many of the municipalities and school districts were unable to deal with the effects of a dwindling population and limited resources while still maintaining local control (Hoerr, 1988). In the late 1970s to early 1980s, Pittsburgh suffered from "out-migration" syndrome, through which younger residents left Pittsburgh while the older population chose to stay (Giarratani, Singh, & Briem, 1999, p. 9). This resulted in an unusually large population of senior citizens in the Pittsburgh region. (For example, in 1998, the population of senior citizens aged 65 and older in Allegheny County was 18.3%, compared to a national average of 12.3%.) (Giarratani, Singh, & Briem, 1999, p. 9).

With decreased revenues for the city and municipalities due to an aging population, a dearth of workforce-aged taxpayers, and a general population decline, the Pittsburgh region has

been left with smaller school districts and many viable options for aspiring school principals. As of October 28, 2011, there were 455 individuals serving as building-level principals in suburban schools in the six-county Pittsburgh region of Allegheny (42 school districts), Beaver (15 school districts), Butler (9 school districts), Lawrence (7 school districts), Washington (15 school districts), and Westmoreland (19 school districts) Counties. In total, 107 school districts exist in the region. This total does not include the Pittsburgh Public Schools or the few charter schools that exist in the city of Pittsburgh, which would make the total number of individuals serving as building principals in the region well over 500. All school buildings are no more than 75 minutes from the city, which makes each position a viable commute for an aspiring candidate.

This context is extremely important for the scope and sequence of this study because it has been established that the Pittsburgh region is one that relies on a large amount of localized control in their school districts. The fact that there are 107 different districts to work for (not including the potential for an in-district transfer between buildings), could potentially have a huge impact on the stress levels of individuals serving as school principals. Exit options are abundant if a school principal deems a particular building or school district as "not a good fit" for their skill set, or due to their lack of autonomy and control to make decisions, or if there are significant conflicts with central administration or a school board.

Another regional consideration is the localized service that exists in school leadership programs. At least twelve different local options exist for aspiring principal candidates to receive certification to become a school principal. Within a one-hour drive from the city of Pittsburgh, there are nine in-state colleges and universities (California University of Pennsylvania, Carlow University, Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State University, Point Park University, Saint Vincent College,

Westminster University) that certify candidates for their school administration and supervisory license (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2011). In addition, online programs that offer online certification for school administrators are also available. These include: Gannon (an Erie, Pennsylvania school that offers an Educational Administration master's program entirely online with in-district supervision at the candidate's site) and other online programs, such as those offered by Drexel University and Walden University. When questioning whether or not a principal was adequately prepared for the realities of the position, it is important to note the abundance of certification options that exist in the region. Variations are likely to exist in the quality and quantity of the topics covered by the certifying institution.

1.3.2 National Context

While the Pittsburgh region is a unique context with a substantially older-than-average population, nationally, the age of individuals serving as school principals and the possibility of an impending principal shortage is an important consideration. Research consistently describes the age and experience of school principals in the United States as older individuals with significant experience in education (Usden, McCloud, & Podmostko, 2000; Rosa, 2003; Horng, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2009; Gajda & Militello, 2008; Gronin & Rawlings-Sanei, 2003; Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Guarino, Ghosh-Dastidar, & Brown; 2005). In describing the typical characteristics of a principal, Usden, McCloud, & Podmostko (2000) describe "a white male about 50 years old. He works at least 10 hours a day. He has been a principal since before 1990. In the intervening decade, he has received little training or support to help him deal with the emerging challenges of school-wide leadership for student learning" (p.4). As this study was published in 2000, it assumes that most principals at that time had ten years of experience, were

older males, and worked long hours in their position. This demographic profile correlates with research from Ringel, Gates, Chung, Brown, and Ghosh-Dastidar (2004) who commented on experience and entry age to the principalship. They found that principals are entering the principalship at an older age and that retirement behaviors remain the same, meaning those individuals are not staying in the position for a longer period of time, which could contribute to attrition. In their research on Massachusetts' school administrators, Gajda and Militello (2008) found that:

> "In Massachusetts the average age of principals is 52.2 years. Despite the short tenure of most Massachusetts administrators, 63% of principals surveyed indicated that they expect to leave the occupation of school principal within the next five years. This percentage holds true for all demographic groups, whether they are male or female, urban or non-urban, or working in different grade level schools. Of the 63% of individuals that plan on leaving the principalship in the next five years, the vast majority (70%) will leave due to retirement. This projected rate of attrition from the occupation is much higher than what was experienced in previous years." (p. 16)

This perception of older principals dominating the field has contributed to research by suggesting an impending principal shortage.

In addition to individuals who have aged and remained in the principalship for the duration of their career, some research indicates that human resource directors actively seek candidates for principalships who are older and have considerable experience in education (Rosa, 2003). If individuals are entering the profession later in their careers with only a few years remaining until retirement age, this would create a need to re-staff the position on a regular basis.

Arguments can be made that examining the stress levels of school administrators is of critical importance due to the aging population. An aging population would imply two very important points. First, targeting experienced principals to speak about the conditions that current principals face is necessary. It can be assumed these school principals have a sense of what specifically causes stress in their position, and if there are consistencies, this can be used to better prepare future school leaders. Second, the aging population of school administrators implies that a principal shortage does exist or will exist in the very near future. The literature review will consider the discussion on whether there is a shortage of qualified candidates or if there is a shortage of individuals who desire to pursue careers in school administration.

Regardless of the perspective taken by authors on that debate, it can be assumed that an aging population means that vacancies will be prevalent throughout the United States due to impending retirements. Thus, the school districts have a responsibility to target teachers with high-potential for careers as administrators. In addition, they are also charged with the task to identify certifying institutions that can provide opportunities for aspiring school leaders so that they can learn the skills and techniques needed to be successful as administrators while being cognizant of the challenges and stressors that come with the position.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions have been carefully constructed to reflect potential gaps in the literature and to target specific challenges that today's school administrator faces. The data collection methods of survey, qualitative screening and post-screening, and structured observation, were chosen to help determine explicit responses for these questions. The terminal

goal of the research questions was to help training providers help to reform principal preparation programs to better prepare future principals for the realities of the position. Four research questions and sub-questions accomplished the aforementioned goals.

1. What job responsibilities occupy the most amount of time in a principal's day?
    a. What responsibilities of the position are sacrificed while principals respond to unscheduled events?
2. What conditions contribute to principal stress?
    a. What characteristics do both high- and low-stressed principals exhibit?
    b. What tasks do principals identify as causing the most stress in their position?
3. To what extent do principals have autonomy and control in their positions?
    a. Do any demographic traits such as gender, years of experience, or building size influence the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experience?
4. Is there a relationship between principal stress and the extent of autonomy and control that principals experience in their positions?

1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS

21st Century Skills: a movement designed to train students in skills that are necessary for their success in the first decades of the 21st Century. Includes redefining core subjects, learning skills, 21st Century tools, 21st Century context, 21st Century content, and new assessments that measure 21st Century skills. This movement also calls for an increased use of technology in schools by administrators, teachers, and students. (Salpeter, 2008)

Anxiety: the degree of uncertainty an individual experiences to cope with a particular situation, which may cause a state of fear or uneasiness. (Selye, 1974)

Burnout: a syndrome that affects people in social and care professions and which consists of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and lack of accomplishment. (Maslach, 1996)

Data-Driven Decision-Making: teachers, principals, and administrators systematically collecting and analyzing various types of data, including input, process, outcome and satisfaction data, to guide a range of decisions to help improve the success of students and schools. (Marsh, Pane, & Hamilton, 2006)

Eustress: a positive stress that leads to "improved physical and mental functioning" for employees. (Morse & Furst, 1982)

Experienced Principal: for the scope of this study, a school leader with five or more years of experience as a building principal.

Job Satisfaction: the extent to which a person likes their job. (Spector, 1997)

New Principal: in this study, a school leader with 0-4 years of experience as a building principal.

Occupational Stress: occurs when there is a discrepancy between the demands of the environment/workplace and an individual's ability to carry out and complete these demands. (Henry & Evans, 2008)

Principal: the site administrator at a building who is responsible for the school's daily operations.

Stress: the discomfort or strain on an individual as a result of some imbalance producing anxiety. (Selye, 1976)

1.5.1 Definition of Terms – Methodological and Theoretical

Administrator Stress Index (ASI): an instrument designed to determine the stress level of school administrators, the original version of the instrument has 25 Likert-scale items, which are categorized by four dimensions of stress: task-based, role-based, conflict-mediating, and boundary-spanning. (Gmelch and Swent, 1977)

Task-based stress: stress that arises from performance of one's duties. (Gmelch and Swent, 1977)

Role-based stress: stress that comes from conflict over job responsibilities in an organization. (Gmelch & Swent, 1977)

Conflict-mediating stress: stress that is derived from resolving conflict within the school. (Gmelch & Swent, 1977)

Boundary-spanning stress: stress from activities involving school and community relations. (Gmelch & Swent, 1977)

Control: the extent to which an individual or group has power and authority in an organization (Scott & Davis, 2007)

Control Theory (in stress research): as defined by LeFevre, Matheny, and Kolt (2003), the idea that the degree to which the individual perceives they have control over the variables that have potential to cause stress in their environment effects the likelihood that they will experience stress.

Demand-Control Theory: as defined by Karacek (1979), the theory that in jobs that have high control mechanisms in place, workers have low strain if they have low demands, and that when high demands exist, workers either have high strain or play an active or learning role. Under this

theory it is also important to consider the discretion permitted to the worker in deciding how to meet these demands.

Forced Response: as defined by Boruch (1971), forcing respondents to answer with a "yes" or "no" response, eliminating the neutral. For the scope of this study, a forced response Likert-scale will be used with no N/A or no response, which also serves to eliminate a neutral answer.

Likert-Scale: the traditional definition of a Likert-Scale is a five-point scale with ranges from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" (Likert, 1932)

Organizational Learning: a process used for school improvement that involves a long-term strategy rather than quick-fix changes. Most definitions of organizational learning include the five following elements: (1) learning from past experience, (2) acquiring knowledge, (3) processing on an organizational level, (4) identifying and correcting problems, and (5) organizational change. (Ingram, Seashore-Louis & Schroder, 2004)

Organizational Theory: a theory that emerged from a combination of psychology, sociology, and management science; essentially means the nature in which organizations work and to the extent of which they are successful or unsuccessful. (Scott & Davis, 2007)

1.6 METHODOLOGICAL ASSUMPTIONS

The methods used for this study will be: a closed-ended survey, a semi-structured interview, and structured observation. Three different forms of data-collection are necessary in order to validate what school principals perceive as stress and what, in actuality, causes stress in their position. There are a number of assumptions that must be considered as a part of this study:

1. It is assumed that the respondents to this study will be able to explain and quantify tasks that cause them stress.
2. It is assumed that all instruments, through pilot testing are valid and reliable.
3. It is assumed that all participants in the study are honest about the level of the stress they experience while participating in the study.
4. It is assumed that all participants in the study understand the terminology related to stress and stressors as presented in the three instruments.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are a few limitations of this study that must be highlighted.

1. This study required the cooperation of high-stressed individuals to take time out of their schedules to respond to all three components of the survey. It is possible these individuals might not have had time to respond due to their stress levels.
2. Participation in the study was voluntary, and is on a topic that some respondents might deem controversial. To compensate, the study used a sample of school administrators who participate in the Principal's Academy, a professional development organization structured at the University of Pittsburgh, to ensure a high response rate.
3. The study was focused on a particular region, Western Pennsylvania, which has a unique educational context. Future studies will validate if the results translate on a national scale or to other regions of the United States.

4. Due to the nature of the IRB process and the unwillingness of central administration to permit the inclusion of Pittsburgh Public School principals in the study, they were omitted from the sample population. Future follow-up studies will specifically target an urban school district and the principals who service that population.

5. Although questions have been built into the revised instrument, which allowed respondents to discuss outside-the-job stressors, the degree to which outside influences impact an individual's job performance is very difficult to quantify, measure, and standardize.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 presents the introductions, definition of terms, justification, and rationale for the study. Chapter 2, the literature review, discusses issues directly and indirectly related to the context of stress, including the responsibilities today's principals face, career trajectories of school principals, attrition and turnover, job satisfaction of school principals, and what past literature has presented regarding stress and burnout of school principals. The theoretical framework is presented in Chapter 3, focusing on the interconnectedness of stress theory and control theory and how organizational theory offers a new lens for examining principal stress. Chapter 4 details the methods and procedures used to collect data for this study, with respect to instruments that had previously been used to measure stress. Each item used in the quantitative, qualitative, and structured observation component of the study is tied to a specific research question. Findings and results of the investigation are presented in Chapter 5, focusing on each

of the three instruments used for data collection and the interconnectedness of results from each instrument. Finally, a summary of the study discussing conclusions, implications for future research, and practical application are discussed in Chapter 6.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

School leadership literature addresses many issues that can be categorized as stimuli that impact the levels of stress experienced by school principals. Before delving into those issues in detail, it is worthwhile to grasp the evolving role of the school principal and the challenges and responsibilities that today's principal's face. It is also important to gauge principals' average career trajectories and attrition and turnover rates in order to determine whether high stress levels tends to encourage school principals to seek other positions in education or leave the professional altogether. Furthermore, and related to this in educational literature, there is the germane controversy over whether or not a principal shortage exists. A strong debate has ensued, which focuses on whether there is a shortage of qualified candidates or if there is actually a surplus of individuals, who are certified to be school administrators but have chosen not to take on such positions due to the stress levels and pressures they would likely face. It is also meaningful to explore whether or not individuals serving as school principals are satisfied with their positions. If research shows that principals are satisfied with their career choice, targeting the specific elements that create job satisfaction can better help prepare future school administrators. Finally, it is sensible to evaluate the current state of training providers that certify future school administrators and provide professional development to those currently serving.

In this study, all of the abovementioned topics are deemed interconnected and pertinent to the literature concerning stress in school principals. Research on the causes of school principal

stress is dated and focuses on an international context. Nonetheless, it is crucial to acknowledge previous studies and consider their findings in order to establish a knowledge base from which to examine the current causes of stress for school principals.

2.1 THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

Very few pieces of published research have centered on the history of the school principalship. While there is an abundance of research concerning current trends in school administration, or even how the principal position has evolved from the 1980s to present time, very little research has tracked the principalship pre-*A Nation at Risk*. Rousmaniere (2007) comments, "There are no articles on the history of the public school principal in the History of Education Quarterly, the leading American journal in the field for the past forty-five years. In the Historical Studies in Education bibliography of over 850 references on the history of Canadian education published since 1980, there are only two essays specifically on the principal" (p. 3). The history of the principalship is important for researchers because today's era of accountability and high-stakes testing preaches an understanding of basics and comprehensive learning. Unfortunately, a miniscule number of studies exist in peer-reviewed journals (Bridges, 1982; Kafka, 2009; Murphy, 1998; Rousmaniere, 2007) and only two published books (Lortie, 2009; Tyack & Cuban, 1995) address anything covering role expectations of the principalship pre-1980. This indicates either a need for further research, or, that the position has only become a critical part of educational leadership research over the last thirty years, which is likely. Through acknowledging the history of the principalship, researchers can draw parallels from each era and thus better predict future directions of importance, as the current era continues its evolution.

Two consistent themes emerge throughout the literature on the history of the principal. First, principal roles continue to grow and principals' responsibilities increase without any relief from existing duties. Notably, as the role of the principal continues to expand, the amount of control principals have over their position has consistently declined. Central administrators (superintendents, assistant superintendents, and curriculum directors) and external stakeholders such as members of the school board and the community have seen their power increase, while building-level administrators (principals and vice-principals) have lost power to these stakeholders. This trend has been documented in the literature since the late 1960s, when standardized testing and community involvement in schools was becoming increasingly prevalent throughout the United States (Ingersoll, 2003). While considering the history of school principals, it is meaningful to acknowledge these changes, because it points to the increased number of challenges and responsibilities school principals must deal with. Stress research did not emerge until the mid-1900s, and educational stress research did not emerge until the late 1970s to early 1980s, therefore, studies analyzing the role of school principals simply stated what their responsibilities were and did not reflect on what experiences the principals had while acting in those roles.

2.1.1 Foundations of the Principalship (1800s-1900s)

The principalship appears to be a position that was created out of necessity: as one-room schoolhouses expanded into multiple-room buildings, individuals were needed to supervise teachers in those growing schools, but more importantly, to manage students as well. Research is very limited on when the first principal positions appeared in the United States, but Lortie (2009) and Rousmaniere (2007) suggest that the first "principals" did not exist in schools until

the mid-1800s. Prior research on the history of schooling suggests that individual classroom teachers were responsible for all aspects of a schoolhouse, including building management, student discipline, and meeting local community members' (pre-dating the emergence of school boards) needs to deliver instruction and design curriculum. Rousmaniere (2007) recounts the responsibilities of a principal in Cincinnati, Ohio as an individual in the building who was responsible for ringing a school bell at the end of the day and ensuring that students did not engage in profane language.

Curiously, at that time there were no programs in place that prepared individuals to become principals. Murphy (1998) notes that individuals who assumed the role of school principal were either the most experienced individual in the building (which would serve as the foundation for a seniority system) or an individual outside of education non-affiliated with teaching. This is of interest because the responsibilities would later involve the administration of curriculum, which instigated the development of certification programs designed to train individuals to become school leaders. Also during this time, principals were considered to be independent decision-makers with the autonomy to run their schools as they saw fit (Kafka, 2009). Superintendents left almost all building-level decisions (for example, hiring, firing, supervision, and curriculum and instruction) to the principal.

Once the assistant and associate superintendent positions were created in the late 1800s, only then did the supervision of principals become part of the responsibilities of central administration (Kafka, 2009). Larger school districts such as the New York City School District realized very early on that the responsibility of the principal should be to supervise teachers and instruct curriculum, and in 1873, became one of the first school districts that recommended that principals be relieved of clerical duties to allow for more time to work with teachers (Kafka,

2009). Demographically, principals appear to have been almost exclusively white men, however, in racially segregated urban school districts, it was common for an African-American man to be the school principal, which Rousmaniere attributed to "the neglect of white school boards and superintendents" (p. 20). This would be the paradigm for the position of school principal until programs with the explicit goal of training individuals to assume the role of school principal started appearing in colleges and universities.

2.1.2 Building Manager Era (1900s-1950s)

Sparked by the continuously increasing number of central administrators, including more assistant and associate superintendents for school districts, many colleges and universities began training individuals to become principals. In 1900, a formalized program to train and prepare school leaders did not exist in the United States (Murphy, 1998). Rousmaniere (2007) notes that in 1906, Ellwood P. Cubberly, "proposed that each state offer an administrative certificate for educators seeking appointment to leadership positions, arguing that specified coursework in administration was an avenue toward professionalizing educational leadership" (p. 11). This represents the creation of the formal notion of a school principalship, which, by some accounts, did not become prevalent in the United States until the 1920s (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). By 1934, twenty-seven states had implemented formal training programs leading to certification distinctly for school leadership, and this continued to grow until the 1950s, when all states had formalized requirements for principal certification.

Historically, it is also important to note that protective organizations such as teacher unions began to form in the early 1900s. This was the beginning of protection for teachers involving working conditions and salary scales. Principals were viewed as managers responsible

for implementing the goals and visions of both central administration and school boards, and were therefore excluded from unionizing for the most part. However, a select few unions opted to elect principals as leaders in the organization and would file grievances on their behalf (Rousmaniere, 2007). In addition, the establishment of the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) in 1956 is noteworthy because it became one of the more prominent professional organizations through which theorists and practitioners worked together and helped to develop consistency across training programs throughout the United States (Murphy, 1998).

In the 1980s, the once male-dominated principalship underwent a notable demographic shift as more women took on administrative positions. Although women were primarily elementary school principals, this later changed when administrator preparation programs began selected recruitment for admission, which favored aspiring male candidates who had greater access to graduate-level education. Rousmaniere (2009) comments, "In the 1920s, university programs in educational administration began to shape and categorize the work of the elementary school principal by offering specific courses on child study and elementary level administration. Access to these programs was explicitly limited to men through recruitment practices and gender quotas in graduate programs" (p. 17). An overwhelming majority of men held secondary school principal positions, which further created a barrier for women aspiring to become school administrators.

The roles and responsibilities of the principalship remained very similar to those that characterized the position when it first emerged: The majority of a principal's time was spent on clerical duties, supervision of teachers, and building management. However, in contrast to practices in the nineteenth century, colleges and universities at this time were preparing individuals to become school leaders and formalized systems were put into place to teach

prospective principals how to clearly and efficiently perform these tasks. The approach to training individuals was much more pragmatic than theoretical. Murphy (1998) notes that "the objective was to train students to understand the job of administration as it was and to perform successfully in the roles they undertook, what Campbell et al. (1987) labeled preparation for the role, as opposed to studying what might need to be done differently and preparing for roles as change agents, i.e., "preparing the person" (p. 363). Scientific research on the principalship was directed at best management practices, in order to find methods to efficiently manage school buildings (Grogan and Andrews, 2002; Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004). The management paradigm would remain the leading driving force for the principalship until social justice increased in prominence in the United States.

2.1.3 The Social Reform Era (1960s-1970s)

Once state-level certification programs and colleges and universities began recognizing the principalship as a unique entity, the position became more oriented toward instruction and helping to assist and develop both new and experienced teachers. However, the increased sense of urgency around core subjects such as math and science further redefined the principalship from a position focused on building management to one that also included instructional leadership (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Unlike other eras for which there is at least some historical evidence showing the duties of position, there is limited amount of published research on school principals during these twenty years. Throughout this period, the primary mode of research on principals was single-variable studies that addressed one specific aspect of the principalship, usually administered by a quantitative survey (Bridges, 1982; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Research focused on administrators' opinions about the importance of the primary roles

and responsibilities of their position or on personal experiences with collective bargaining and unionization of both teachers and principals. It is suggested that research on the principalship seems to be based on random events with little to no structure during this period of time (Bridges, 1982) and that judgments made on the position tend to be case specific.

This time period began the transition in academia during which schools began to be presented in educational literature as more bureaucratic with an increased amount of controls in place throughout various levels in the organization. Previously, schools and teaching were commonly viewed as loosely coupled organizations lacking control and organizational support (Rowan, 1982; Meyer & Rowan, 1978; Weick, 1976). This would further be extrapolated upon with pressures placed on principals from central administration due to the growing emphasis on standardized testing.

During this era, school principals began to have less control over their buildings. Historically, many changes were occurring in school systems, including: major budget cuts; an increase in class sizes as a result of teacher furloughs; the shrinking number of school-aged children due to the aging population of the baby boom era; and contracted school programs for students (Boyd, 1982). These changes were dictated in many school districts by the central administration, which led to less decision-making from building principals. During this period, central administration was beginning to become highly specialized with tightly focused positions involving budgeting, personnel and human resources, curriculum development, and federal mandates (Rowan, 1982). This pattern persisted throughout this era, as state and federal requirements continued to increase principals' responsibilities, while simultaneously disempowering local school administrators by affording them less decision-making power and decision-making power would end up in the hands of district-level administration (Kafka, 2009).

Both race and gender were a factor in staffing the principalship during this era. One noteworthy change was the decline in African-American principals in the southern United States by 90% following Brown v. Board of Education (Rousmaniere, 2007). Two cases of note were in Kentucky and Maryland: From 1954 to 1970, the total number of African-American principals in Kentucky dropped from 350 to 36; in Maryland there was a 27% reduction of African-American principals during the same time period (Kafka, 2009). It can be argued that desegregation, at least initially, made the principalship less accessible to African-American men. However, those who were lucky enough to remain principals after the ruling were finally afforded the opportunity to earn a salary comparable to that of their white counterparts. As school districts began appointing white men to the principalship, African-American men and women tended to remain in the classroom and were not given opportunities to become administrators. The "gender purge" in elementary schools, which had significantly reduced the number of female administrators in the 1920s, was still a factor throughout the 1960s, as "institutional and personal definitions of manhood and womanhood played out in school staffs with women in the classroom and the man in the principal's office" (Rousmaniere, 2007, p. 19). This could also be attributed to the reduced number of school-aged children throughout the 1970s (Lortie, 2009), and school districts' preference to permit white men to remain in the position, while demoting their female or minority counterparts.

The role and the responsibilities of the principal continued to grow in number. Contemporary social problems, which were becoming more prevalent in the news media, represented new challenges for current principals and those aspiring to take on the post. Social issues such as teen pregnancy, drug and alcohol use, and racial tension were becoming more prominent throughout the United States, and principals were responsible for providing

professional development and awareness programs that addressed such issues for teachers and students (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Federal entitlement programs and curricular initiatives were also a principal's responsibility, which added another level of bureaucracy for principals of this era (Kafka, 2009). Not only were principals responsible for the management and direction from local and state agencies, but from federal agencies as well. Principals were in challenging positions in which they needed to negotiate between the pressures from the top and local community in order to channel the directives-as best they can-to suit the specific context of a school.

During this same period, the Danforth Foundation solicited a major education program, which influenced the principalship specifically. The Model Schools Reform project of the 1960s, which was administered by the National Association of Secondary School Principals to create "schools of tomorrow," implemented some of the first and administrators (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). Unfortunately, the program was not a success at the principal level, as many of the principals, who were specifically recruited to be change-agents and lead the program, left during the implementation phase. Most indicated that the stresses and responsibilities of the program caused them to seek other positions. Despite this, it was one of the first major programs in principal reform that would be implemented by a national agency, and thus was significant during this period of time; an omen of sorts, showing the correlation between national agencies' involvement and increased stress at the building level.

2.1.4 The Initial Accountability Era (1980s)

The publication of A Nation at Risk (National Commission of Excellence in Education, 1983), could be described as the beginning of the accountability era for all personnel involved in

education, including teachers, superintendents, college and university faculty, education students, and especially school principals. The argument that students in K-12 public education were ill-prepared compared to their international counterparts facilitated the need for increased testing mandates in core subjects and comprehensive education reform to prepare individuals for post-high school opportunities. Test scores and accountability factors began to be published at the local and state levels (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004), which created additional pressure for school principals. This led to the growing involvement of concerned parents, school boards, and community groups in education, which in turn intensified the pressures placed on school district administration. Grogan and Andrews (2002) comment that "not only did citizens offer suggestions and advice to educators, but there were also many mandates requiring boards and superintendents to respond and principals to implement" (p. 236). At this time, superintendents became less present in school buildings, and instead implemented policy and procedure from their central office to which principals were expected to follow. Principals, therefore, became the first line of defense in addressing parents and community members, and implementing the reform efforts dictated from all levels. The additional strain placed on principals from parents and community increased the responsibilities of the position dramatically.

Another pressure placed on principals during this time was a substantial increase of state power through state reforms and intergovernmental conflicts (Layton, 1989; Marshall & Scribner, 1991). This included standardized test scores and statewide benchmark assessments, but also documented an increase of state standards and common curricular objectives established for all districts within a state. School districts were met with greater accountability factors from state departments of education, which were disseminated to central administration and left in the hands of principals to implement across their schools.

During this time, the traditional way of preparing school leaders began to change after the University Council for Educational Administrators published a response to A Nation at Risk, which outlined the basic skills that were being taught in principal preparation programs. If principals were going to be responsible for different tasks as part of the increased accountability, then preparation programs had the responsibility to engage in reform as well in order to better prepare principals for these new expectations. An observation was made that most principal preparation programs did not include a basic course on curriculum (Grogan & Andrews, 2002) and that programs at the time were directed toward teaching aspiring principals management tasks only. It was also argued that the majority of individuals preparing future school administrators were not practitioners but were simply scholars with little to no practical experience running a school (Murphy, 1998). This caused most individuals enrolled in principal training programs to be exposed to scholars who were more interested in the research aspects of the position as opposed to the practical day-to-day operations. Perhaps the most important change to the role of post-secondary institutions in preparing and training principals was the establishment of principal evaluation programs in forty states by the beginning of 1990 (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). This state-mandated principal evaluation would be administered by local school districts and would create yet another layer of accountability on school principals. This was the beginning of initiatives like state standards for principals (ISLLC standards), which soon created changes that when practically applied meant that aspiring principals were now being trained to meet measured goals and objectives in their positions, thus leading to more accountability.

Another key phrase which was prevalent in educational literature from this time was "instructional management" (Bosser, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982). This strategy involved the

clinical supervision of teachers to ensure proper teaching practices were being applied in classrooms and managing the performance of teachers through evaluation. This was a precursor to "instructional leadership" in the sense that school principals were familiarizing themselves with best teaching practices and discovering ways to hold teachers accountable for those practices. Principals were responsible for displaying characteristics of "power, authority, and influence" (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982, pp. 50–52) to be effective in their current positions. Those key phrases would build the bridge from manager to instructional leader in the late 1980s to the early 1990s. Finding ways to implement a management style that demonstrates power, effectively uses the authority of the position, and influences practice was important. Hallinger (2005) argued that the effective schools model of the 1980s was also a precursor to instructional leadership, however, "it was still too soon to determine the longer term outcome" (p. 2). With management, accountability, and now the onset of instructional leadership, the role of the principal continued to expand.

Murphy, Hallinger, and Peterson (1986) noted that during the early 1980s, research on school leadership had begun to reflect even less autonomy for principals when matched against the prior characteristics of the position. In their study of effective school districts in California, they found more control mechanisms were in place in highly effective school districts with high student achievement. A study from Bacharach, Bauer, and Shedd (1986) surveyed 1,789 National Education Association members and reported that teachers sought greater input in school-level decision-making on issues such as budgeting, staffing, class assignments, and curriculum development. Rowan (1982) observed a shift in power in curriculum development to district-level curriculum supervisors, which would be administered and mandated by building principals. Coupled with the notion that tightly controlled districts with a technical core

curriculum correlate with high student achievement (Murphy, Hallinger, & Peterson, 1986) both superiors (central administrators) and subordinates (teachers) have attempted to wrestle power away from building principals.

2.1.5 The Instructional Leadership Era (1990s)

Many other authors have described in detail the qualities and characteristics of principals displaying practices that in combination are deemed to constitute instructional leadership. This section addresses the changes to policy and practice that emerged from the instructional leadership era, which impacted the work that a school principal engaged in on a daily basis. Instructional leadership became (and to some extent, still remains) one of the key phrases in determining the effectiveness of a school leader.

During the 1990s, prior work during the accountability era led to the belief that principals were not only building managers, but instructional leaders as well. Hallinger (2005) defined three dimensions for the constitution of instructional leadership in schools: "defining the school's mission, managing the instructional program, and promoting a positive school learning climate" (pp. 4–5). The main change in the model that was prevalent in the previous era was that in order for principals to become "instructional leaders," they had to be well-versed in curricular issues, best teaching practices, and technological advances, in order to effectively manage a building. As this was a new practice in most school districts, there was a transition period until preparation programs were able to provide the training necessary for principals to perform this new responsibility of the position. Some researchers suggest that women administrators were better suited for the role of instructional leader, as they viewed their role of principal as "teacher of teachers" and were "more likely to spend more years in teaching before they enter the

principalship" (Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004). As instructional leadership was a new idea at the time, it would take principals a fair amount of time to adapt to this additional responsibility in their position, regardless of gender.

Instructional leadership was a key idea that was included in the establishment of state level standards in preparation programs (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). While some authors claim that the principal's role in improving student outcomes was "largely ignored by policymakers throughout the 1980s and 90s" (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007), it took time for preparation programs to begin to teach the supervision and evaluation of instructional delivery in their programs, especially with a shortage of faculty with practical experience in school systems (Murphy, 1998). Hess and Kelly (2005) identify the adoption of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards by a number of states, which are built on the premise of instructional leadership, as an important step in developing standards for principal evaluation.

Finally, conditions in the 1990s also continued to increase the power of community members, parents, and policy makers, in the hiring and firing of school administrators. Glassman and Heck (1992) commented that, "As we move into the 1990s the aftermath of the reform that has given citizens greater voice in educational policy-making implies a greater role for parents with respect to hiring and firing principals, one function of personnel evaluation" (p. 15). Principals remained responsible for managing their building and becoming instructional leaders, while accountability standards measured by outside stakeholders such as community members, parents, and school board members became even more important. As other individuals gained power in school systems, the amount of control principals had over their responsibilities did not increase.

2.1.6 The 21st Century Skills Era (2000-Present)

Currently in our school system, principals are still responsible for the management of the building, creating professional development opportunities, creating a climate that fosters cultural and social awareness, budgeting and financing for the building, and training and developing teachers and staff members. But now, in addition to the preciously stated responsibilities, principals are responsible for helping students to develop skills necessary to be successful in post-secondary pursuits, whether it be as college students, or as individuals directly entering the workforce. This could be best described as creating skills and competencies to help students be successful in the twenty-first century, hence the name of 21st Century Skills Era, for this period in the history of the principalship.

An argument currently gaining prominence in educational leadership literature (Haughey, 2006) is the impact that computers have on a principal's daily work. With the increased accessibility of test scores from federal, state, and local sources, building principals now have access to data that was not readily available to them in earlier generations. Building-level administrators, who had previously used technology as a tool to assist teaching and learning and also professional development, are now in positions where computer literacy is a requirement of the position. Haughey notes that the increased importance of computers leads to distributed leadership across schools; however, it could also be more work and strain the principal to ensure that all voices within a school system are heard. Lortie (2009) notes, "greater use of computers for instruction intensifies the managerial responsibilities of the principal, binding managerial decisions more closely to the effectiveness of the instructional program" (p. 204). A potential direction for future principal preparation programs might be to include a course or courses on technology management, appropriate ways and times to respond to e-mails, research on best

practices utilizing technology as building leaders, and the use of technology to improve curriculum and instruction.

Educational reform act No Child Left Behind has also increased the accountability pressures placed on principals for increased competency in their position and data-driven decision-making. In addition to principals' growing list of responsibilities, the need to have strong skills in data analysis and the dissemination of data to teachers in manageable and explainable terms is also important. While central administration generally receives data, it is the responsibility of the principal to discuss that data on a regular basis with his or her staff. In a study of the responsibilities of central administration, Johnson and Chrispeels (2010) found that the school principals were responsible for overseeing and training teachers for standardized testing procedures. A respondent in their study commented, "I expect principals to share the data. I expect teachers and groups of teachers and the school as a whole to look at their progress, now with DAIT every 6 weeks, and to monitor and adjust their instruction with Grade Level Action Plans" (p. 757). More time is necessary for the principals to understand important data themselves, and to determine an appropriate method for helping teachers to implement that information into their teaching. Paired with the argument made that with union protection teachers do not have the added pressure of potentially losing their jobs (Ingersoll, 2003), this creates a difficult balance for principals in terms gauging how much to expect from their teaching staff while still meeting appropriate mandates from central administration.

Another important skill believed to be of the utmost importance for students in schools is the ability to create individualized program choices for students and professional development opportunities for faculty and staff (Tirossi, 2001; Lortie, 2009). As these are pressing issues in the development for individuals in the building, it is the principal's responsibility to implement

them. Lortie considers this element a component of intensified instructional decision-making, which increases the responsibilities of the principalship. If school districts continue to individualize instruction and create new courses and opportunities for students such as distance learning or partnerships with colleges and universities, the building principal will need to be competent to assist with the instructional delivery of these programs.

There is also a growing population English language learners and minority students across the United States. Very similar to the movement in the 1970s that made principals responsible for creating school climates that fostered cultural and social acceptance, principals are now being asked to create outreach opportunities for communities to help disconnected students adjust to their new environment (Leone, Warnimont, & Zimmerman, 2009). Tirozzi (2001) called for the staffing and selection of more minority candidates to serve as principals to act as role models to students, teachers, and staff. The most important thing to note for principals of tomorrow is that when the cultural and social responsibilities of the position were of importance in schools (1970s) accountability was not (until the 1980s). Now, today's principals have to be proficient in social outreach and ensure that students receiving special services are performing well-enough on high-stakes tests in order to maintain the community's positive perception of the school district. All of the above clearly contribute to intensify the pressure endured by school principals.

2.1.7 Today's Expectations

The principal's role continues to grow in importance. Perhaps the most significant point to highlight is the fact that during each era since the inception of the principalship, school administrators have been able to relinquish very few (if any) responsibilities despite the

continuous trend to add more and more tasks to their basic job functions. Research on the principalship must continue to be focused on specific tasks or methods to make the position more manageable. Lortie (2009) states, "I am unaware of any notable breakthroughs that have changed the daily decision-making of principals" (p. 189). This indicates that researchers should explore possible clarifications of the position. History has shown us that the responsibilities of the school administrator do not appear to be decreasing in number, in contrast, the position continues to incorporate a larger number of challenges and obstacles. Thus, targeted recruitment of individuals who are considering becoming administrators and acknowledging the root sources of stress and burnout among principals are now more critical than ever before.

2.2 CAREER TRAJECTORIES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

The requirements and responsibilities for principals have changed over time, from a director of classroom management, to a building manager, to an instructional leader, and now, to a blend of all three elements plus the additional pressures of dealing with high-stakes testing and other responsibilities. Many researchers have commented on the changing role of the principal (Whitaker, 2003; Allison, 1997; Davis, 1998; McAdams, 1998; Southern Regional Educational Board, 2004; Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2000; Haughey, 2006). Whitaker (2003) offers insight into the characteristics of the principal trends in the 1990s by stating, "the school restructuring reforms of the 1990s have further identified the principal as a transformational leader who must be involved in school problem finding and problem solving, shared decision making, decentralized leadership, and systemic change" (p. 35). Haughey's (2006) study of the impact of computers on a principal's work further acknowledged yet another responsibility that is, in some

cases, being placed on school principals. Individuals entering the principalship need to be aware that a myriad of responsibilities await them, including, but not limited to: budgeting, management, teacher evaluation, instructional leadership, classroom management, technology training and use, responsibilities for implementing standardized testing, curricular decisions, extracurricular activities which require their presence, in addition to the required number of hours spent in their office. McAdams (1998) comments that the time commitment for the job might actually have a more negative impact than any of the other changes because the time commitments prohibit principals from pursuing other opportunities—while working as a principal—that might provide additional compensation. As the role continues to change, studies focusing on stress amplify the voices of individuals leaving the principalship for stress-related reasons.

Finally, it is important to recognize the ways in which principals use their experience to help prepare them for a role in central administration. This is only briefly mentioned in the literature, and only in terms of career trajectories (Whitaker, 2003; Papa Jr., 2007), and could certainly be further researched. In terms of stress and burnout, the hypothesis from Whitaker (2003) and Papa Jr. (2007) is that individuals experiencing high stress from their experiences as a principal would perhaps be less likely to seek positions within central administration, and that individuals satisfied with their career choice as school administrators would be more likely to seek promotion. Further research needs to be carried out— similar to the studies done on teachers pursuing school administration positions—on the qualities and characteristics that make school principals pursue positions in central administration.

2.3 PRINCIPAL ATTRITION AND TURNOVER

A limited amount of research has been conducted investigating why individuals leave the principalship or change school districts. Kruger, van Eck, & Vermeulen (2005) remark,

"Hardly any research has been conducted on the topic of principals' premature departure. On the other hand, the crisis in the school principalship has given rise to a diversity of research into the (un)desirability and the (un)attractiveness of the job. Furthermore, research has been done into the combination of gender, prejudice and job entrance, and into reasons for retirement. This research could give us some clues in answering the question of why principals would leave their jobs prematurely" (p. 243).

The articles about principal turnover are from both domestic and international contexts and list a number of factors that contribute to individuals changing schools or leaving the principalship all together (Johnson, 2005; Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Guarino, Ghosh-Dastidar, & Brown, 2009; Davis, 1998; Duke, 1988; Kruger, van Eck, & Vermeulen, 2005). The following paragraphs will explore some of the conclusions from those studies.

A study conducted by Johnson (2005) interviewed and surveyed twelve individuals who had left the principalship and found that participants encountered significant barriers between teachers and administrators while serving as principals. Johnson reported that managerial tasks were overwhelming; the job took a high emotional toll, and also, that there were constant, ongoing pressures with school board members. The individuals surveyed mentioned cultural issues, workload, bureaucracy, student discipline, and irate parents as the major factors that led them to walk away from the profession. In a recent study, Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Guarino, Ghosh-Dastidar, and Brown (2009) examined state-level databases in North Carolina and Illinois and found that in those states: principals consistently moved from smaller schools to larger schools, a

large population of minority students leads to higher turnover rates, and that female administrators are more likely to change districts than male administrators. Their study did not track individuals leaving the principalship, as data about principals who left education altogether was not available.

Davis's (1998) study surveyed ninety-nine superintendents in California and conducted eleven, 35–50 minute interviews with superintendents about what leads to the involuntary departure of principals. This study was unique because it looked at principals leaving their position not on their own will, but due to their respective superintendents' recommendations. Davis found the following characteristics as where shared among those counseled out of the principalship: poor interpersonal relationships; poor decision making; lack of political skill and awareness; failure to accurately assess the culture of the school and adapt his or her leadership style so that it is compatible with the school's culture; and failure to provide a focus or sense of direction for the school (p. 68). Interestingly enough, in the same study, 65% of the principals who were asked to leave the principalship ended up returning to their former role as a classroom teacher. Davis states:

"It is interesting to note that superintendents most frequently selected outcomes related to parent and staff complaints about administrators. This is not surprising, considering the large number of superintendents who responded that a principal's insufficiencies relating to human relations most often led to an involuntary departure. It is also interesting to note that some of the organizational outcomes not selected by superintendents seem to defy conventional wisdom regarding the indicators of effective school leadership. For example, few superintendents selected lower than expected student academic performance or a high number of student suspensions, transfers, or dropouts as evidence that a principal's leadership was lacking" (p. 84).

This is particularly interesting because research and practice consistently demonstrate that improving academic performance is the most important task for school administrators; however, it appears that human relations dictate whether or not an administrator will be successful in the position.

Duke (1998) interviewed four principals who had considered leaving the principalship in a focus group to determine what specifically had changed their opinions on administration and how it differed from the perspective they held when they entered the profession. The reasons for the their consideration in leaving the principalship were grouped into four categories: fatigue; a growing awareness of self; a sense of career and timing; and lack of preparation for the realities of being a principal. Duke's conclusions were that preparation for school leaders needs to address the realities of the principalship for future school leaders, and that principals need autonomy and support. Each principal needs to be treated differently by his or her supervisor, and each supervisor—in order to retain administrators—needs to be sensitive to what his or her principals need to be successful. Equally important was the fact that all four of the administrators who participated in the study individuated that were satisfied with the principalship but that fatigue and burnout were among the major factors that led them to consider other opportunities.

Finally, Kruger, van Eck, and Vermeulen (2005) looked at voluntary and involuntary departures of principals in the Netherlands. They utilized a focused questionnaire to seek volunteers to participate in the study. They interviewed twenty-seven principals who agreed to further take part in the study after completing the questionnaire. The results of this study provided a number of unique reasons why individuals considered leaving the principalship. The primary reason in the Netherlands is strained relations with governing bodies, i.e. the national

and regional boards of education. Also significant was that principals who left their posts prematurely often had a staff with a ratio of older to younger teachers of about 50:50. This also supports the idea of human relations being a major detractor from the position of the principalship. Kruger, van Eck, and Vermelen provide six suggestions as a means to retain principals, "setting up profiles for potential principals, professionalizing and formalizing selection procedures by means of selection codes, assessment and critical incidents, job analysis techniques, informing candidates sufficiently, and paying attention to potential teacher support for the applicant principal in order to prevent mismatches" (p. 258–259). Although this study focused on the Dutch context, the relationship with governing agencies, both regional and nationally can be compared to some of the conflicts that American principals have with their local governing agencies, the state boards of education, and the federal government as well.

To summarize, there were consistent themes across the literature that suggested why principals either voluntarily or involuntary leave the principalship. The major emerging theme was the inability to form relationships with superiors, peers, and subordinates (Johnson, 2005; Davis, 1998; Duke, 1988; Kruger, van Eck, & Vermeulen, 2005). This is a consideration that should be taken into account by superintendents as they recruit and interview aspiring principal applicants because a candidate's ability to work well with others with various personality types and within the organizational culture will probably indicate the degree to which he or she will be successful in the position. Next, stress, fatigue, and burnout were also consistently identified as major reasons why individuals choose to leave the profession (Johnson, 2005; Davis, 1998; Duke, 1988; Kruger, van Eck, & Vermeulen, 2005). This latter point is the basis for the research conducted in this study. Finally, salary was mentioned as a consistent reason why individuals leave the principalship altogether or change districts to find a more lucrative position (Gates,

Ringel, Santibanez, Guarino, Ghosh-Dastidar, & Brown, 2009; Graham & Messner, 1998; Papa Jr., 2007; Kruger, van Eck, & Vermeulen, 2005). This can be a major problem for lower-income school districts as talented individuals might enter a principal position only to gain experience to eventually transition to another district for more pay. Also, low pay with the significant amount of duties and responsibilities of the principalship might be reason enough for an individual to leave the position altogether.

2.4 JOB SATISFACTION OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

A number of studies exploring job satisfaction among school administrators have been conducted (Winter & Morgenthal, 2002; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Stark-Price, Munoz, Winter, & Petrosko, 2006; Friedman, Friedman, & Markow, 2008; Pijanowski & Brady, 2009; Schmidt, 1976; Duke, 1998; Graham & Messner, 1998; Scott & Dinham, 2003). Some of the more interesting and significant information from those studies is discussed below.

Schmidt carried out one of the earliest studies on job satisfaction among secondary school administrators (1976). He utilized a checklist to survey administrators in which they were asked to select two events that made them feel good as an administrator and two events that led them to feel dissatisfied with their position. The findings were that recognition, achievement, and advancement were major forces in motivating administrators to their maximum potential. The study also suggested that job satisfaction among staff would be better served if a mix of external and internal candidates were hired for the principalship. This is interesting as it contradicts much of the current research done on internal succession planning.

Duke's study (1998) was also noteworthy because he interviewed four principals who considered leaving the principalship, and found that those individuals were still somewhat satisfied with their job. "All four principals described considerable satisfaction with the job itself. They appreciated the diversity of tasks, the numerous opportunities to solve complex problems, and the chance to learn more about their own abilities and beliefs" (p. 309). This is significant because even though the individuals were ultimately not satisfied with their positions, there were still certain characteristics of the position that they enjoyed and which caused some degree of job satisfaction.

Friedman, Friedman and Markow (2008) utilized a Harris poll to survey twenty-nine school districts across the United States on school administrator job satisfaction; they received responses from 431 elementary and secondary school principals. They found that among their sample, principal satisfaction was directly correlated with three characteristics: student behavior; involvement in decision-making; and school equipment and facilities. This was the only study reviewed that acknowledged student behavior to be a criterion that influences job satisfaction.

Graham and Messner (1998) utilized the Principal's Job Satisfaction Survey (PJSS) to report on characteristics of job satisfaction among Missouri school principals. Some significant findings from their study include: Missouri school principals were generally satisfied with their role as a principal (92.9%); principals in mid-size schools were more satisfied with their job and pay than principals in larger or smaller schools; and principals with less experience were the most satisfied with their opportunities for advancement, significantly more than mid-career administrators (with four to eight years of administrative experience) or highly experienced administrators (with more than eight years of administrative experience).

Pijanowski and Brady (2009) conducted a study to determine what specifically would increase school administrators' satisfaction with their job. They found that money is not necessarily enough to convince individuals to enter the principalship or to increase their job satisfaction, and that more qualified individuals would seek the principalship if the working conditions—including responsibilities, personnel support, and decision-making authority—were changed to better benefit administrators. Although the study concludes that a generous salary package does not guarantee job satisfaction, there are indications that it is more effective to provide principals with additional monies than it is to offer pay raises to teachers if they agree to assume leadership positions (p. 39).

Pounder and Merrill's article (2001) attempted to further engage the argument and advance research that there are more than enough qualified candidates for the principalship, however, a significant amount of candidates are opting not to pursue the position, which in turn creates the appearance of a critical shortage. Within that literature, there are some interesting findings concerning principals' job satisfaction. Pounder and Merrill concluded that "potential candidates are most likely to be attracted to and seek the position to fulfill psychological needs represented by the subjective factor (a desire to achieve and improve education)" (p. 47), which relates to the extrinsic needs individuals in education have (e.g., entering the principalship with the desire to "change the world"). Most importantly, they cautioned that choosing to enter the principalship is ultimately a struggle between how much an individual is willing to sacrifice their personal life in order to influence education or how much of a salary constitutes a worthwhile compensation for the loss of personal time. They conclude that job satisfaction is linked to a sense of accomplishment, opportunities for advancement and recognition, the time demands required by the position, and salary as the fourth variable.

These conclusions are similar to those arrived at in a study by Winter and Morgenthal (2002), which also found sense of accomplishment to be the number one factor leading to job satisfaction, followed by increased pay. In addition, Winter and Morgenthal (2002) found in their data that school location (urban, suburban, or rural) was not as important a factor in job desirability for administrators as it was for teachers. This can be construed as a major positive for job desirability, as applicants were willing to enter into low-income or high-risk schools as principals. Stark-Price, Munoz, Winter, and Petrosko (2006) also looked at job satisfaction and job desirability in low-income and high-risk schools and had a differing opinion on the job desirability. Their findings indicate that experienced administrators were the ones most likely to be both satisfied and successful with taking over low-performing and low-income schools. This can create a conundrum if the majority of individuals that ends up in these types of schools has limited experience and is just looking for an opportunity to gain experience in order to eventually transition to a more desirable school.

The final study related to job satisfaction is the Scott and Dinham (2003) quantitative study, which looked at both teacher and principal job satisfaction in Australia, New Zealand, England, and the United States. Their conclusions correlate with the majority of the other research stating that, "In each sample, teachers and school executive recorded greatest satisfaction with what could be termed the "core business of teaching", i.e. matters pertaining to student achievement and their own professional efficacy and development. There was more ambivalence with 'school-based factors', such as school communication and decision making" (p. 84). This was a consistent conclusion in all four of the countries that were studied.

The most important conclusion that can be gleaned from the literature on school administrator job satisfaction is that when opportunities for advancement, professional

development, working with students and staff, and positive relationships exist among administrators, their superiors, and their subordinates, job satisfaction tends to be high. It is fruitful for the school principals' direct supervisors (e.g., the area administrator in large, urban school districts, or the superintendent or assistant superintendent in smaller districts) to provide considerable feedback, motivation, and support for individuals who have selected to take on this highly challenging occupation.

Research on pay and its relation to job satisfaction is slightly more complex. It can be confirmed that higher pay has a positive correlation with job satisfaction, but identifying the exact amount of pay it would take to maximize job satisfaction is an impossible task. More research could be undertaken in attempt to identify specific incentives, but pinpointing an exact figure is most likely impossible. The final conclusion is based on individuals seeking to enter the principalship in high-risk or low-income schools. While the conclusions from the literature are consistent concerning motivating factors and compensation, the job satisfaction in different types of schools is still up for debate. Winter and Morgenthal's (2002) research leads readers to believe that individuals seeking the principalship are content with seeking application at more challenging schools, whereas Pounder and Merrill (2001), Stark-Price, Munoz, Winter, and Petrosko (2006), and Graham and Messner (1998) argue that the higher-risk/low-income assignments are more stressful, less desirable, and have a negative impact on job satisfaction. However, what is consistent in this debate is that these types of environments can serve as springboards to more satisfying positions, and that some administrators are willing to deal with negative job satisfaction as a means to gain experience in order to later transition to a more desirable location.

2.5 STRESS OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

This section explores the studies which have been conducted on administrator stress and highlights overarching themes and ideas that have emerged from the data. Since there is a considerable amount of literature on this topic, I have chosen to portray the findings in a table that lists the characteristics identified by the researchers in each study. It should also be noted that the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), developed in psychology, is a consistent instrument that was utilized in a large percentage of studies on stress and burnout.

This following descriptions and Table 1 provide a comprehensive literature analysis of all studies that have been conducted on the causes of administrator stress and burnout. Sixteen empirical studies were consistently cited across the literature, and represent an accurate sample of the research currently available on administrator stress and burnout. In some cases, the studies included teacher and central administrator stress. This was not factored into the article analysis. Studies are listed in chronological order.

A brief description of each study is provided below:

Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent (1982) - The first study related to stress management in education. Given to Oregonian administrators, used the Administrator Stress Index. Quantitative. Found that the more experienced school principals are the less stress they tend to experience.

Kottkamp & Mansfield (1985) - Given to New Jersey administrators, convenience sample. Used Maslach Burnout Inventory. Quantitative. Main finding was that burnout occurs when a leader experiences powerlessness and has problems controlling their day-to-day operations.

Savery & Detiuk (1986) – Administered to elementary school principals throughout Australia. Very high response rate. Quantitative. Found time constraints and role overload to be major

causes of stress. Also alluded to legal implications for school districts if administrators become ill as a result of job stress.

Cooper (1988) - Surveyed 212 secondary school principals cited by the National Secondary School Recognition for their excellence. Given the Administrator Stress Index and the Boesch Coping Preference Scale. Quantitative. Found that the biggest causes of stressors were task-based stressors related to an overload of responsibilities.

Gmelch (1988) - Surveyed 1,156 administrators. Used the Administrator Stress Index. Quantitative. Found the primary causes of stress to be role overload and the demands of the job. Following survey, worked with 25 administrators on a coping plan that did not focus on the causes of stress, just relief from stress.

Sarros (1988) - Surveyed 128 administrators in Western Canada. Used the Maslach Burnout Inventory and a self-designed questionnaire. Quantitative. Found that most administrators enjoy their job and do not experience stress. Found that older administrators that have not been promoted or who have remained in the same positions are the ones most in danger of experiencing stress.

Carr (1994) - Survey responded to by 94 principals from Western Australia. Randomly selected. Quantitative. Also used an interview and dream analysis but those findings were not reported on in the survey. The primary sources of stress from respondents were lack of support from the Education Department and the union, a lack of control over the work environment, and management being forced on the principal.

Friedman (1995) - Surveyed 571 Israeli principals. Quantitative with open-ended questions for respondents to answer at length. Mapped the open-ended responses as quantitative data, no

interviews were conducted. Found that six factors caused burnout for principals: expectations, relationships, motivational, fulfillment, psycho-physical status, and time.

Whitaker (1995) - 107 surveys were returned from an anonymous state, using the Maslach Burnout Inventory. From that, the 13 "highest-stressed" principals were contacted for interviews in which 9 agreed to participate. Mixed-methods study. Found that four elements of the principalship caused stress: increasing demands of the principalship, lack of clarity in terms of the principal role, lack of recognition, and decreasing autonomy.

Thornton, Thomas, & Vine (1996) - Natural observation of five principals in Australia, where their blood pressure was measured every 15 minutes. Study was a case study and written with qualitative interpretations. Found that time in the office and periods of time before meetings were the most stressful periods for principals.

Whitaker (1996) - Individual case studies from the nine principals in the above-mentioned study that mentioned extreme levels of stress. Principals were interviewed at their school sites. Qualitative case-study analysis. Reported the following as major causes of stress: increased demands of the principalship, and difficulties and pressures from central office.

Allison (1997) - Surveys were sent out to all administrators in Vancouver, British Columbia. The survey used the Administrator Stress Index and additional documents. Quantitative. Principals with higher stress levels tend to use work-coping techniques, while principals with lower stress levels take part in a lot of outside activities. Also, younger principals (30–39) are more likely to experience stress than older principals.

Gmelch & Gates (1998) - 656 administrators responded to a survey that included both the Administrator Stress Index and Maslach Burnout Inventory. Also, there was an additional instrument created by the authors. Quantitative. Found that administrators would choose the

profession again if given the choice, and found that negative job satisfaction and time constraints were the largest causes of burnout.

Devos, Bouckenoohe, Engels, Hotton, & Aelterman (2007) - 46 primary school administrators in Flanders completed a survey and interview component. Mixed methods. Found that dissatisfaction with the government (board of education), lack of autonomy, poor earnings, and high workload were the causes of stress and burnout.

Tomic & Tomic (2008) - 514 principals in the Netherlands responded to a mailed survey. Quantitative. Found that older principals have higher self-transcendence and suffer from less burnout than younger principals. Cautioned that the survey was conducted over break, which would lead to a higher level of positive responses not associated with burnout.

Combs, Edmonson, & Jackson (2009) - 228 principals in a Southwestern state were surveyed. Quantitative. Found that gender and years of experience did not have a strong correlation with burnout, and the key causes of burnout were the balancing of multiple responsibilities and the motivation of teachers.

Table 1. Location, Instrument, and Methodology of Studies Involving Administrator Stress

Author	Domestic	Abroad	Used MBI	Used ASI	Used Other	Quantitative	Qualitative	Case Study
Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent (1982)	X			X		X		
Kottkamp & Mansfield (1985)	X		X			X		
Savery & Detiuk (1986)		X			X	X		
Cooper (1988)	X			X	X	X		
Gmelch (1988)	X			X		X		
Sarros (1988)		X	X		X	X		
Carr (1994)		X			X	X		
Friedman (1995)		X			X	X		
Whitaker (1995)	X		X			X	X	
Thornton, Thomas, & Vine (1996)		X			X		X	X
Whitaker (1996)							X	X
Allison (1997)		X		X	X	X		
Gmelch & Gates (1998)	X		X	X	X	X		
Devos, Bouckenooghe, Engles, Hotton, & Aelterman (2007)		X			X	X	X	
Tomic & Tomic (2008)		X	X		X	X		
Combs, Edmonson, & Jackson (2009)	X				X	X		

The summaries and chart show that there have been multiple methods to study administrator stress, and multiple conclusions have been made throughout the literature. The overarching themes and conclusions that can be drawn from Table 1 and the research are as follows:

1. The majority of the studies conducted on administrator burnout have involved quantitative analysis as the predominant mode of inquiry. This is not surprising. Quantitative studies are easier to collect data from, and in a lot of cases, the survey instrument was built prior to distribution. The limitations are the inability to discuss a sensitive topic one-on-one with an individual and listen for voice inflection or interviewee personality, which has the potential to provide a different conclusion related to stress or burnout.

2. A significant amount of the studies found role overload and relationship with staff (either central administration or subordinates) to be the major causes of burnout. The causes of stress in more than half of the studies were either role overload (Kottkamp & Mansfield, 1985; Savery &

Detiuk, 1986 ; Cooper, 1988; Gmelch, 1988; Friedman, 1995; Gmelch & Gates, 1998; Devos, Bouckenoohe, Engels, Hotton, & Aelterman, 2007; Combs, Edmonson, & Jackson, 2009), difficulties with staff members (Friedman, 1995; Whitaker, 1996; Combs, Edmonson, & Jackson, 2009), or in a few of the international studies, problems with state or national mandates (Carr, 1994; Devos, Bouckenoohe, Engels, Hotton, & Aelterman, 2007). It is interesting to note this, as none of the empirical studies list performance evaluation or high-stakes testing as a major stressor of the position. The pressures from central administration, not the tests themselves, are a stressor, relating more to relationships than the high-stakes testing element.

3. Older principals do not suffer from as much stress and burnout as younger principals. With the exception of Combs, Edmonson, & Jackson (2009), it was consistent across any studies related to age that older, experienced principals suffered less from burnout than their less experienced counterparts. What was not conducted as part of any studies were to look at the reasons why this is the case. Coping strategies were discussed in a few of the studies (Gmelch, 1988; Friedman, 1995; Tomic & Tomic, 2008) and experienced administrators naturally dealt with the stresses, pressures, and responsibilities of the principalship more adeptly than early-career administrators.

4. There are a lack of studies conducted with qualitative research on the subjects of stress and burnout. This is an area that needs to be addressed further in research. Allowing administrators to speak about causes of stress is certainly something that could benefit the profession and provide opportunities for a new dialogue and new lines of research.

5. There are a variety of instruments that have been used to measure burnout; however, Gmelch's Administrator Stress Index and Maslach's Burnout Inventory are the two most commonly used evaluative tools. It is interesting to note that twenty-five years later, research is

still relying on the ASI and the MBI to evaluate stress levels. Although psychologists have created these tools, it would certainly behoove the profession to have an instrument created by a former or practicing principal who has dealt with stress and high-pressure situations in order to accurately evaluate the principalship in the form of a formal questionnaire.

2.5.1 Does Stress Influence Individuals Leaving Administration?

Identifying the factors that contribute to administrator stress is insignificant without acknowledging the tangible effects that stress can have on the principalship. While decreased job performance is ultimately the consequence of increased stress, a discussion on whether it has an impact on removal from the position is important in order to completely understand the impact that stress and burnout can have. A number of studies (Gilman & Laven-Givens, 2001; Johnson, 2005; Howley, Andrianivo, & Perry, 2005; Allison, 1997; Whitaker, 2003; Gmelch & Gates, 1998; Sarros, 1988; Gmelch, 1988; Roberson & Matthews, 1988; Tomic & Tomic, 2008; Carr, 1994; Friedman, 1995; Kottkamp & Mansfield, 1985) have evaluated whether administrators leave the profession because of the stress that comes from the role expectations of the position. While the causes of stress and burnout have yet to be fully explored in the literature, studies spanning three decades have looked at retention and role expectations of school administrators. Administrator turnover due to stress is said to not be a major phenomenon in the position. Stress is not a major cause for administrator turnover because most administrators-despite their stress levels-remain in their positions but also wish for their working conditions to improve.

Compensation is a heavily contested area of the research related to administrator turnover. Gilman and Laven-Givens (2001), Pounder and Merrill (2001), and Graham and

Messner (1998) argued that salary is one of the main reasons why individuals will ultimately leave the profession, whereas other authors (Johnson, 2005) have argued that compensation is a reason that individuals stay in the position, even if they do not desire to do so. The work of Papa Jr. (2007) is the first attempt to correlate compensation with administrator satisfaction, and opens up debate over the specific amount of salary that will retain an administrator in their current position. Papa Jr. used units of standard deviation in salary across districts in the state of New York and found the following:

> "if salary is decreased by 1 s.d. from its mean (using statewide averages, from $84k to $68k), then the likelihood of retention falls from 91.6 percent to 76.3 percent. If, on the other hand, salary is increased by 1 s.d. (i.e., using statewide averages, to $100k), then the likelihood of retention increases to 97.5 percent. In other words, the likelihood of losing a principal to another school is, on average across the state, almost 9.5 times greater (i.e., 23.7 percent as compared to 2.5 percent) at a school paying a salary which is 1 s.d. below the mean as compared to a school paying salary which is 1 s.d. above the mean" (p. 19).

For a state with an inflated economic system well over the average cost of living in the United States, New York might not have been the best choice to explore the cost of administrator satisfaction in retention, however, this study certainly opened up opportunities for further discourse and debate regarding the cost of retaining administrators in the principalship.

Pijanowski and Brady's (2009) study supports the theory that extrinsic rewards such as compensation and job incentives are what initially attracts people to the principalship, however personal satisfaction and working conditions cause individuals to remain in the position.

> When former administrators were asked by Lankford et al. (2003) why they left, 49% of men and 63% of women cited stress as the primary reason and 44% reported that they did not like the work. Although recruiting efforts and pay incentives are most attractive to those who have never served in a leadership position, it appears that those who have had experience in the job and leave are more concerned with quality of life and working conditions. Extrinsic motivation may draw them in, but it is the intrinsic rewards that most influence if they will stay (p. 31).

This further supports the assertion that although pay might be what causes individuals to seek application, self-fulfillment, freedom, and leadership opportunities are ultimately what cause administrators to be satisfied with their career choice.

The final consideration involves the job desirability of the principalship. Individuals pursuing the principalship might enter into a training program, complete their degree, practicum, and certification, and decide the position would not be in their best interest. Pounder and Merrill's (2001) research argues that the job desirability of the principalship is altogether down, and the candidates who are most capable of leading a school and creating considerable education reform do not want the job to begin with, thus undesirable candidates end up as principals.

> "Approximately two thirds of the study's respondents found the job to be at least somewhat desirable. However, when asked to identify specific career plans within the next 5 years, fewer than one third of the respondents identified the high school principalship as a career goal. It appears that only those who find the position highly desirable are likely to actively pursue attainment of the position. Those candidates who may be only marginally interested in the position may need stronger incentives or encouragement to seek the high school principalship, or, said conversely, may need less potent disincentives to pursue the position" (p. 46).

It should also be noted that Pounder and Merrill's study found the high school principal to be the "highest paid field position in education" (p. 30), however, the job desirability was still very low so that individuals opted not to pursue the position.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the literature that contribute to this study. First, it is clearly evident that the role of the principal has increased in difficulty with increased responsibility and accountability for principals. In particular, it appears that much of the added responsibilities that principals currently face were added to the domain of the principalship in the mid-1980s. This is an important consideration for this study, as it reflects on the need to update methodological instruments to discuss the changed role of the principal.

It also appears that the inability to form relationships with subordinates, peers, and superiors is the most prevalent reason that individuals leave the principalship. Stress and burnout appears to be the second-most cited reason in educational literature. Applying these conclusions to an organizational theoretical framework involving control theory will help to better understand this phenomenon. Of course, it is entirely feasible that the inability to form relationships with stakeholders could itself create stress.

Individuals who choose to be school principals appear to be satisfied with their decision. Financial compensation is the primary reason that individuals choose to become school administrators, and it is also why individuals remain school administrators. Administrators are likely to leave their current school district for another with a similar teacher and student demographic profile if it means an increase in pay for their position. More research is needed to investigate individuals who become principals and then decide to leave the profession altogether. All of these changes have had a direct and indirect impact on principal research. Many different studies will have to be updated, but in particular, looking at the causes of stress for school principals amid principal redesign and development is vital. The next chapters will address the

theoretical framework linked to the causes and implications of stress for school administrators and the methods used to isolate specific tasks and challenges that today's principals face.

3.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: STRESS AS AN ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGE

Initial studies examining the causes of stress for school administrators began in the 1970's and 1980's. Researchers (Gmelch, 1978; Gmelch & Swent, 1981, Savery & Detiuk, 1986) used occupational stress theory to reflect the conditions that cause school administrators stress. Occupational stress theory infers there are specific dimensions of stress that an individual encounters in their daily routines (McGrath, 1976) and that principals have the responsibility of understanding the optimal amounts of stress that can help their job performance (Gmelch & Chan, 1994). Successful principals, then, in turn, will employ personal and occupational coping strategies to relieve the pressure that comes from the position when faced with an overabundance of stress (Allison, 1997; Cooper, 1998; Gmelch, 1988a).

The argument can be made that principal stress can be examined from an organizational perspective. The mere structure of schools and school districts as organizations create a stressful environment for principals. Principals face demands from various actors in an organization such as teachers, parents, other administrators, school board members, and central administration. Principals are also held accountable for outside stakeholders such as state and federal agencies. This creates multiple agendas that create a complex system for principals to navigate on a daily basis.

Organizational theory is also important because some theorists have commented on the complexity and the challenges of organizational change (Fernandez and Rainey, 1994; Kotter,

1995, Jeffcutt, 1994; Connolly, James, & Beales, 2011). The role of a building principal could be construed as one of a singular actor within a larger, more complex system. Under this assumption, in order for the principal to find success within the organization, they would have to understand the structure, systems that are in place, the formal and informal networks that have been created and are active, and position themselves within that system. It can then be assumed that understanding the structure of a particular institution could correlate with a reduction of stress.

Control theory, a theory positioned within a broader-scope of organizational theory literature, offers a different approach to analyze stress. Control theory is important because it directly addresses the multiple layers that exist within organizations. Ouchi (1979) defines control as "a process of monitoring something, comparing it with some standard, and then providing selective rewards and adjustments" (p. 97). Control is further managed by acknowledging structural determinants such as size of the organization, number of stakeholders, and the intensity of their supervision (Myers and Murphy, 1995). These factors, create unique sub-organizations within each organization.

Creating an instrument that acknowledges important elements of organizational theory assimilated with prior findings in occupational stress theory allows research on the causes of stress in organizations to be further developed. The theoretical framework for this study will build on the "person-environment fit theory" from occupational stress research. It also integrates challenges that have been identified in organizational theory through control theory as represented by the Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979). It is important to analyze which specific groups and subgroups of the tasks that principals engage as part of their practice are ones in which control mechanisms are highly structured or intensified from the input of various

stakeholders within an organization. Then, we can better quantify these tasks as high- or low-stressors.

3.1 OCCUPATIONAL STRESS THEORY

Occupational stress theory emerged from research in social stress (Kahn, 1970; McGrath, 1970) and became its own sub-discipline in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Researchers in the disciplines of psychology and management would use occupational stress theory (Cooper & Payne, 1978; Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980) to explain the extent to which individuals cope with stress from work, the effect stress has on employee health, intervention strategies to reduce stress, the interaction between individuals and their work environment, and the correlations between stress and job satisfaction. All of these topics were explored either as independent studies or as multiple-factor combination studies throughout the 1980's and 1990's, focused almost exclusively in the helping professions (social work, nursing, education, civil service). Ganster and Schauboreck (1991) noted the amount of studies conducted using instruments that were designed exclusively for one particular occupation to analyze stress.

The definition of occupational stress has been debated. It has been argued that occupational stress can be defined in three different ways, either in terms of the person, the environment, or a combination of the two (Hart & Cooper, 2001). This creates a challenge correlating the definition with a theoretical framework that uses occupational stress. Because of the conflicting definitions, multiple models have been created to develop a theoretical framework for occupational stress. Cooper (1998) identified three theoretical frameworks that use occupational stress: Person-Environment Fit Theory (identified as P-E Fit Theory), Cybernetic

Theory, and Demand-Control Theory. Of the three, both P-E Fit Theory and Control Theory involve the interaction between individuals and their organizations and self-assessment and perception of stressors (LeFevre, Matheny, & Kolt, 2003). Cybernetic Theory addresses the impact that homeostasis has on stress and an individual's likelihood to fight or flight from a position once stressors persist. As this study is not longitudinal in nature, elements of this theory will not be included. Demand-Control Theory is addressed as a separate entity because of its overlapping elements in organizational theory research.

3.1.1 Person-Environment Fit Theory of Occupational Stress

The psychological model of Person-Environment Fit Theory (French, Rogers, & Cobb, 1974; LaRocco, House, & French, 1980; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1984; Cooper, 1998; Schnall, Landsbergis, & Baker, 1994; Dollard & Metzer, 1999) is a popular theory that has been used by researchers to define the relationship that a person has with their work environment and the impact this relationship has on stress. It is unique in the fact that it suggests that a curvilinear relation between work load and strain, meaning that an individual with too much (or too little) work to complete is more likely to experience stress in their position. Person-Environment Fit Theory was conceptualized by French, Rogers and Cobb (1974) postulating that "stress results when the supplies or demands of the environment (E) do not match the needs or abilities of the person (P) (LaRocco, House, & French, 1980). Selection is the most important element of this theory, as it is the responsibility of an occupation's managers and staffing departments to select individuals who display characteristics that match the needs of the organization, both in terms of occupational abilities and personality fits within the organization. According to this theory, the amount of stress and strain placed on the individual will be reduced. Considerations must also

be made to appropriately balance a workload to a manageable and appropriate level based on the capability of the employee.

3.1.2 Past Findings of Studies Utilizing Occupational Stress Theory

It is important to note the findings from studies that have previously used occupational stress theory models to analyze the causes and effects of stress. LaRocco, House, and French (1980) found that individuals who perceive an excessive amount of workload, role conflict, and role ambiguity are more likely to experience negative job satisfaction. Support from co-workers was also negatively correlated with job satisfaction, meaning that individuals who did not have strong relationships with co-workers, management, and subordinates were not satisfied with their job, which was a leading cause of stress (Caplan, 1972).

Motowidlo, Manning, & Packard (1986) produced a comprehensive study on nurses and used quantitative path analysis to analyze the causes and effects of occupational stress. They found that "the more frequent and the more intensely stressful the events are for an individual, the greater level of subjective stress" (p. 618). Age was not a significant variable, however, time in an organization was. They found that individuals who remain in an organization longer have adapted to specific stressors in the organization. They suggest that those individuals developed "coping mechanisms to deal with stress" and that "senior organizational members should be more fully adapted and, therefore, should experience less stress" (pp. 619-620). Their final conclusions were that fear of negative evaluation was the leading cause of anxiety among workers and that the frequency of stressful events caused more stress than the intensity of stressful events (p. 624).

Other studies have found that the knowledge of job security has significantly reduced stress and anxiety in employees (Levi, 1990; Dollard & Metzer, 1999). The notion that individuals who know they are in no eminent danger of losing their position feel more job security could impact their willingness to take risks and attempt change in an organization. Hart and Cooper's findings (2001) were less conclusive, stating that a combination of individual and organizational characteristics contribute to employee well-being, which, in turn, contributes to organizational performance and impacts a multitude of stakeholders.

3.1.3 Critiques of Occupational Stress Theory

Models of occupational stress theory are not without critiques from individuals who have employed those models in their research. Hart and Cooper (2001) cautioned against an exclusive use of occupational stress theory due to the natural correlation to employee health and not the productivity and profitability of organizations. They state, "one of the main limitations of an occupational stress theory that applies to all domains of an employee's life, is that it can become incidental to the mainstream work psychology literature. In other words, it may lead to occupational stress being viewed as a topic that is primarily concerned with general health issues, rather than a topic that is integrally linked to the ongoing viability and profitability of work organizations" (p. 8). This indicates the need to consider some of the elements of occupational stress theory including job satisfaction, strain, security, and autonomy when examining stress as an organizational concern.

Also, it should be noted that one of the primary critiques of research using occupational stress theory models is the perception that stress is intently negative. Occupational stress theory does not address the positive effects that stress presents (as critiqued by Meurs and Perrewe,

2011), which can encourage managers to perform better in their positions. This provides researchers with the opportunity to address eustress through other modalities, such as qualitative research.

Finally, findings from studies involving occupational stress theory have drawn conclusions from data provided by individuals involved in social service professions (Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Sutherland & Cooper, 1992; Travers & Cooper, 1993; Beaton, Murphy, & Pike, 1996; Cooper, 1996). This has caused contention among some (Marmot, Smith, Stansfield, Patel, North, Head, White, Brunner, Feeney, 1991) that suggest that labor and industry workers are more likely to have worse physical health. The lack of interdisciplinary research conducted could potentially distort findings and make it challenging to present generalizations outside of specific professions.

3.1.4 Implications of Occupational Stress Theory in Education

Education has been found to be a "high-risk" occupation in terms of occupational stress (Travers & Cooper, 1993). This provides researchers with an opportunity to explore education-specific situations that cause stress. As role-based occupational stress tends to occur the most for individuals in middle management positions (Koch, Gmelch, Tung, & Swent, 1982), exploring how the impact of stress affects school principals, is then important. The assumption that stress and anxiety are inherently reduced with job security must also be considered. It can be argued that the pressure on school administrators is at an all-time high due to increased accountability provisions, which would then reduce job security.

Hurell, Nelson, and Simmons (1998) note the changing dynamic of stress in the general workforce stating, "it seems reasonable to question the relative importance of some of these

stressors in contemporary work, given that the nature of the workforce have changed radically and continue to change" (p. 385). Whether or not those conditions contribute to the stress experienced by principals must be considered. The Motowidlo, Manning, & Packard (1986) study suggested assigning individuals with the least stress-resistant characteristics to the least-stressful jobs (p. 627). In larger school districts with multiple buildings, this could be a consideration superintendents take into account to retain individuals that exhibit large amount of stress but are still high-quality principals.

Finally, the model presented through Person-Environment Fit Theory is of significant interest to educational researchers. Person-Environment Fit Theory is used to determine the "stress caused by a lack of fit between the person and environment" (LeFevre, Matheny, & Kolt, 2003, p. 733). What it does not address are the specific tasks within an organization that cause the most serious stressors. As principals have a multitude of responsibilities, it can be assumed that some tasks are less desirable than others. It can also be assumed that not all interactions in an environment with different stakeholders cause the same amount of stress. While P-E Fit Theory seeks to establish the relationship between an individual and their environment, the complex nature of schools make it nearly impossible to ascertain what specifically causes an environmental stressor for principals. It becomes more important to understand the school as an organization with multiple stressors than as a singular source of stress.

3.2 CONTROL THEORY/JOB DEMAND-CONTROL MODEL

Control theory emerged in the early 1900's in the field of sociology, and has had applications to organizations and organizational learning since the mid-1950's. One of the first

theories that emerged from organizational studies involved the use of control theory to explain the relationships explicitly and implicitly created in organizations (Scott & Davis, 1997). Control theory has consistently been presented in organizational literature in tandem with power, dependence, and social relations (Emerson, 1962). The work of Emerson (1962) and Ouchi (1979) are two of the most commonly cited studies utilizing control theory.

Emerson (1962) explains generalized power in relationships have the following structure:

Person A dominates Person B, while being subservient in relations with Person C (p. 31)

This basic representation suggests that unless an individual is at the very bottom or very top of the organization, they will have power over others, and others will have power over them. Interestingly enough, it could further be recognized that all individuals within an organization are in some part of a power structure, as the highest ranking member of the organization has power over someone or a group of people, whereas the lowest ranking individual in the organization is powerless, yet is still part of someone else's power structure. This is important to acknowledge, as this ties into the need for reciprocity between stakeholders in order to accomplish mutually beneficial relationships, which is an important concept in control theory. Emerson also alludes to a concept that aligns with stress and burnout, entitled "motivational withdrawal" (p. 36). If individual "B" experiences frustrations based on the power structure and the demands that "A" imposes, this could lead to withdrawal and cause "A" to lose interest in his or her role.

Ouchi (1979) notes a similar perspective on organizational control in terms of power and dependency relationships through bureaucracy, but also comments the importance of selection as a key way to internalize control, through selecting individuals that fit best with the needs of the organization (p. 842). This relates to the concept of Person-Environment Fit Theory in terms of occupational stress. Another organizational consideration is to align the individual and

organizational objectives closely together. Ouchi notes that when the organization has a similar objective to the objective of an individual, then no close supervision is required at any level, because both stakeholders will be pursuing the goals of the organization (p. 842). Ouchi's concluding thoughts on organizational control in the public sector is that "clan control" which focuses on ceremony, ritual, and routines, is the most effective way to implement control mechanisms in an organization. He cautions against the "young manager who has taken a quick look around, and observed that no control mechanisms exist, and then begun a campaign to install a bureaucratic or market mechanism of some sort, only to trip over the elaborate ceremonial forms of control which are in place and are working quite effectively" (p. 845). An example of this relating to education would be a new principal coming into a school district and not taking time to observe the culture of the building before implementing changes.

There are a few noteworthy commonalities related to control theory from Emerson and Ouchi's studies:

- Emotional investment with a particular situation creates a growing need for control if one individual in a power relation is committed to advancing that issue
- Ultimately, if the objectives of the individual align with the organization, minimal control supervision is necessary, which is common among highly technical organizations with already established practices and norms
- Understanding relationships (power relationships) and rituals and routines (clan mentality) in an organization is critical in order to implement control mechanisms
- It is quite difficult to balance the concepts of power and control and accurately measure them to a particular output

These findings, combined with other models, can be used to better understand the relationship that individuals have within organizations and the control mechanisms in place. As schools themselves are highly-centralized organizations, examining the role of the principal using a model from management research can examine the amount of stress and autonomy that principals experience. A model that has been previously used to examine the impact that control has on stress in occupational stress literature is the Demand-Control Model (Karasek, 1979). The Demand-Control Model implies that as job demands increase with increased control provisions, depression and emotional exhaustion tend to result. Therefore, individuals with an overabundance of job responsibilities and pressures are most likely to experience depression and emotional exhaustion.

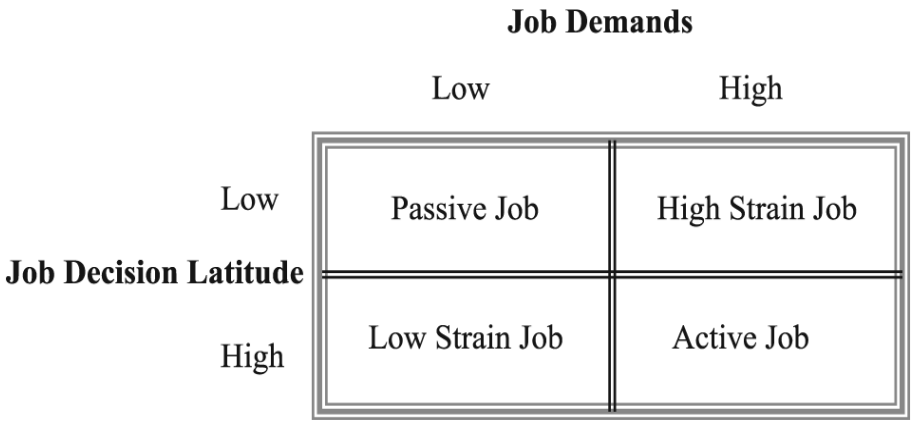


Figure 1. Karasek's (1979) Demand-Control Model

Under the Demand-Control model, four types of jobs exist:

1. Passive Job - low-job decision latitude and low job demands
2. Low Strain Job - high-job decision latitude and low job demands
3. Active Job - high-job decision latitude and high job demands
4. High Strain Job - low-job decision latitude and high job demands

Karasek noted in this model that individuals exhibited the most job satisfaction when they were engaged in jobs that had high decision-making authority and high job-demands. He noted that individuals were more likely to work hard and be satisfied in organizations when they were provided with significant responsibilities and had the authority to make decisions surrounding those responsibilities. He also noted the mental strain that is placed on individuals that have low decision-making authority and high job-demands. These individuals suffer from "strain indicators" (p. 296) such as absenteeism, pill consumption, and job dissatisfaction. The main idea from Karasek's study is that managers want to work at jobs with high responsibility, but they want the authority to make decisions that affect the organization.

Karasek's Demand-Control Model has been critiqued by scholars who note its lack of complexity (Daniels & Guppy, 1994; Beehr, Canali, & Wallwey, 2001; Peeters & Rutte, 2005; Meurs & Perrewe, 2010). Peeters & Rutte (2005) suggest the addition of a third variable to increase complexity and provide a new dimension to the model. Both the individualization of tasks (not looking at stress as a singular dimension of work) and time engaged in tasks are potential directions that have been suggested to expand the model. Another critique of the Demand-Control model is the reliance on the job description itself and not a multi-dimensional work experience (Beehr, Canali, & Wallwey, 2001). Therefore, looking at control in combination with elements from occupational stress and person-environment could frame a model better served to work in the context of this study.

3.2.1 Application of Control Theory to Education and School Principal Stress

Control theory offers an interesting dichotomy for school leaders. As it has been defined, control theory is relative to the amount of power an individual has and their position within a

structure of an organization. The structure and organization of schools has long been defined as hierarchical in nature (Myers & Murphy, 1995) with the majority of control coming from central office, but in particular, the superintendency. While the superintendent and other members of central administration might be the primary control agent over the work that principals engage, there are multiple stakeholders outside of central administration that are involved with the decision-making process. This places the principal central to all of the activities in a school building. Their power is necessary to create change within a particular school, however, many internal and external forces can exhibit control over a principal's work. Multiple stakeholders contribute to the educational process, therefore, it is the responsibility of the principal to involve the stakeholders in the change process in order to establish positive relationships and increase the amount of autonomy they have in their position. Dollard and Metzer (1999) comment that, "for any applied work to be linked to change it must involve participation by the stakeholders and be valued and utilized by the stakeholders. It must therefore recognize the interpersonal and political contexts in which research is undertaken" (p. 244). Navigating a complex, interpersonal and political context perhaps then becomes the biggest challenge that a principal must face in their position.

If the structure and organization in a school district is a hierarchy, each building principal is in the middle of the hierarchy. The model in Figure 2 represents a hypothetical school district in the state of Pennsylvania. The structure of schools in the state of Pennsylvania position building principals in the middle of the organizational hierarchy of a school district. In this example, the middle school principal is an individual who reports to both an assistant superintendent and curriculum director, who they in turn report to a superintendent, all the while being responsible for two assistant principals who manage a teaching system who manage

students. External to the centrality of the middle school principal's relationships are the public relations director and business manager, who also hold power over our middle school principal. This does not even include the school board, external stakeholders such as parents, community members, and colleges and universities, or local, state, and federal agencies who also exhibit power over the governing of schools.

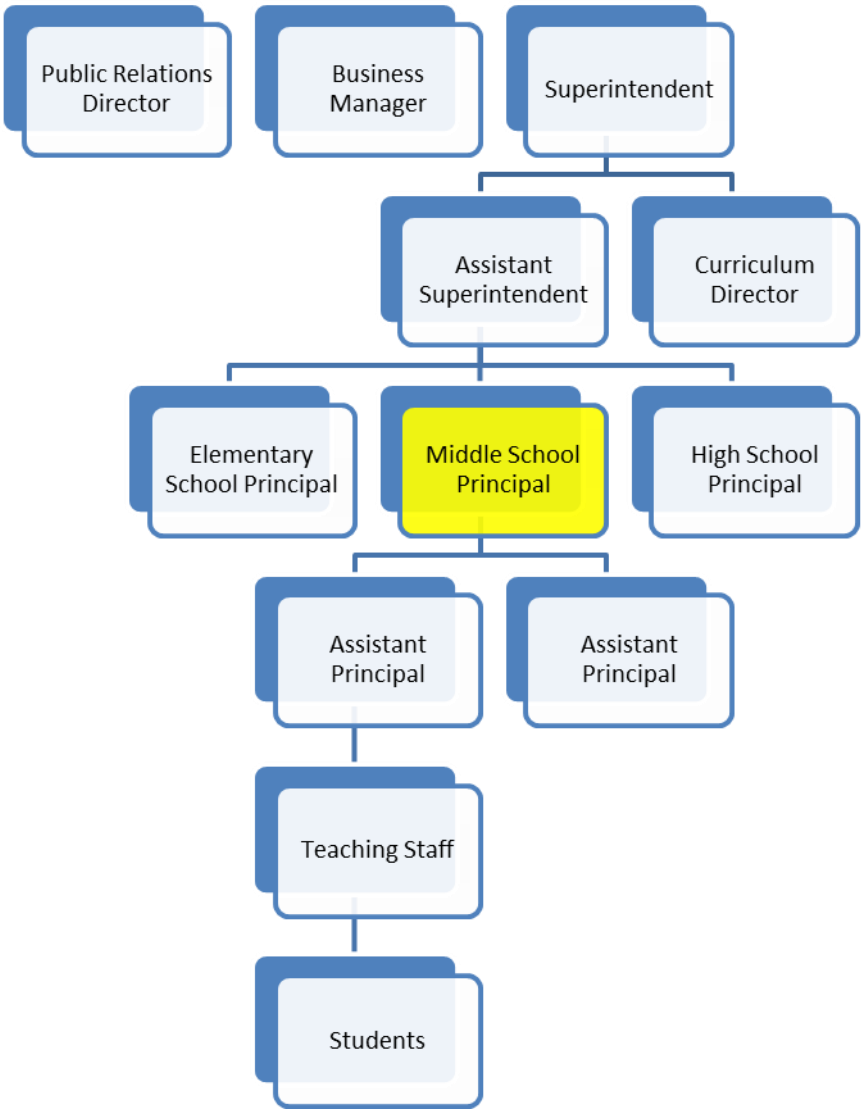


Figure 2. Sample Hierarchy of a Typical Western Pennsylvania School District

This example clearly exhibits the centrality of the school principal (in this case, the middle school principal). Every organizational stakeholder is connected to them, thus having a stake in their job performance and job responsibilities. However, while this hierarchy clearly represents the theory of power dependency that Emerson (1962) created (with the principal, A, having power over B, yet being a subordinate to C), it still does not accurately create a model for autonomy and control in relation to principal stress as there are multiple relationships that a principal has with stakeholders in their position. This is one of the arguments against the use of control theory as a standalone theory to examine the stress that principals experience. LeFevre, Matheny, and Kolt's (2003) critique of control theory state that it "does not focus on amount, and in fact provides no characterizations of the stressor. Rather, it simply acknowledges that environmental stress exists and" … "provides a set of factors that may influence the interpretation of the individual with regard to how that stressor is personally experienced as stress" (p. 737). Therefore, elements of occupational stress theory, person-environment fit theory, and the job-demand control model from control theory can be synthesized to create a visual representation of control.

3.3 THEORETICAL SYNTHESIS

Occupational Stress Theory, Person-Environment Fit Theory, or Demand-Control theory as standalone framework is not enough to fully define the problems and challenges that school principals' face in their positions. Organizational theorists have long contested that theoretical systems and structure need to rely on multiple perspectives and theories to create new frameworks for measuring and analyzing the complex conditions that effect individuals in

organizations. Two visual representations are constructed that could be used to define the relationship between the various actors in the school district and outside stakeholders engaged in the district's practices and stress.

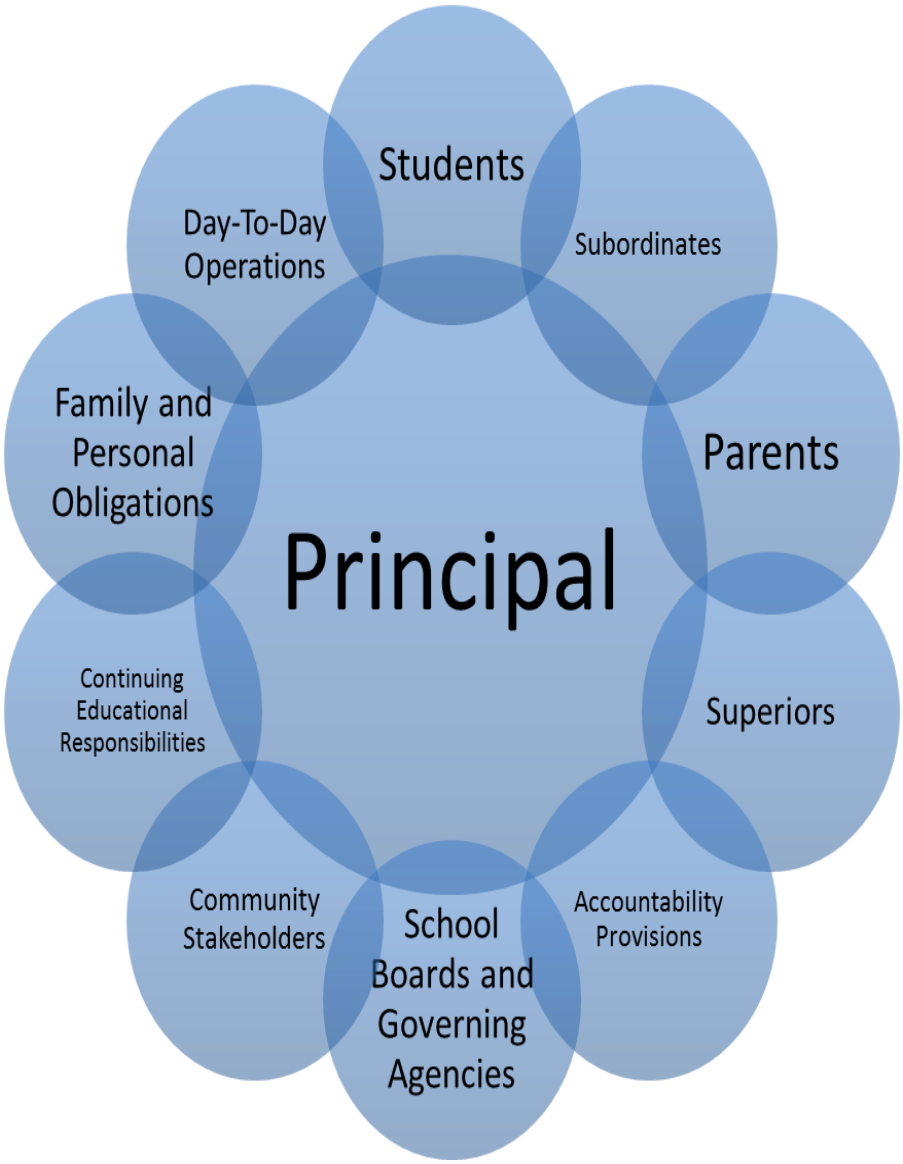


Figure 3. Representation A of the Relationship between Autonomy and Control and Principal Stress

This model acknowledges the ten pressures (either through responsibilities of the position or stakeholders) that potentially could provide input to a school principal, and, in turn, exhibit control. Each of these responsibilities or stakeholders has an arrow attached to it, representing

how each one has a direct effect on the principal. The positioning of the external models is done in a prescribed pattern. Each model is positioned next to an obligation or stakeholder, which is interrelated to it. As the models move closer to center, and decrease the autonomy and control that a principal experiences, it could eventually dominate the principal, which leads to role overload.

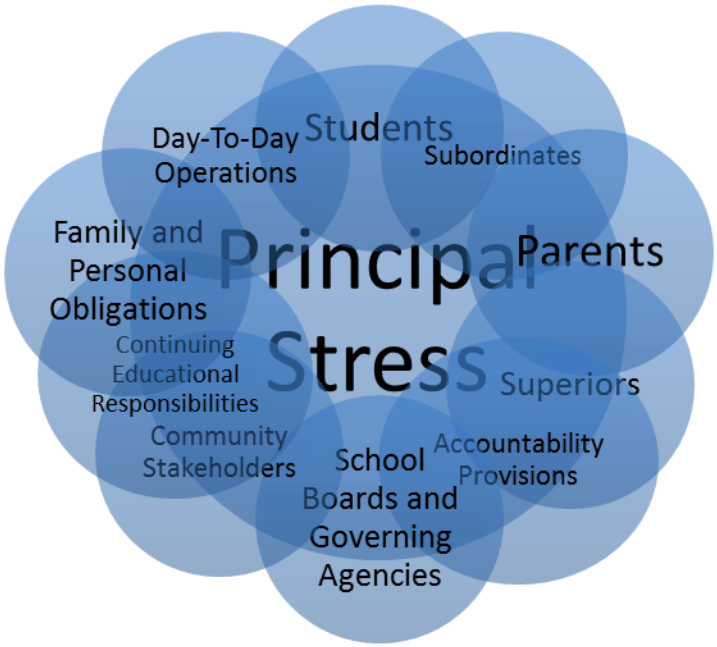


Figure 4. Amended Representation A of the Relationship between Autonomy and Control and Stress

This model shows the impact that stakeholders and obligations add to the principal, which each create unique dimensions of control. This, in turn, causes stress. Principal stress is the central theme of the model, as all of the stakeholders and obligations have the potential to cause unique pressures for the individual in the principalship. This model appears easy and

could be easy to critique. First, it assumes that all of the stakeholders and responsibilities in the organization are equal, which is not the case. One or more of these stakeholders or obligations could create more stress than the other eight combined, depending on each school district.

Another model might better represent the stress that principals experience and how autonomy and control increases their stress levels. However, representing this model on paper and in a non-virtual environment is nearly impossible. Consider principal stress as being on one side of a virtual scale and control being on the other:

This framework represents the need to "test the scale" and examine the nature of the organization through task-analysis of high- and low-stressed principals to see if there are consistent patterns. The relationship between principal stress and autonomy and control for school principals is just as important, because if that relationship is strong, then using this model to examine consistencies between organizations has the possibility of having a tremendous impact on the future training, development, and preparation of school principals. The methods for this study, focusing on this theoretical model, will be discussed in-depth in the next chapter.

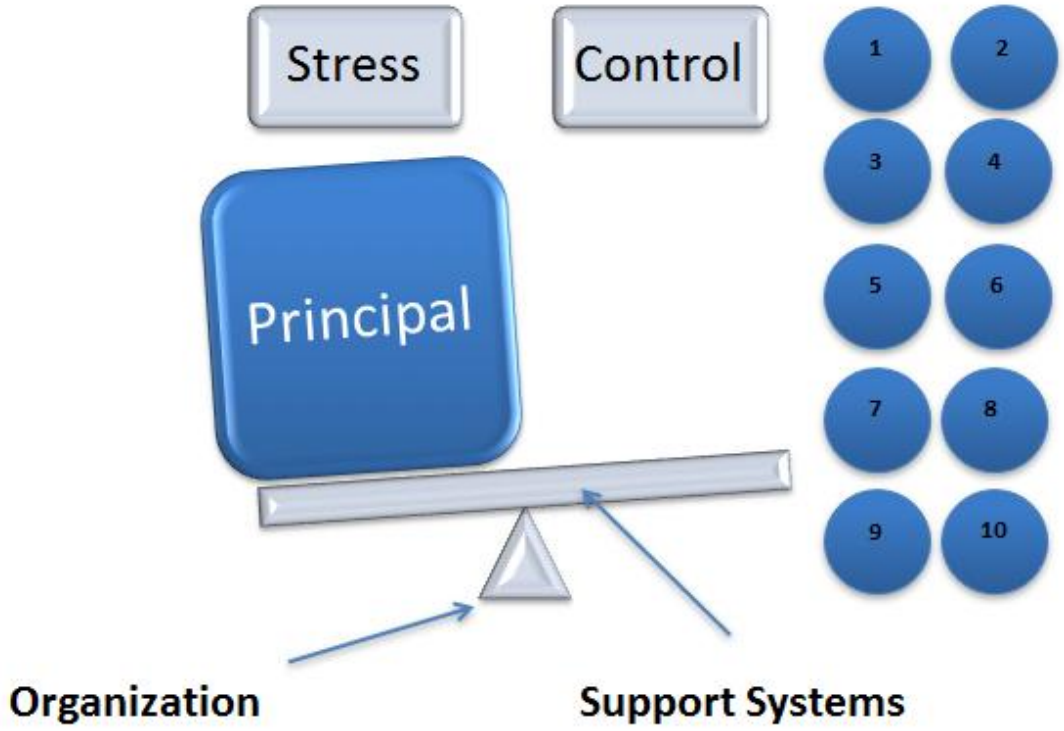


Figure 5. Representation B of the Relationship between Autonomy and Control and Principal Stress

Figure 5. Representation B of the Relationship between Autonomy and Control and Principal Stress

The circular shapes, numbered 1-10, represent the ten internal and external factors that impact a principal's job. These were key words that were coded as part of the qualitative interviews:

1. Students – the students in the building
2. Subordinates – teaching and professional staff in the building
3. Parents – parents of students in the district
4. Superiors – central administration; including superintendents, HR directors, assistant superintendents, curriculum directors, or other individuals that report to the superintendent
5. Accountability Provisions – anything involving high-stakes testing or federal, state, or local mandates

6. School Boards and Governing Agencies – local school boards or state or federal agencies
7. Community Stakeholders – people who have a vested interest in the performance and operations of a school building
8. Access to Resources – the amount of resources available to invest in the school for materials, supplies, training, or professional development
9. Family and Personal Obligations – the role of husband, wife, father, mother, son, or daughter in the personal life of a principal
10. Day-to-Day Operations – the regular activities that go on in a school including the continuing educational responsibilities needed for the position

The scale is divided into two sides, and attempts to represent a balance between stress and control (similar to the aim of the Job-Demand Control Model conceptualized by Karasek). The principal assumes the left side of the scale, and the numbered "factors" (listed from 1-10) are the different types of individuals, organizations, or responsibilities that can establish control over the well-being of the principal.

The positions of all of the items in the model, with the exception of the factors (1-10) are fixed positions. Only the factors will move onto the scale, and cause the scale to tip in the favor of control, which will represent the increase in stress for the principal. The weighting platform, which serves as the foundation of the scale, represents the organization. This part of the model is variable; all organizations have different foundations and different strengths. Some have a supply of proficient stakeholders within the organization capable of handling challenges when necessary, some have a strong tax base and the finances necessary to support various dimensions of the organization. Most importantly though, when the principal becomes a part of the

organization, they can't be 100% certain of the strength of the organization, but can make a guess as to how well their skills and talents will fit within the organization's framework (Similar to Person-Environment Fit Theory). The "weighing beam" serves as the organization's support mechanism, which is also a variable piece of the model. Places or people within an organization that provide support systems and coping mechanisms for employees can aid in the ability for those employees to deal with heightened pressures and increased control from organizational inputs (similar to Occupational Stress Theory). A strong weighing beam balancing the demands on the principal and the amount of control indicates that the principal can handle more pressures.

The weight of the principal and the weight of the factors are variable in every sense. Some principals will have a higher tolerance for stress and be able to handle multiple stressors (the factors) and still remain effective and satisfied in their job. Some factors are going to weigh more depending on the organization. For example, in a wealthier school district, one would assume that the control that parents would like to have over the operations of the school district would be heavier than in a district with a lower socioeconomic status. The organization (the scale) needs to be able to handle the weight in each circumstance, and in the case of the principal, the principal needs to be strong enough (weight) to handle the parents. In different school districts, the weight of the factors might be different. In a school district recognized for having a strong athletic program, perhaps factor 7 (community stakeholders) would hold more weight than in other districts. The most important takeaway from this is that each organization has different factors (stakeholders) that have varying degrees of control. Each organization has supports of varying strength, and the strength of the organization itself varies as well. Therefore, everything on the scale, and everything impacting the scale is variable.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This chapter is a discussion of the methods and instruments used in this study, which includes a description of the three-tiered data-collection process, a step-by-step breakdown of how each research question was analyzed, and justification for the choices of each instrument. The primary purpose of this mixed-methods study was to examine the relationship between stress and sources of control toward P-12 school administrators in Western Pennsylvania. Sections are included that explain the population and sample, procedures for data collection, an explanation of how the data are analyzed statistically and qualitatively, and the limitations of the study methodology.

4.1 RESTATEMENT OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were addressed as part of this study:

1. What job responsibilities occupy the most amount of time in a principal's day?
    a. What responsibilities of the position are sacrificed while principals respond to unscheduled events?
2. What conditions contribute to principal stress?
    a. What characteristics do both high- and low-stressed principals exhibit?
    b. What tasks do principals identify as causing the most stress in their position?

3. To what extent do principals have autonomy and control in their positions?
    a. Do any demographic traits such as gender, years of experience, or building size influence the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experience?
4. Is there a relationship between principal stress and the extent of autonomy and control that principals experience in their positions?

4.2 STUDY PARTICIPANTS

The state of Pennsylvania is considered to be one of the states with a large population of school districts, serving 501 unique districts. Districts range in size from a relevant school-age population of slightly more than 200 students in the Austin Area School District in Potter County as of 2010, to 242,338 students in the Philadelphia Public Schools (SAIPE, 2010). As there are a wide range of school districts across the state of Pennsylvania, each with their own unique challenges, individuals certified as school administrators have many different options of districts in which to pursue a principalship.

All administrators included in the study population were in either the first or second year of the Western Pennsylvania Principal Academy (WPPA), which consists of a cohorted group of individuals that are currently serving as P-12 school administrators. 77 current building-level administrators attend meetings approximately every two months at various locations in Western Pennsylvania to discuss pertinent issues pertaining to their job responsibilities. This group was specifically chosen for this study for the following reasons:

(a) **Convenience** - this group serves a population of school districts within no more than 90 minutes of the University of Pittsburgh. Because interviewing is one of the methods

utilized by the researcher in this study, the researcher needed to be within reasonable proximity to the school district.

(b) **Centrality and Authority Lend Professional Credibility** - it is highly unlikely that another large group of school administrators would be in one setting at the same time; the Principal's Academy provides the researcher the opportunity to explain the study in one-45 minute session and collect data for the first stage of the study. For all individuals who were not present at the time of the study, a separate e-mail was sent out from both the researcher and the director of the Principal's Academy asking them to complete the information digitally.

(c) **Topic Appropriateness** - the topic of this study is one that administrators perhaps might not be comfortable discussing or contributing personal data to without an established relationship with the researcher. WPPA provides a highly-specialized context in which principals can openly share their experiences with other individuals in similar situations as them, and also provides the researcher with the opportunity to explain the study in its entirety and field questions with an audience.

4.2.1 Pittsburgh Public Schools

As mentioned in Chapter 1, all principals currently serving in the Pittsburgh Public School District were omitted from this study. While this creates a limitation through lack of inclusion from a decidedly urban school district, it provides the researcher with an opportunity to test the data obtained in this study comparatively with urban school districts as a future study.

4.3 SELECTION AND DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The entire study from conception to completion took approximately three years to complete. The following two pages outline the timeline, which includes selection and data collection.

TIMELINE	
July 2011 to August 2011	The initial literature was gathered for this study, focused on stress and organizational theory research.
August 2011	A pilot survey was designed and administered in a doctoral class of practicing school administrators at the University of Pittsburgh.
September 2011	The survey was redesigned and administered in a different doctoral class of practicing school administrators at the University of Pittsburgh.
October 2011	Materials were uploaded into the OSIRIS system at the University of Pittsburgh to begin the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process.
October 2011	Five practicing building principals pilot-tested the interview protocol for the study and offered feedback. Revisions were then made to the interview protocol with a shift in focus from principal burnout to a task-based analysis of stress for school principals. All pilot-testing materials were then destroyed and not included in the findings for the study.
November 4th, 2011	Dr. Joe Werlinich, director of the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy, agreed to support the study using the participants in the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy as a sample.
November 11th, 2011	Dr. Maureen McClure, doctoral advisor, wrote a letter endorsing the study and approved the study in the University of Pittsburgh's OSIRIS system for IRB.
November 14th, 2011	Institutional Review Board approval was granted for the study.
November 18th, 2011	Dr. Joe Werlinich approved the survey and interview to be given to members of the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy.
February 15th, 2012	A draft of the first four chapters were submitted to doctoral committee for overview.
March 1st, 2012	Completed overview defense at the University of Pittsburgh. Suggestions were made to revise the interview protocol (the survey remained unchanged) to focus more on task-based stressors. A section of the overview originally involved job shadowing. This was eliminated in favor of more emphasis on task-based stressors.
March 8th, 2012	Revisions to the overview were completed in preparation for the administration of the survey to the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy.
March 15th, 2012 and March 21st, 2012	The survey was administered face-to-face to all attendees at the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy spring retreat. **55** out of 77 members completed surveys for an initial response rate of **71.4%.**
March 23rd, 2012	An online survey was created in Survey Monkey for all members of the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy who did not attend the retreat to complete.
March 26th, 2012	A list of non-attendees were provided by Jackie Harden, administrative assistant to Dr. Werlinich.
March 2012 to August 2012	The survey was activated in Survey Monkey and administrators were e-mailed and asked to complete the survey if they did not attend the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy meeting. On March 26th, 2012, the response rate increased to **66** out of 77 members, or **85.4%.** A follow-up e-mail was sent out to administrators for completion in May, which eventually led to the final response rate of **69** out of 77 members, or **89.6%.**
August 1st, 2012	Survey was closed in Survey Monkey and no new respondents were permitted.
September 1st, 2012	All data was streamlined using Survey Monkey to ensure proper statistical analysis could take place. (for instance, if a respondent wrote 1 yr. instead of just a "1" for number of years experience, this had to be changed to allow for consistency in data analysis)

September 2012 to December 2012	Survey data was exported to Microsoft Excel and basic descriptive statistical analysis using mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation took place to identify individuals who were both above and below the mean for survey responses related to stress and autonomy and control.
January 14th, 2013	Using mean averages and standard deviation, the researcher selected six respondents from each of the four quadrants of Karasek's Demand-Control Model. This enabled the researcher to have a sample size of 24 candidates in each domain (High-Stress/High-Autonomy, High- Stress/Low-Autonomy, Low-Stress/High-Autonomy, Low-Stress/Low-Autonomy) to be interviewed. The survey data for stress documented a mean of **1.82** (on a 1.00 to 5.00 scale), showing that the administrators sampled in this study self-reported low-stress. The survey data for stress documented a mean of **2.04** (on a 1.00 to 5.00 scale), showing that the administrators sampled in this study self-reported considerable autonomy and control in their positions. Individuals who self-reported **above 1.82** for stress and **below 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **High-Stress/High-Autonomy**. Individuals who self-reported **above 1.82** for stress and **above 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **High-Stress/Low-Autonomy**. Individuals who self-reported **below 1.82** for stress and **below 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **Low-Stress/High-Autonomy**. Individuals who self-reported **below 1.82** for stress and **above 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **Low-Stress/Low Autonomy**.
January 2013 to May 2013	Due to the standardized testing cycle and training for the new Pennsylvania teacher evaluation system, the study was put on a four-month hiatus until the end of the school year. During this time, **1** of the 24 (**4.2%**) respondents left the principalship and education all together and thus was removed from the list of prospective candidates to be interviewed. At the decision of the doctoral committee, a replacement was not selected in place of this respondent, and his survey data remained in place for the data analysis.
May 2013 to January 2014	Interviews were conducted both by phone and face-to-face at the respondent's schools. **22** of the 23 (**95.6%**) remaining respondents participated in the interviews. Interviews ranged in length from **11 minutes and 58 seconds** to **56 minutes and 49 seconds**. The average length of an interview was **28 minutes and 51 seconds**.
August 2013 to January 2014	Interview data was transcribed into Microsoft Word.
January 6th, 2014	The final interview was completed, and data was uploaded into Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis software.
January 2014 to April 2014	Qualitative data analysis was performed using an inductive approach to data analysis, meaning data was used to frame the findings for the research questions and identify reoccurring themes in the data. The initial drafting of the findings began.
April 2014	Analytical data analysis was performed using ANOVA for the variables of gender, years of experience, number of students in building, and number of assistant principals in building.
April 2014	The first set of findings for Research Questions 1, 1A, 2, 2A, and 2B was presented for edits to advisor.
May 2014	The final research questions 3, 3A, and 4, were drafted, as were the conclusions section and future implications.
June 10th, 2014	A final draft was sent to advisor.
June 2014 to July 2014	Edits were made based on feedback from advisor.

Figure 6. Timeline for Study

As documented in Figure 6, the process of collecting responses for this study relied on the cooperation and assistance of many different individuals in order to ensure a high response rate. Given the sensitivity of this study, the involvement of a wide variety of support systems was necessary as a means to promote the study and to encourage respondents to participate.

Of the eight non-respondents to the survey, one began the survey and chose not to complete the control section, and his data was subsequently eliminated from the study. Three individuals refused to complete the study, and four individuals never responded to follow-up e-mails for completion.

The second component of the study, the interview, was arranged and conducted by phone and in person after the initial data had been analyzed in late 2012. Using mean averages and standard deviation, the researcher selected six respondents from each of the four quadrants of Karasek's Demand-Control Model. This enabled the researcher to have a sample size of 24 respondents in each area (High-Stress/High-Autonomy, High- Stress/Low-Autonomy, Low-Stress/High-Autonomy, Low-Stress/Low-Autonomy). Figure 6 explains this process in detail. During the contact period, one of the administrators (Low Stress/High Autonomy) voluntarily resigned from his position, and because of this, his selection was omitted from the interview, however, his quantitative data remained. This reduced the sample size to 23 (5 in the Low Stress/High Autonomy domain, and 6 in each other domain). Interviews were conducted from May 2013 through January 2014. Of the (n = 23) selected respondents, (n = 22) participated in the interview, for a response rate of (95.6%).

4.4 INSTRUMENTATION

Instrumentation and study design was selected for this study to effectively obtain data pertaining to school principal stress and school principal autonomy and control. There were eight variables identified in this study. The primary criterion variables in this study were stress and control, whereas the predictor variables were the amount of time associated with various job responsibilities, gender, building level (elementary, middle, and high school), number of students in building, number of assistant principals in building, and total years of administrative experience. Descriptive and analytical data analysis were performed on these variables, which is presented in Chapter 5.

The indicators used for this study emerged from data collected from Gmelch's original Administrator Stress Index along with two recent research studies (Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Pareja, & Lewis, 2008; Horng, Klasik, & Loeb, 2010), which examined the daily operations of the principalship.

Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Pareja, and Lewis (2008) addressed challenges with the methodology used to study distributed leadership. As a part of their study of distributed leadership, one of the methods utilized by the researchers was a job analysis log entitled "experience sampling method" (p. 192). Spillane, Camburn, Pustejovsky, Pareja, and Lewis (2008) describe the ESM as "a technique in which principals are beeped at random intervals throughout their work day alerting them to fill out a brief questionnaire programmed on a handheld computer (PDA)" (p. 192). Although the method used in this study was not job shadowing, this study identified tasks that principals perform in their position.

Spillane et. al (2008) classified activities that principals engage in during their day in one of four categories: administration, fostering relationships, instruction, and curriculum, and

professional growth (p. 206). The focus of this study was to analyze which activities that principals were most frequently involved with but also to determine whether they were engaged in co-leadership processes with other administrators, teachers, or professional staff, or leading alone.

Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010) analyzed how principals spend their time and how their time contributed to school effectiveness. Their study used job-shadowing techniques to analyze the work of 65 principals in the Miami-Dade County Public Schools over one day, collecting detailed information on principal activity in 5-minute intervals. As a part of their study, 41 high school principals, 12 middle school principals, and 12 elementary school principals were shadowed.

Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010) identified six categories in which principal's tasks were classified. The categories used to determine principal's task objectives were administrative, organization management, day-to-day instruction, instructional programming, internal relations, and external relations (p. 495). Each of these categories were further divided into subcategories, classifying principal tasks into 43 unique identifiers.

The tasks that were identified by these studies were then classified into categories and presented to a doctoral class at the University of Pittsburgh. A class of 13 practicing administrators critiqued the initial lists and were asked to add additional tasks (if necessary) they perform in their positions. This led to discussion about the similarities and differences of different tasks, which led to a draft copy of 28 tasks between five subcategories.

The final copy was then presented to a different doctoral class at the University of Pittsburgh consisting of 11 practicing administrators. From their feedback, two additional tasks (creating, changing, and developing the master schedule and directly teaching students before,

during, or after school) were added, that were not directly addressed by Spillane et. al (2008) or Horng, Klasik, and Loeb (2010). The results of these focus groups led the researcher to classify the tasks principals engage in into thirty tasks, spanning five categories. A subsequent table is provided that classifies the daily operations that principals engage in as part of their practice:

Table 2. Categories and Tasks that Principals Perform as Part of their Day-to-Day Operations

Category #1	*Category #2*	*Category #3*	*Category #4*	*Category #5*
Instructional Responsibilities	**Organizational Responsibilities**	**Internal Relations and Social Responsibilities**	**External Relations and Social Responsibilities**	**Administrative and Building Responsibilities**
Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	Performing HR-related tasks such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	Attending or supervising after-school functions	Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	Overseeing student discipline
Conducting building walkthroughs	Attending and/or presenting at meetings	Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes	Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or community outreach	Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)
Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers	Performing building- or district-level grant writing	Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons	Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building	IEP requirements – Attending or conducting meetings or writing
Directly teaching students before, during, or after school	Performing building- or district-level budgeting	Meeting and working with non-instructional staff	Partnering with local colleges and universities	Discussing, planning, and participating in crisis management
Personal time (IN-SCHOOL) devoted to graduate studies or personal education		Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates	Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities	Facility maintenance
Engaging in Data-Driven Decision Making (conducting and developing better assessments)		Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations		School procedures - drills, bus evaluation
Designing and developing curriculum				Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building
				Performing HR tasks such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff

4.4.1 Survey Instrument

Using the indicators designed from the task-analysis studies and pilot testing, a four-section survey was created by the researcher to screen respondents from the Western Pennsylvania Principal's Academy to find administrators who indicated they experienced either high- or low-levels of stress in comparison with the other Academy members (See Appendix C). The same indicators used for stress were used for control, in order to connect the theoretical framework of control theory and occupational stress to the practices administrators use as part of their daily responsibilities.

Survey research was chosen as the method to be used for the first stage of data collection because of the importance of gathering a large amount of data in a short period of time. Babbie (2007) suggests survey research as an appropriate method for accomplishing research goals due to a survey's flexibility, measurement generalities, and to describe the characteristics of a large population (p. 276). Surveys are also recommended to be used when the researcher has a "purposeful sampling strategy" (Creswell, Shope, Plano-Clark, & Green, 2006, p. 8). This survey accomplished all of the aforementioned goals. The following four sections were framed by both the research questions and theoretical framework selected by the researcher:

Table 3: Summary of Research Questions and Data Analysis/Collection Methods

Research Questions	Data Collection Method	Information Obtained from Methods	Analysis Methods
1. What job responsibilities occupy the most time in a principal's day?	Survey – Section 2 Interview	Survey – Section 1-2: Time Spent on Tasks Interview – Q #5, #5a, #5b, #10	Basic Statistical analysis - frequency distribution, percentage of total, cumulative percentages, mean, median, and standard deviation, rank order list
1a. What responsibilities of the position are sacrificed while principals respond to unscheduled events?	Interview	Interview – Q #5a, #5b	Qualitative thematical analysis through key words
2. What conditions contribute to principal stress?	Survey – Section 2 Interview	Survey – Demographics – Q #12, #13, #14, #15, #16, #17, #18, #19 Survey – Section 1-3: Stress analysis Interview – Q #4, #14, #15	Basic statistical analysis – Standard deviation, mean, median, and range, rank order list Qualitative deductive coding using classification and frequency (noting how many times the individual directly mentioned a stressor)
2a. What characteristics do both high- and low-stressed principals exhibit?		Survey – Section 1-2: Time Spent on Tasks Survey – Demographics – Q #13	Basic Statistical analysis - frequency distribution, percentage of total, cumulative percentages, mean, median, and standard deviation, rank order list
2b. What tasks do principals identify as causing the most stress in their position?	Survey – Section 3 Interview	Survey – Section 1-3: Stress analysis	Qualitative deductive coding using classification and frequency (noting how many times the individual directly mentioned a stressor)
3. To what extent do principals have autonomy and control in their positions?	Survey – Section 4 Interview	Survey – Section 1-4: Autonomy and control Interview – Q #11, #13, #14, #16	Basic statistical analysis – Mean, median, and range, rank order list Qualitative thematical analysis through key words
3a. Do any demographic traits such as gender, years of experience, or building size influence the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experience?	Interview	Interview – Q #12 Interview – Q #3, #3a	Comparison using ANOVA Testing with Demographic Section Qualitative thematical analysis through key words
4. Is there a relationship between principal stress and the extent of autonomy and control that principals experience in their positions?	Survey – Section 3 Survey – Section 4 Interview	Survey – Section 3: All Survey – Section 4: All Interview - Q #4, #4a, #5, #6, #7, #7a, #8, #8a, #9, #11, #12, #12a, #13, #14, #15 Interview – Q #2, #2a, #3, #3a	Comparison and contrast between the survey data and interviews.

Section 1: Demographic Variables: The demographic variables gathered as a part of the study were selected to look for correlation between dependent variables (stress and/or autonomy and control) and other quantifiable characteristics associated with the principalship. A fixed sample of school administrators participated in a fixed group. Independent demographic variables included were: 1) gender, 2) building level (elementary, middle, and high school), 3) number of students in building, 4) number of assistant principals in building, and 5) total years of administrative experience.

Section 2: Time Spent on Tasks: Time spent on tasks was used for a similar purpose as the independent variables. Using the 30 tasks selected from the literature and the focus group, a time scale was created to determine how much time during a typical week administrators engaged in each of the 30 tasks. The purpose of this section was to correlate time spent on tasks with high- or low-stress and/or high- or low-control.

Section 3: Stressors: Determining which principals would be selected for interviews based on characteristics of high- and low-stress was one of the two main purposes of the survey. The anchors scale used was developed from Gmelch's Administrator Stress Index (ASI) (1982), using a Likert scale. The ranges were (1) rarely or never, (2) seldom, (3) occasionally, (4) normally, and (5) almost always. By assigning values of 1-5, this permitted the researcher to perform basic statistical descriptive analysis (mean, median, standard deviation) for each of the 30 indicators and also for the total for each respondent of the survey.

Section 4: Autonomy and Control: The other primary purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which administrators felt as though they experienced autonomy and control in their position. An Likert scale was developed to correlate with the anchors used for the stress analysis portion of the study. The ranges used were (1) full autonomy, (2) autonomy with minimal

supervision, (3) autonomy with supervision, (4) supervised autonomy, and (5) no autonomy. Definitions of each classification were provided in the heading of the survey. The values assigned also were used to permit the researcher to perform basic statistical descriptive analysis (mean, median, standard deviation) for each of the 30 indicators and also for the total for each respondent of the survey.

4.4.2 Interview Instrument

An interview protocol was created, that was used to further extend the data obtained from survey results and to help the researcher create a relationship with the subjects (See Appendix D). This instrument used 17 questions to further expand on the data obtained through survey research.

Creswell et al. (2006) note the importance of using "supplemental data to enhance qualitative research" (p. 8). In the case of this study, the selection process was administered quantitatively through a survey, and interview questions were generated to further extrapolate on the research questions. Using a sequential process for initial data collection quantitatively and conducting qualitative research is recommended (Bryman, 2006) in order to accomplish the following five goals of combining quantitative and qualitative research: triangulation, complementarity, development, initiation, and expansion (Bryman, 2006, p. 105; Greene et al., 1989). Triangulation (the connecting of data using different methods) and initiation (the "recasting of questions or results from one method with questions or results from the other method") (Greene et al., 1989, p. 259) were the primary reasons for conducting an interview. All questions were pilot tested with five practicing school administrators and altered based on their feedback. The five principals also contributed feedback to the survey instrument, which enhanced the credibility of the instrument.

4.5 SURVEY DATA ANALYSIS

The instrumentation and the data collection sections explained the design process for the study and how data were collected for the study. The data analysis section addresses each component of the study and demonstrates the importance of each instrument in the overall scope and sequence of the research study. All data collection instruments (surveys and interview protocol) are found in the Appendixes.

4.5.1 Survey Data Responses (Section 1: Demographic Information)

A comprehensive table (Table 4) was created to address gender, building level, building size, and district size. Years of experience as an administrator in the current building, years of experience as an administrator overall (multiple buildings or districts) and years of experience in education were also considered by the researcher. A separate table addressing frequency distribution, percentage of total, cumulative percentages, mean, median, and standard deviation were created for each question that addressed years of experience. A sample one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) where each demographic characteristic served as an independent variable and the dependent variable was the response mean for each category.

Table 4: Demographic Characteristics of All Respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Valid %
Gender		
Male	45	65.2%
Female	24	34.8%
School Level		
Elementary	16	23.2%
Combination of Elementary/Middle	5	7.2%
Middle or Junior High	15	21.7%
Combination of Middle/High	7	10.1%
High	24	34.8%
Other	2	2.9%
Building Size (Number of Students in Building)		
65 - 200	5	7.2%
201 - 399	14	20.3%
400 - 599	20	29.0%
600 - 799	13	18.8%
800 - 999	5	7.2%
1000 or More	12	17.4%
Assistant Principal in Building		
0	31	44.9%
1	28	40.6%
2	9	13.0%
3	1	1.4%

Table 5: Years Left Until Anticipated Retirement

Years Until Anticipated Retirement	*n*	%	Cumulative %
35	1	1.45	1.45
34	0	0.00	1.45
33	0	0.00	1.45
32	0	0.00	1.45
31	0	0.00	1.45
30	7	10.14	11.59
29	0	0.00	11.59
28	1	1.45	13.04
27	1	1.45	14.49
26	2	2.90	17.39
25	3	4.35	21.74
24	4	5.80	27.54
23	1	1.45	28.99
22	3	4.35	33.34
21	3	4.35	37.69
20	10	14.49	52.18
19	1	1.45	53.63
18	4	5.80	59.43
17	2	2.90	62.33
16	2	2.90	65.23
15	8	11.59	76.82
14	1	1.45	78.27
13	2	2.90	81.17
12	3	4.35	85.52
11	0	0.00	85.52
10	3	4.35	89.87
9	1	1.45	91.32
8	2	2.90	94.22
7	0	0.00	94.22
6	0	0.00	94.22
5	2	2.90	97.12
4	1	1.45	98.57
3	0	0.00	98.57
2	0	0.00	98.57
1	0	0.00	98.57
0	1	1.45	100.02*

*off by .02 due to rounding.to two decimal places

Median = 20 **Standard Deviation = 7.20423** **Mean = 18.80**

Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Experience as a Principal or Assistant Principal at any Building

Years of Administrative Experience	*n*	%	Cumulative %
1	10	14.49	14.49
2	10	14.49	28.98
3	10	14.49	43.47
4	6	8.70	52.17
5	3	4.35	56.52
6	7	10.14	66.66
7	7	10.14	76.80
8	2	2.90	79.70
9	1	1.45	81.15
10	3	4.35	85.50
11	4	5.80	91.30
12	1	1.45	92.75
13	1	1.45	94.20
14	1	1.45	95.65
15	0	0.00	95.65
16	1	1.45	97.10
17	0	0.00	97.10
18	0	0.00	97.10
19	0	0.00	97.10
20	0	0.00	97.10
21	1	1.45	98.55
22	0	0.00	98.55
23	0	0.00	98.55
24	1	1.45	100.00

Median = 4 **Standard Deviation = 4.6437** **Mean = 5.64**

Table 7: Frequency Distribution of Years of Experience in Education

Years of Experience	*n*	%	Cumulative %
1	0	0.00	0.00
2	0	0.00	0.00
3	0	0.00	0.00
4	0	0.00	0.00
5	0	0.00	0.00
6	0	0.00	0.00
7	3	4.35	4.35
8	3	4.35	8.70
9	2	2.90	11.60
10	3	4.35	15.95
11	7	10.14	26.09
12	4	5.80	31.89
13	6	8.70	40.59
14	5	7.25	47.84
15	6	8.70	56.54
16	9	13.04	69.58
17	6	8.70	78.28
18	1	1.45	79.73
19	3	4.35	84.08
20	4	5.80	89.88
21	0	0.00	89.88
22	0	0.00	89.88
23	1	1.45	91.33
24	1	1.45	92.78
25	0	0.00	92.78
26	0	0.00	92.78
27	0	0.00	92.78
28	0	0.00	92.78
29	1	1.45	94.23
30	0	0.00	94.23
31	1	1.45	95.68
32	0	0.00	95.68
33	0	0.00	95.68
34	1	1.45	97.13
35	1	1.45	98.58
36	0	0.00	98.58
37	1	1.45	100.03*

**off by .03 due to rounding.to two decimal places*

Median = 15 **Standard Deviation = 6.2290** **Mean = 15.51**

4.5.2 Survey Data Responses (Section 2: Time on Task)

The section on time on task was be used to rank the tasks that school administrators engage in as part of their practice. This component of the survey asked school administrators to what extent they engaged in each of the 30 items from our job categorization during a typical week in either 0-1 hour, 1-2 hours, 2-3 hours, 3-4 hours, 4-5 hours, and 5 hours or more blocks. A metric-based scale was used where 0-1 hour was represented by a "1" and 5 hours or more was represented by a "5." This aided with quantitative analysis of data and permitted for a rank order list to be designed. Data obtained from this section were ranked from 1-30, with one representing the task that administrators perform the most, and 30 representing the task that administrators perform the least. Question #13 of Section 1 also asked respondents: "If you could average out the time spent on the job either in the building or doing district work per week, how many hours a week do you work in this position?" A true mean, median, and standard deviation could not be established for this section as this section uses anchors that represent ranges and not absolutes. Therefore, a frequency distribution was used by the researcher. Table 8 provides a rank order list of the tasks in which administrators reflected spending the most amount of time in their positions.

Table 8: Rank Order List of Time Spent on Specific Tasks

Section 2: Time on Tasks	*N*	Category	Frequency of					
			0-1 Hour	1-2 Hours	2-3 Hours	3-4 Hours	4-5 Hours	5 or More Hours
1. Overseeing student discipline	69	**5**	*5*	*3*	*14*	*9*	*9*	***29***
2. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations	69	**3**	*7*	***18***	***18***	*10*	*7*	*9*
3. Conducting building walkthroughs	69	**1**	*6*	***21***	***21***	*7*	*6*	*8*
4. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	69	**1**	*3*	***24***	*21*	*11*	*5*	*5*
5. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes	69	**3**	*6*	*21*	***22***	*8*	*6*	*6*
6. Attending or presenting at meetings	69	**3**	*6*	*21*	***22***	*13*	*0*	*7*
7. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings)	69	**5**	*8*	***23***	*19*	*7*	*0*	*0*
8. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)	69	**3**	*17*	***22***	*11*	*5*	*6*	*8*
9. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessment)	69	**1**	*5*	***29***	*23*	*6*	*3*	*3*
10. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues	69	**5**	*15*	***21***	*18*	*6*	*6*	*3*
11. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	69	**4**	*18*	***27***	*14*	*7*	*1*	*2*
12. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons	69	**3**	*16*	***30***	*16*	*5*	*0*	*2*
13. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates	69	**3**	***29***	*16*	*8*	*11*	*4*	*1*
14. Designing and developing curriculum	69	**1**	*18*	***34***	*9*	*4*	*3*	*1*
15. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance	69	**5**	*24*	***27***	*10*	*5*	*1*	*2*
16. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers	69	**1**	*19*	***35***	*6*	*7*	*2*	*0*
17. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)	69	**5**	***27***	*25*	*10*	*3*	*3*	*1*
18. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	69	**2**	***31***	*18*	*14*	*3*	*3*	*0*
19. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	69	**5**	***30***	*23*	*9*	*7*	*0*	*0*
20. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures – drills, bus procedures	69	**5**	***30***	*26*	*9*	*2*	*1*	*1*
21. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff	69	**3**	***30***	*24*	*12*	*2*	*1*	*0*

22. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities	69	**4**	***39***	*20*	*5*	*2*	*2*	*1*
23. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach	69	**4**	***39***	*17*	*11*	*2*	*0*	*0*
24. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff or meeting with union representatives	69	**5**	***27***	*23*	*8*	*1*	*0*	*0*
25. Performing building – or district-level budgeting	69	**2**	***39***	*22*	*8*	*0*	*0*	*0*
26. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building	69	**4**	***46***	*19*	*4*	*0*	*0*	*0*
27. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education	69	**1**	***56***	*8*	*2*	*1*	*1*	*1*
28. Partnering with local colleges and universities	69	**4**	***50***	*17*	*1*	*1*	*0*	*0*
29. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school	69	**1**	***60***	*6*	*1*	*0*	*0*	*2*
30. Performing building – or district-level grant writing	69	**2**	***59***	*7*	*1*	*2*	*0*	*0*

Category #1 – Instructional Responsibilities

Category #2 – Organizational Responsibilities

Category #3 – Internal Relations and Social Responsibilities

Category #4 – External Relations and Social Responsibilities

Category #5 – Administrative and Building Responsibilities

4.5.3 Survey Data Responses (Section 3: Stress)

Each item response on the Section 3: Stress component of the survey was ranked in order by mean (Table 9). Each was classified into their responding categories and placed into the table below: The table on the proceeding page ranks all 30 items from the highest mean (highest causes of stress) to the lowest mean (lowest causes of stress). The category (instructional, organizational, internal relations and social, external relations and social, and administrative and building) represents the classification of each task, the mean represents the arithmetic average between the responses (scaled 1-5), the median represents the middle-most number on the response chart (where n = 69), and the standard deviation represents the degree of variance from the mean data results. A total row is also provided, was used to aid in the selection process of high- and low-stressed administrators.

Table 9: Rank-Order List of Stress Index Items

Section 3: Stress Index Items	*N*	Category	Mean	SD	Median	Range
1. Overseeing student discipline	69	**5**	3.00	1.16316	3	1 - 5
2. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)	69	**5**	2.48	1.31293	2	1 - 5
3. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues	69	**5**	2.42	1.34390	2	1 - 5
4. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	69	**2**	2.36	1.13722	2	1 - 5
5. Attending and/or presenting at meetings	69	**2**	2.20	1.09248	2	1 - 4
6. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings)	69	**5**	2.13	1.11029	2	1 - 5
7. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	69	**1**	2.10	0.98735	2	1 - 4
8. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)	69	**3**	2.03	1.01418	2	1 - 5
9. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessments)	69	**1**	1.90	0.90984	2	1 - 5
10. Designing and developing curriculum	69	**1**	1.90	1.08662	2	1 – 5
11. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff or meeting with union representatives	69	**5**	1.88	1.07835	2	1 – 5
12. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management	69	**5**	1.87	0.93797	2	1 – 5
13. Performing building – or district-level budgeting	69	**2**	1.86	1.07478	2	1 – 5
14. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities	69	**4**	1.81	1.01858	1	1 – 5
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building	69	**4**	1.81	1.01858	1	1 – 5
16. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance	69	**5**	1.75	0.88127	2	1 – 4
17. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers	69	**1**	1.72	0.82040	2	1 – 4
18. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	69	**4**	1.70	0.83932	1	1 – 5
19. Conducting building walkthroughs	69	**1**	1.65	0.87155	1	1 – 4
20. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	69	**3**	1.64	0.83355	1	1 – 4
21. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	69	**4**	1.62	0.83582	1	1 – 4
22. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures – drills, bus procedures	69	**5**	1.61	0.83782	1	1 – 4
23. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations	69	**3**	1.57	0.78902	1	1 – 4
24. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff	69	**3**	1.55	0.80822	1	1 – 4
25. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education	69	**1**	1.46	0.91683	1	1 – 5
26. Performing building- or district-level grant writing	69	**2**	1.45	0.77512	1	1 – 4
27. Partnering with local colleges and universities	69	**4**	1.39	0.72666	1	1 – 5
28. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons	69	**3**	1.30	0.68745	1	1 – 4
29. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school	69	**1**	1.28	0.63903	1	1 – 4
30. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates	69	**3**	1.13	0.50828	1	1 - 4
AVERAGES	**69**		**1.82**		**1.53**	

4.5.4 Survey Data Responses (Section 4: Autonomy and Control)

A similar table (Table 10) was constructed for the section on autonomy and control. Each was classified into their responding categories and placed into the table below: The table on the proceeding page ranks all 30 items from the highest mean (highest control) to the lowest mean (lowest control). The category (instructional, organizational, internal relations and social, external relations and social, and administrative and building) represents the classification of each task, the mean represents the arithmetic average between the responses (scaled 1-5), the median represents the middle-most number on the response chart (where n = 69), and the standard deviation represents the degree of variance from the mean data results. A total row is also provided: this was used to aid in the selection process of administrators exhibiting high- and low-autonomy and control in their positions.

Table 10: Rank-Order List of Autonomy and Control Index Items

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items	*N*	Category	Mean	SD	Median	Range
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	69	**2**	3.22	1.1404	3	1 - 5
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	69	**2**	3.13	1.0203	3	1 - 5
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	69	**2**	3.01	1.5369	3	1 - 5
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	69	**1**	2.93	1.0810	3	1 - 5
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	69	**5**	2.90	1.1689	3	1 - 5
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	69	**5**	2.71	1.0509	3	1 - 5
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	69	**5**	2.58	0.9541	3	1 - 5
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	69	**1**	2.54	1.0978	2	1 - 5
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	69	**4**	2.51	1.1749	2	1 - 5
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	69	**5**	2.45	0.9859	2	1 - 4
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	69	**5**	2.33	1.1121	2	1 - 5
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	69	**1**	2.17	0.9161	2	1 - 4
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	69	**5**	2.14	0.9821	2	1 - 5
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	69	**5**	2.14	1.1582	2	1 - 5
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	69	**4**	2.03	1.1289	2	1 - 5
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	69	**2**	1.94	1.0479	2	1 - 5
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	69	**4**	1.91	0.9528	2	1 - 5
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	69	**4**	1.87	0.9312	2	1 - 5
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	69	**1**	1.71	0.8530	2	1 - 5
20. Overseeing student discipline.	69	**5**	1.68	0.7321	2	1 - 4
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	69	**1**	1.48	1.0441	1	1 - 5
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	69	**3**	1.46	0.7723	1	1 - 4
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	69	**1**	1.43	0.9851	1	1 - 5
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	69	**1**	1.43	0.8072	1	1 - 5
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	69	**3**	1.29	0.7041	1	1 - 5
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	69	**3**	1.28	0.6785	1	1 - 5
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	69	**4**	1.28	0.5075	1	1 - 3
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	69	**3**	1.26	0.5289	1	1 - 4
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	69	**3**	1.17	0.6128	1	1 - 5
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	69	**3**	1.13	0.4140	1	1 - 3
AVERAGES	69		**2.04**		**1.90**	

4.6 INTERVIEW DATA RESPONSES

The interview was designed to support the findings from the survey and expand on specific tasks that respondents suggested exhibited high or low dimensions of stress and control. Data were analyzed using inductive theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which meant that the data that emerged from this study was reflective of the interview questions.

First, the researcher transcribed all completed interviews. Each interview was then checked against the tape two separate times to ensure 100% accuracy. Appendix D represents the questions that were asked of respondents during the interview. Next, data were coded using Dedoose, qualitative coding software developed by UCLA. Dedoose was chosen over other qualitative research software due to its ease of use, accessibility from mobile devices, and affordable cost. The results of the coding are presented as part of the findings section.

5.0 FINDINGS

This section will detail the findings of the research study. The findings sections uses both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered between May 2012 and January 2014 to address the research questions.

5.1 RESTATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What job responsibilities occupy the most amount of time in a principal's day?
    a. What responsibilities of the position are sacrificed while principals respond to unscheduled events?
2. What conditions contribute to principal stress?
    a. What characteristics do both high- and low-stressed principals exhibit?
    b. What tasks do principals identify as causing the most stress in their position?
3. To what extent do principals have autonomy and control in their positions?
    a. Do any demographic traits such as gender, years of experience, or building size influence the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experience?
4. Is there a relationship between principal stress and the extent of autonomy and control that principals experience in their positions?

5.2 PROFILE OF SELECTED CANDIDATES FOR QUALITATIVE RESPONSES

As explained in the previous chapter, using the results obtained through the survey (Table 9 and Table 10), 24 of the 69 respondents were selected based on their responses. 6 respondents were selected in each domain, High Stress/High Autonomy, High Stress/Low Autonomy, Low Stress/High Autonomy, and Low Stress/Low Autonomy.

1.82 was the self-reported mean for stress. Individuals who self-reported above 1.82 were considered high-stress for this sample and any individuals who self-reported below 1.82 were considered low-stress for this sample.

2.04 was the self-reported mean for autonomy and control. Individuals who self-reported above 2.04 were considered low-autonomy for this sample and any individuals who self-reported below 2.04 were considered high-autonomy for this sample.

Further stratification was done to separate survey respondents into quadrants (similar to Karasek's Demand-Control Theory). The following four categorical descriptions below describe how each of the *n=69* survey respondents were stratified by domain.

(1) Individuals who self-reported **above 1.82** for stress and **below 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **High-Stress/High-Autonomy**. This accounted for 18 out of 69 (26.1%) of the survey sample.

(2) Individuals who self-reported **above 1.82** for stress and **above 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **High-Stress/Low-Autonomy**. This accounted for 19 out of 69 (27.5%) of the survey sample.

(3) Individuals who self-reported **below 1.82** for stress and **below 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **Low-Stress/High-Autonomy**. This accounted for 24 out of 69 (34.8%) of the survey sample.

(4) Individuals who self-reported **below 1.82** for stress and **above 2.04** for autonomy and control were categorized as - **Low-Stress/Low Autonomy**. This accounted for 8 out of 69 (11.6%) of the survey sample.

From these four stratified domains, the 6 outliers that were farthest away from the mean in each domain were selected to be interviewed. 6 candidates in each domain were selected at the request of the dissertation committee to ensure that at least 3 respondents (50%) would respond to the interview request to allow substantial data to be obtained. Of these 24 candidates, one individual resigned from his position in between completing the survey and the interview, and thus was not included in the interview sample, however, his survey responses remained in the analyzed data. Another individual chose not to respond to the interview, citing that he wasn't comfortable openly talking about the questions asked, despite a guarantee to maintain confidentiality. Both individuals were part of the Low Stress/High Autonomy domain, thus, only four individuals from that particular domain were used in the interview sample. The following table documents the demographic profile of the interviewees (n = 22) who were included in the study. Averages were provided to protect the anonymity of respondents. Gender, building configuration, and the coding numbers used remain to allow for a reference point.

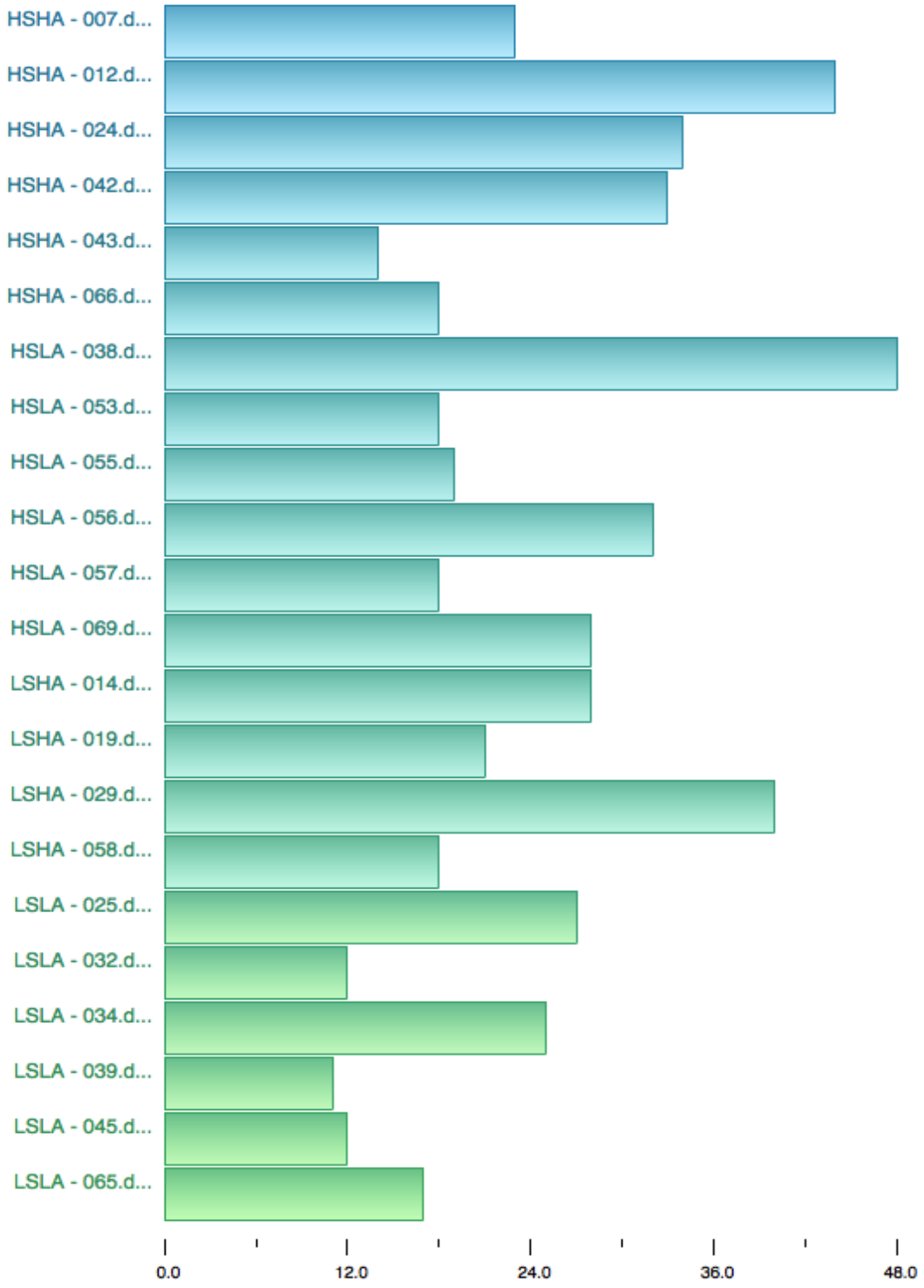
Table 11: Demographic Profile For Interview Respondents

High Stress/High Autonomy							
Coding Number	*Gender*	*Building Configuration*	*Number of Students*	*Number of Teachers*	*Years of Administrative Experience*	*Years of Teaching Experience*	*Number of Assistant Principals in Building*
HSHA - 07	Female	K-5					
HSHA - 12	Male	5-6					
HSHA - 24	Female	K-6					
HSHA - 42	Female	6-8					
HSHA - 43	Female	9-12					
HSHA - 66	Male	9-12					
Averages			***531***	***35.16***	***3.58***	***9.50***	***0.33***
High Stress/Low Autonomy							
Coding Number	*Gender*	*Building Configuration*	*Number of Students*	*Number of Teachers*	*Years of Administrative Experience*	*Years of Teaching Experience*	*Number of Assistant Principals in Building*
HSLA - 38	Male	5-8					
HSLA - 53	Male	7-12					
HSLA - 55	Male	9-12					
HSLA - 56	Male	9-12					
HSLA - 57	Male	9-12					
HSLA - 69	Female	9-12					
Averages			***1026.66***	***78.83***	***4.50***	***8.50***	***1.33***
Low Stress/High Autonomy							
Coding Number	*Gender*	*Building Configuration*	*Number of Students*	*Number of Teachers*	*Years of Administrative Experience*	*Years of Teaching Experience*	*Number of Assistant Principals in Building*
LSHA - 14	Male	K-5					
LSHA - 19	Male	6-8					
LSHA - 29	Male	K-1					
LSHA - 58	Male	9-12					
Averages			***610***	***41.25***	***8.75***	***6.50***	***0.50***
Low Stress/Low Autonomy							
Coding Number	*Gender*	*Building Configuration*	*Number of Students*	*Number of Teachers*	*Years of Administrative Experience*	*Years of Teaching Experience*	*Number of Assistant Principals in Building*
LSLA - 25	Male	7-12					
LSLA - 32	Male	K-8					
LSLA - 34	Male	9-12					
LSLA - 39	Female	6-8					
LSLA - 45	Male	7-12					
LSLA - 65	Male	9-12					
Averages			***716***	***50.83***	***7.83***	***10.00***	***0.33***

5.2.1 Qualitative Coding

Qualitative data analyses were performed using Dedoose on the 22 interview responses and data were coded according to the research questions. This was explained in Chapter 4 and visually depicted in Table 3 (p. 94). Any statement that an interview respondent made that directly related to the research questions were coded and highlighted and broken into subcategories to help with the classification process. Table 12 indicates the number of codes per respondent, which ranged from eleven (lowest) to 48 (highest). The substantial number of codes allowed for in-depth qualitative analysis to address the research questions in a thorough and complete manner.

Table 12: Dedoose-Generated Table Addressing Number of Codes per Interview



5.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 1

The purpose of this research question was to determine the job responsibilities that occupy the most amount of time in a principal's day. This was addressed both as a part of the survey (n = 69) and the interview (n = 22). Table 13 provides a rank-order list of the ten tasks from Table 8 that administrators noted occupied the most amount of their time in a typical week.

Table 13: Table 8 Revisited in Conjunction with Research Question 1

Section 2: Time on Tasks	*N*	Category	Frequency of					
			0-1 Hour	1-2 Hours	2-3 Hours	3-4 Hours	4-5 Hours	5 or More Hours
1. Overseeing student discipline	69	**5**	*5*	*3*	*14*	*9*	*9*	***29***
2. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations	69	**3**	*7*	***18***	***18***	*10*	*7*	*9*
3. Conducting building walkthroughs	69	**1**	*6*	***21***	***21***	*7*	*6*	*8*
4. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	69	**1**	*3*	***24***	*21*	*11*	*5*	*5*
5. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes	69	**3**	*6*	*21*	***22***	*8*	*6*	*6*
6. Attending or presenting at meetings	69	**3**	*6*	*21*	***22***	*13*	*0*	*7*
7. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings)	69	**5**	*8*	***23***	*19*	*7*	*0*	*0*
8. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)	69	**3**	*17*	***22***	*11*	*5*	*6*	*8*
9. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessment)	69	**1**	*5*	***29***	*23*	*6*	*3*	*3*
10. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues	69	**5**	*15*	***21***	*18*	*6*	*6*	*3*

The 22 respondents were asked to respond to two questions directly relating to time engaged in their positions. Question #10 from the interview asked respondents: What initiatives do you think are costing you the most amount of time in your position? and Question #12 from the interview asked respondents: What stakeholder or stakeholders do you believe to take up the most amount of time in your position? All but one administrator (21 out of 22) responded to

these questions with specific answers regarding the amount of time invested in their position and the stakeholders that require the most amount of their time. These two questions resulted in 43 unique codes from the respondents. The one respondent who did not have specific answers for this question (HS/HA - 43) noted that "nothing has changed in the time that I've been principal" in regards to initiatives and did not feel comfortable providing an answer to the question, "Which stakeholder occupied the most amount of time in her position," and indicated that "it varies." This respondent would later remark that being in a contract year has caused a particular amount of stress and that different stakeholders have occupied various amounts of time in her position. The following findings section notes the respondents who spoke toward the time investment in their position as a school administrator.

Despite the quantitative survey noting that "Overseeing Student Discipline" occupies the most amount of time in an administrator's position, the qualitative responses reflected a different trend across all sets of interviewees. This will be further reflected in Chapter 6 of this study. The following table documents the occurrences of each category as discussed by respondents. Each category has also been stratified according to the domains utilized by the study. When identified, if an administrator is considered to be part of the high-stress/low-autonomy subgroup, for example, they will be designated by HS/LA prior to their unique code.

Table 14: Frequency of Tasks which Occupy the Greatest Amount of Time in an Administrator's Position

Task	HS/HA	HS/LA	LS/HA	LS/LA	Total
Conducting the Evaluation Cycle	3	4	2	3	*12*
Overseeing Student Discipline	1	4	0	1	*6*
Working with Teachers	3	0	0	2	*5*
Standardized Testing	0	1	2	1	*4*
Working with Parents	1	1	2	0	*4*
Special Education	0	2	1	1	*4*
Curriculum Decisions	1	0	0	0	*1*
School Budgeting	1	0	0	0	*1*
Working with School Board Members	0	0	0	1	*1*
Professional Development	0	0	0	1	*1*
Transition to Cyber Schooling	0	0	0	1	*1*
School Safety	0	0	1	0	*1*
Completing Paperwork	0	1	0	0	*1*
State Department of Education	0	0	0	1	*1*
Totals	***10***	***13***	***8***	***12***	***43***

Teacher Evaluation Cycle

Data from the survey reflected student discipline as the task that occupied the most time in an administrator's day. However when interviewed, respondents across all four domains noted that the teacher evaluation cycle, both conducting observations and meeting with teachers, occupied the most time in their day. The teacher evaluation cycle, both conducting observations and meeting with teachers, occupied the most time in administrator's daily activities across all four domains. Currently, the state of Pennsylvania is engaged in changing the teacher evaluation cycle to include pre-and-post conferences, value-added attributions to students based on standardized testing scores, and full-lesson observations throughout the school year. This system is to be implemented in full during the 2015-2016 school year, meaning that the interviews were conducted during the first year of piloting. Some of the administrators in the study are currently engaged in the pilot phase of the evaluation cycle, and are conducting the observations and standardized testing cycle with value-added attributions for student performance for the first time. This has created tension between the amount of time being spent on the components of the

evaluation cycle and the other responsibilities of school administration, which may or may not reflect long term trends in system implementation. An administrator (LS/LA - 65) spoke to the amount of time the new cycle will occupy in his position.

> "From start to finish, to do it the way that they want you to do it, you're looking at probably 6-8 hours per teacher. And granted, they might say you can do 1/3rd of the staff, and that type of thing, but a 1/3rd of my staff is 30 teachers, well, actually 35 teachers. So I'm looking at, whoever's doing it, you're looking at approximately 210 hours of someone's time for evaluating 35 teachers."

This particular administrator serves a 9-12 building with around 100 teachers and 2 assistant principals. Dividing the teachers among himself and two other administrators reduces the amount of time needed to spend with each teacher. As the building principal, however, he is also responsible for quality assurance of the evaluations that his assistant principals complete, and that too, takes time.

Another administrator (LS/HA - 29) who had not been a part of implementation or pilot testing foreshadowed the amount of time commitment he anticipated devoting to the teacher evaluation cycle.

> "the model for teacher observations calls for that pre-conference, that post-conference, and that's just, ahhh, I don't know when I'm going to find the time to do all that."

This administrator is responsible for close to 30 teachers in a K-1 building arrangement with no assistant principal. Also, he has more than ten years of administrative experience and had never conducted evaluations to the extent of the new observation cycle.

Another administrator (HS/LA - 56) was satisfied with the new teacher evaluation system, however, expressed concerns with the time investment involved in the cycle. This particular administrator has a teaching staff of 75 teachers with two assistant principals in the building.

> "Um, the new teacher evaluation is time consuming. I may feel different than every other person that you speak to, but I don't mind it. To me, it's time well spent. Because I don't think that we're spending enough time with teachers. So it's sort of time well spent, but it's, it's, labor intensive, and, um, I think there were better ways to do that than, that didn't take so much time."

The tension of investing the necessary time and completing it in the manner as to which it was prescribed by the state department is something that administrators have also expressed concern.

An administrator (LS/HA - 14) discussed an effective way to address the challenges of the evaluation cycle by discussing an application that his school districts had created to complete the evaluation model. He spoke about the extent to which technology has aided him in addressing the challenges of completing the observation cycle.

> "I hit submit, before I leave the room, they have a copy of their observation. I have walkthroughs, observations, copies of all of that. It saves me from coming back, printing it, making copies, being able to do all those things, so that saves me a lot of time too. Now we still meet, but, you know, all of my post-observation questions, they have in their hands, they have them in e-mail, so before they come in, I can see all their answers already. Little things, you know, 15 minutes here and there, makes a big difference at the end of the day."

This particular administrator serves a K-5 population with 30 teachers and no assistant principals. He also commented that he "evaluates each teacher twice" (per year) and also noted that "I only have a building of 350 kids. If you have anything bigger than that, you don't have that time."

These comments highlight a change in the daily operations of school administrators and further reinforces the additional pressures that are being placed on administrators to perform in their position. As administrators continue to have mandated tasks incorporated in their daily responsibilities without relief from other duties, other responsibilities must be sacrificed.

Overseeing Student Discipline

Although only 6 out of 21 (28.6%) noted student discipline as occupying the most amount of time in their position, it should be noted that 4 out of these 6 respondents who

specifically mentioned student discipline were from the High Stress/Low Autonomy domain. These administrators were all male, three of which are administrators in a 9-12 high school and the other in a 5-8 middle school. Although overseeing student discipline was not the primary interview response by the respondents, they provided commentary about what discipline occupied a considerable amount of time in their day.

An administrator (HS/LA - 56) noted that their building faced a lot of challenges with discipline. This particular administrator serves a 9-12 building with 1000 students. He noted,

> "I do a lot of discipline here, just not necessarily the day-to-day discipline, just those decisions on what discipline do you want to battle with. For example, how big of a battle do you want to make with dress code, how big of a battle do you want to make about electronic devices, um, you know, internet policies, things like that, that I find to be stressful because I know that whatever decision we make and how we set those up, I'm going to deal with on a day-to-day basis, and so, you try to set it up correctly, it's not always the way you hope it goes."

A similar thought was echoed by another administrator identified as high-stress/low-autonomy (HS/LA - 55) noted that the majority of their day was spent with student affairs as well, he commented, "The bulk of it is dealing with the students. Either negatively through discipline or positively through student activities." This particular administrator is in a building of 500 students without an assistant principal, and is required to serve many roles in their position which he also indicated was a major stressor in their current position.

Another administrator lamented the amount of time spent on student discipline over his two years in the position (LS/LA - 25). This particular administrator is responsible for grades 7-12 in a building of close to 400 students without any assistant principals to provide support. He expressed the challenge of student discipline taking up the majority of his time by commenting,

> "The most stressful at least with my two years, I would say is being overwhelmed with the discipline…And I think that was too difficult because I felt that I spent most of my time doing discipline instead of being an educational leader, I was a glorified police officer or truant officer where I was messing and handling the

> problems instead of trying to move forward academically, that was put on the back shelf, but that's what took most of my time."

Despite the time spent on discipline, this administrator chose to focus on climate and culture of the building to attempt to reduce the amount of discipline infractions in lieu of support personnel to handle discipline problems.

An administrator who did not identify discipline as a challenge in her position (HS/LA - 69) spoke about how she was able to create a consistent policy to reduce the amount of time spent in her day on discipline. She noted how she utilized a system that was used in a previous school district (where she had served as an assistant principal) to better prepare her to handle discipline infractions with students. She reflected that she had fought to change the culture involving student discipline during her three and a half years in her position. She commented,

> "I have handled every situation the same, regardless of severity, it's 10 days OSS (out-of-school suspension), same policy as (school district name removed), exact same thing, and I've been consistent. That has made a difference here, you know, because people see that there's consistency. Doesn't matter if you're an athlete, it doesn't matter if you're from a broken home, like, if you're caught, this is the discipline and then this is the, um, this is the steps that we're going to take to assist you to you know, make change and help the families, so I think things like that, um, when you build consistency like that you build trust with the community."

The idea of building a positive school climate and consistency in enforcing policy could help to reduce the amount of stress and time spent on student discipline, and also allow administrators to have more autonomy and control over challenging situations with students.

Working with Teachers

The relationship between school administrator and teacher was also described in the interviews, but not to the extent to which the teacher evaluation cycle and school discipline was discussed. Three school administrators in the High Stress/High Autonomy domain specifically discussed interactions with teachers as occupying a considerable amount of time. One

administrator (HS/HA - 66) mentioned this was a particularly difficult year with teacher absences and teacher sabbaticals. Another administrator (HS/HA - 42) felt as though 10% of her teaching staff occupied 90% of her time, and the third administrator (HS/HA - 24) stressed the importance of building positive relationships with teachers as a major aspect of her position. Two other administrators in the Low Stress/Low Autonomy domain noted their teaching staff as occupying time in their position. One administrator (LS/LA - 65) when asked what occupies the most amount of time in their position stated, "It's the needy teachers!" and another administrator (LS/LA - 32) responded similarly to the question and simply stated "the teachers, I believe."

Summary

In summary, the majority of administrators sampled in the qualitative portion of the study described the challenges and conditions impacting their ability to complete the new teacher evaluation cycle. They noted their concerns in having enough time to conduct observations, the division of labor between themselves and their administrative team, and the addition of data for student achievement as being a part of the teacher rating. Some expressed optimism and saw positives from the new model, but still expressed skepticism in being able to conduct the evaluation cycle for all teachers in their building. Only one administrator offered a solution to reduce the time engaged on the teacher evaluation cycle, which was to set up a computer-based template to expedite the process of completing the paperwork associated with the evaluation tool.

While discipline was noted as the task that occupied the most amount of time according to the 69 survey respondents, discipline ranked second for the interview respondents. In particular, 4 of the 6 respondents that directly discussed student discipline were identified as High Stress/Low Autonomy, which could be an indicator of the challenges associated with administrators who identify as having a considerable amount of stress in their position with little

control. Only one of the administrators in the sample (HS/LA – 69) discussed ways to reduce the time spent on school-wide discipline issues, noting establishing a culture of consistency and enforcing policy according to the school code.

Other areas such as working with teachers, interactions with parents, and increased mandates from special education were noted as causing stress for school administrators but were not consistently mentioned as costing a considerable amount of time in the position.

5.3.1 Research Question1A

Research question 1A was designed to be an extension of the discussion surrounding the time administrators spend on various tasks during a school day. This particular research question extrapolates on the following two interview questions. Interview Question 5A specifically asked respondents "Are there any types of activities that typically don't get done because you are responding to unplanned activities that require immediate attention?" and Interview Question 5B asked respondents, "What tasks are they?" Responses to this question generally led to administrators describing scenarios that had occurred during their time as a school administrator and tasks which were pushed to the side to deal with unplanned events. Only one administrator (HS/LA - 57) believed that he had enough time in his day to respond to all unplanned activities as they occurred and cited having two assistant principals for support as the reason he did not worry about unplanned events. Two other individuals gave definitive answers; one (LS/HA - 29) simply responded "Everything." and the other (LS/HA - 14) stated, "All the stuff you're supposed to do," but did not expand when prompted. The following table depicts the responses that the 19 interview respondents who provided specific examples of what activities had to be set aside to manage unplanned activities. The analysis is presented in whole group, and Table 15 on

the following page is stratified across the four study domains with the population from the interview.

Table 15: Time Set Aside to Manage Unplanned Activities

Task	HS/HA	HS/LA	LS/HA	LS/LA	Total
Observations and Walkthroughs	3	3	2	4	*12*
Curriculum Decisions	1	4	0	2	*7*
Analyzing Data	1	1	1	3	*6*
Paperwork	1	1	0	3	*5*
Scheduling	0	1	0	0	*1*
Interactions with Parents	1	0	0	0	*1*
School Budgeting	0	0	1	0	*1*
Facilities Management	0	0	1	0	*1*
Checking E-Mail	1	0	0	1	*1*
Attending Meetings	0	0	0	1	*1*
Totals	***8***	***10***	***5***	***14***	***37***

Table 15 represents the number of instances administrators in either of the subdomains provided a specific example of something that doesn't get done when attending to an unplanned activity. For example, one administrator in the high-stress/high-autonomy domain (and a total of six administrators across all domains) noted data analysis as a task that becomes sacrificed. The total columns represent the number of responses for each domain. Low-stress/low-autonomy principals presented the most examples of tasks that do not get done when unplanned activities occur, while low-stress/high-autonomy principals noted the least amount of examples.

Observations and Walkthroughs

Of the 19 administrators who offered a response to the question of what doesn't happen when unplanned events take over, 12 indicated that observations and walkthroughs were the job responsibilities most likely to be sacrificed. There was consistency on this response across all four domains. Most respondents indicated no control when they were forced to reschedule walkthroughs and observations to respond to unplanned events. Descriptors such as

"unfortunately" (LS/HA - 58), "frustrating" (HS/LA - 56), and "go to the wayside" (HS/LA - 53) were provided by administrators to depict the struggle of not having enough time to perform essential job responsibilities. The 12 respondents were across all four domains, and no apparent patterns based on any particular demographic characteristics were evident.

An administrator (HS/HA - 43) in a smaller building (170 students and 18 teachers) problematized the gap between the need to interact with students and teachers and the need to be office-bound when a crisis occurs:

> "I think the job, unfortunately what ends up getting pushed to the side is people, being in the classrooms as much you would like to be, being in the hallways and interacting with the students as much as you would like to, um, again you end up being office-bound, and I make it a point to always be around first thing in the morning, and make sure that I do a walk-around at least once a day, but I would like to do more."

This comment indicates the level of frustration that occurs when instructional leadership is sacrificed for office tasks and other issues including data-management and parental concerns.

Another administrator (HS/HA - 66) expressed a similar frustration with lack of time to interact with students and teachers, however defined their crises as fights or "drama" instead of paperwork. He noted:

> "There were many times where I wanted to do walkthroughs, I wanted to do classroom observations, I wanted to meet with certain people, and when, you know, a fight happens or that drama that I was talking about occurs, you know, you have to drop everything and deal with that, so things get pushed off to the wayside, so, no, I didn't have enough time in my day to deal with those things."

This reflects the complexity of an administrator's position, showing the time sacrificed for instructional activities to attend to other pressing activities. The challenge then comes from finding an adequate amount of time to balance walkthroughs and observations with the other responsibilities of the position.

Another administrator (HS/LA - 56) also noted the struggle but did indicate they believed that the teacher walkthroughs and observations could be pushed aside when necessary because they can be done at a later time.

> "The biggest problem is what tends to get pushed are the teacher evaluations, the walkthroughs, those kind of things kind of sort of get pushed off, because you say, ok, I can do that again tomorrow, I can get to that teacher the next day, but those things to me, they should be like vital things, they should be like no touches, you should block that time and not let it get taken away"

An interesting contradiction exists in this response, as this particular administrator noted that the observations should be vital and not cancelled, however, when something more pressing comes up, the evaluations and walkthroughs are what ends up sacrificed because they can be rescheduled at the administrator and teacher's convenience.

An administrator who was identified as low-stress/low-autonomy (LS/LA - 34) offered honesty in terms of observation and walkthroughs and specifically noted the lack of time to complete them. In his opinion, as long as he completed the minimum state mandates and knew the capabilities of his teaching staff, he felt as though he didn't have to spend the mandated time completing the full-length observation cycle. This administrator serves a 9-12 building with only 19 teachers and no assistant principals in the building. He commented:

> "I know I can meet the state mandate if I put in certain stuff when I have time I'll be more in-depth and detailed with my observations, so I kind of, it's the supervision piece that, when I'm disciplining kids as a principal, that's my priority, that's like my little walkthroughs. The big observation at the end of the year, I know if I got a decent teacher, I'll do light on it, and that saves me time. Hours and hours and hours, every week. I'm still giving them a good observation but I'm basically multitasking, but I'm doing more informals if I'm out in the halls a lot or talking to parents."

This administrator openly admitted to not engaging in the full observation cycle as dictated by the state mandates, but felt confident enough in specific members of his teaching staff to not worry about repercussions for not following the direct mandates. This could end up being an

ethical dilemma that more administrators face when placed in a position where not enough time is permitted to attend to the scheduled mandates imposed on school administrators.

Curriculum Decisions

Another task that administrators reported being pushed to the side when unanticipated events occur was making decisions involving curriculum or examining new curricular decisions. Four of the administrators that were considered to be High Stress/Low Autonomy noted curriculum as one of the first things to be sacrificed when faced with an emergency. This was especially pertinent at this particular time due to the implementation of many new curricular decisions needing to be made around the Common Core State Standards, which were recently implemented across the state of Pennsylvania. Because of the change to standards, many administrators noted a changing of curriculum to align with the new standards and expectations set forth with the curriculum.

One administrator (HS/HA - 42) noted the challenges associated with making instructional leadership and curricular decisions in her school. She commented:

> "the academic leadership kind of gets, put, put back so you have to work really hard during those summer months to make sure everything's in line and lined up so that as the teachers are coming in, and, and your professional development is going on through the school year"

In her eyes, administrators who focus on curricular planning and data-analysis during the summer months have less instructional planning to focus on during the school year and can direct their attention to issues involving the stakeholders in her building and the school district.

Another administrator (HS/LA - 53) had a similar response toward both the loss of instructional leadership and the time devoted toward developing curriculum.

> "what tends to go to the wayside is, I don't want to say wayside, but you don't get to address immediately are the curriculum issues, moving kids forward, making sure we're preparing them academically the best we possibly can."

This creates a dichotomy of sorts for administrators, as the unplanned activities normally do not involve academic preparation or curriculum development.

Finally, an administrator (LS/LA - 45) discussed a positive about curriculum and data being sacrificed to respond to unplanned events. They commented:

> "curriculum gets pushed aside for the next day, um, to address those needs that arise, but they need to be addressed immediately. Um, so you kind of tend to put off or push aside those items that don't need that immediate attention that can wait, for you to address, so like data, which is available 24/7 or curriculum, which you normally have some time to address also, so you can move those to the side to address something that comes up immediately."

In many instances, this assumption appears to be true. Data-analysis and curricular decisions can be conducted outside of school due to the ability to access data from virtually any location. Under this assumption, however, one aspect of school performance that might suffer is the ability to work collaboratively with other administrators, central administration, or classroom teachers during the school day to address curricular issues and assess data.

Analyzing Data

The final task that administrators mentioned that got pushed to the side while responding to unplanned events was analyzing data and preparing for data-informed decision-making. One third of the population responded to this, with at least one school administrator from each of the four domains in the study. The use of data by school administrators to influence teaching and learning is a major component of the role of today's principal. When this is sacrificed for other events in an administrator's day, this can possibly have a long-term impact on the performance level of a school district. A High Stress/Low Autonomy administrator (HS/LA - 69) commented that, "doing data-analysis, those things that we like to do to improve what we do, those are things that get pushed off until later, as not as important to dealing with crisis at hand." Another administrator (LS/LA - 45) noted that "A lot of times it's, um, you know, it's really looking at

data, that gets pushed aside," both of these comments further reinforce the separation between data-analysis and more pressing tasks in an administrator's day.

Summary

As presented in the literature review for this study, many findings have documented that instructional leadership, observations and evaluation, and data-driven decision-making are some of the most beneficial things that school administrators do in their daily activities. It could be described as noteworthy that observations and walkthroughs are what administrators end up pushing to the side when dealing with unplanned situations that occur as part of their position. As part of the new teacher evaluation system, the majority of the time invested in the evaluation process consists of observation of classroom teachers. It is important to consider that observations and walkthroughs directly impact the teaching staff and no other stakeholders in a school district. When unplanned events encompass an administrator's day, it has a direct effect on the teaching staff who are now forced to reschedule their walkthroughs. A final consideration in this is the new level of complexity with the teacher evaluation cycle. All observations now require a pre-conference and post-conference that specifically discusses the observation that the administrator is to observe. If an unplanned event causes the administrator to miss the observation, the administrator might be back to square one and have no choice but to start over with the pre-conference, especially for non-tenured teachers or teachers on an improvement plan. Having additional staff members such as assistant principals or deans of students might serve to reduce some of the time that school administrators have to invest in unplanned events. When the unplanned events can be handled by other members of the administrative team, this can allow for more time to be devoted to walkthroughs, observations, and other tasks reflecting instructional leadership.

Sacrificing time spent on curriculum and data-analysis can also have an impact on the instructional leadership of a school district, especially when the decisions impacting curriculum directly coincide with data-driven decision-making. Some administrators mentioned they come in during the weekend to attend to management of curriculum and data, however, time could be spent at school to engage in data-analysis and inform other stakeholders in the building and in the school district. If an administrator finds themselves spending too much time attending to unplanned events, a relationship with teachers and staff could potentially suffer.

5.4 RESEARCH QUESTION 2

The purpose of research questions 2, 2a, and 2b were to determine which conditions and responsibilities of the position contribute to stress in the role of a school administrator. Research question 2 was to examine the conditions contribute to principal stress. This was addressed both as a part of the survey (n = 69) and the interview (n = 22). Table 9 provides a rank-order list of all thirty tasks that administrators self-reported were considered to be the most stressful tasks in their position. The following table is an excerpt from Table 9 to depict the ten tasks from the survey that administrators reported were the most stressful.

Table 16: *Excerpt of Table 9* – 10 Most Stressful Tasks as Indicated by Survey

Section 3: Stress Index Items	*N*	Category	Mean	SD	Median	Range
1. Overseeing student discipline	69	**5**	3.00	1.16316	3	1 - 5
2. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)	69	**5**	2.48	1.31293	2	1 - 5
3. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues	69	**5**	2.42	1.34390	2	1 - 5
4. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	69	**2**	2.36	1.13722	2	1 - 5
5. Attending and/or presenting at meetings	69	**2**	2.20	1.09248	2	1 - 4
6. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings)	69	**5**	2.13	1.11029	2	1 - 5
7. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	69	**1**	2.10	0.98735	2	1 - 4
8. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)	69	**3**	2.03	1.01418	2	1 - 5
9. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessments)	69	**1**	1.90	0.90984	2	1 - 5
10. Designing and developing curriculum	69	**1**	1.90	1.08662	2	1 – 5

The interview protocol did not directly ask for a response to the question of "what conditions contribute to principal stress," however, Question #4 from the interview asked respondents: ***What tasks do you feel that administrators engage in that are the most stressful?,*** Question #14 asked respondents: ***How could policymakers help to make this a low-stressed but challenging occupation?,*** and Question #15 asked respondents: ***What might I have overlooked in this interview or survey that could be helpful to others?*** Qualitative deductive coding using classification and frequency (noting how many times respondents directly mentioned a tension causing them stress) was used to examine conditions that administrators reported contributing to stress in their positions. All 22 administrators noted at least one condition that caused stress in their position. The table was created using the following structure:

HS/HA – (represents *high-stress/high-autonomy*)

HS/LA – (represents *high-stress/low-autonomy*)

LS/HA – (represents *low-stress/high-autonomy*)

LS/LA – (represents *low-stress/low-autonomy*)

The numbers represent the survey/interview respondent that selected a particular condition.

The following table outlines responses reflecting their own personal stressors from the position:

Table 17: Summary of Reflections of Personal Stressors

Condition/Stressor	#	Respondents
1. Relationships with Teaching Staff	8	**LS/LA**: 65; **LS/HA**: 29, 58; **HS/LA**: 38; **HS/HA**; 07, 12, 42, 66
2. Student Discipline	6	**LS/LA**: 25; **HS/LA**: 57, 69; **HS/HA**; 42, 43, 66
3. Parents	5	**LS/HA**: 14, 29; **HS/LA**: 53, 55; **HS/HA**; 43
4. Legal Issues	4	**LS/LA**: 34, 39, 45; **HS/LA**: 69
5. Lack of Time	4	**LS/LA**: 32, 34; **HS/LA**: 57; **HS/HA**; 12
6. Central Admin.	3	**HS/LA**: 38, 56; **HS/HA**; 12
7. No Assistant Principal	3	**LS/LA**: 25, 34; **HS/HA**: 24
8. School Board	2	**LS/HA**: 29; **HS/LA**: 38
9. Accountability	2	**LS/HA**: 29; **HS/LA**: 56
10. Teacher Evaluations	2	**HS/LA**: 56, 69
11. Teacher Contract	2	**HS/LA**: 38; **HS/HA**; 12
12. Budgeting	1	**HS/HA**: 12, 24
13. Facilities	1	**HS/HA**: 12

Thirteen different causes and conditions of stressed emerged from the interviews, with relationships with teaching staff, student discipline, and relationships with parents being the three causes that were expressed the most frequently. Issues pertaining to accountability, budgeting, and facilities were not as frequently mentioned by respondents.

Teaching Staff as a Condition and Cause of Stress

At least one respondent from each of the four domains noted that relationships with teachers were one of the most frequent causes and conditions of stress in the role of the school principal. 8 of the 22 respondents described situations or conditions in which teachers impacted their stress level in their position. Responses ranged from statements such as "It's the needy teachers!" (LS/LA - 65), to more descriptive scenarios in which teachers contribute to the stress of school administrators. One administrator (LS/HA - 58) responded to the challenge of working with marginal teachers. He commented,

> "I think another very stressful area is the need to, um, help the teachers that are marginal, um, those teachers that are definitely in need of some, just, you know, need help. They need to either improve and they don't see it themselves, I find that's probably one of the harder areas, trying to coach that teacher to pick up their game, be better, take on these techniques, use them and, um, and build that into them, and their ability to be able to do that just comes down to personality. You really can't change personality."

This comment shows a possible tension that exists in the management and leadership of teachers in the role of school administrator.

A similar comment was expressed by another administrator (HS/HA - 42), who questioned the professionalism of her teaching staff, noted challenges with teachers who demand professionalism of their students, yet do not act professional themselves. She recounted a scenario of a teacher who had previously complained to her about students being on their cell phones, yet during an in-service meeting, that particular teacher spent the entire meeting on their cell phone. She attributed this to professionalism and commented,

> "I think that stepping back and making sure that you realize that, yes, these are professionals, but yes, they are individuals, and yes, they're going to have different capabilities, and um, levels of commitment and different levels of independence, different levels of determination and those kinds of things."

Understanding that teachers have differing levels of commitment and professionalism may be a potential cause of stress for administrators expecting a particular level of commitment and dedication.

A final comment worthy of consideration is when an administrator is dealing with an abnormal amount of teacher absence or sabbaticals. One administrator, a high school principal (HS/HA - 66), reported that absences and personnel were the biggest stressor currently in his position. He noted,

> "I'm dealing with numerous teachers right now on leave, um, for personal issues, the one guy, you know, he's day-by-day, which has turned into week-by-week and then month-by-month and he may have to take a leave, so, you know, dealing with the personnel, the actual day-to-day personnel, whether a teacher is going to be here or not, takes a lot of time, and it's not a mandate, but it's, you, it's the biggest part of my job right now, making sure there is a teacher in front of those kids to teach."

Unplanned or unscheduled circumstances have the potential to circumvent an administrator's capabilities of performing their job, and in this particular case, not only occupies a significant amount of time, but causes and contributes to stress.

Student Discipline as a Condition and Cause of Stress

The survey data documented that overseeing student discipline was the leading cause of stress for school administrators. This was also reported through the interviews, where 6 of the 22 respondents reported student discipline and bullying as a contributor to the stress in their position. The demographic profile of these respondents is worth noting, as all six were either middle school, high school, or a combination of a middle/high school administrator. Three were female and three were male, and three administrators did not have assistant principals in their building, who would normally be responsible for overseeing student discipline.

Challenges relating to cyberbullying, which wouldn't have existed 10-15 years ago were noted by respondents, one respondent (HS/LA - 57), a high school principal specifically commented on these challenges. He noted,

> "it has to be the ongoing, just bullying, Facebook, cyber stuff, drama, you know? Like a lot of things are cut and dry, if it's drugs and alcohol, usually for the most part, those are cut and dry, those are easy to handle, but it's usually the issues, you know, with the, with the, just the non-stop bullying issues, then, you know, working with sometimes the parents are harder to work with than the kids, those types of things."

Responsibilities involving student discipline over technology issues that may or may not occur during school time is a condition in which school administrators may not have any control over, but can impact the culture and climate in their school, which could potentially require attention.

Another high school administrator (HS/HA - 66), reflected a similar belief, and spoke about students bringing their personal lives to school. He noted,

> "student conflicts are the most stressful, um, kids bring a lot of drama to their own lives which in turn, they project on other students, um, which then, come into the school and it becomes our problem with their personal issues, so, um, you know, that really is a stressful part of the job"

School administrators should understand the challenges that come along with managing 21st Century Schools, and new forms of discipline, bullying, and climate management are a factor that could potentially impact the stress level in their position.

Another administrator (LS/LA - 25) attributed student discipline as a challenge they were currently facing, starting that, "I felt that I spent most of my time doing discipline instead of being an educational leader, I was a glorified police officer or truant officer where I was messing and handling the problems instead of trying to move forward academically" and then noted that he was going to be receiving an assistant principal in his building and that "that assistant is going to end up being responsible for discipline." Lack of support personnel such as assistant principals or guidance counselors have the potential to add to the stress level of the position.

Relationships with Parents as a Cause and Condition of Stress

Five of the 22 respondents noted their relationships with parents contributed to the stress level in their position. Gender or building configuration did not prove significant with this particular sample; and responses reflect several different challenges in relationships with parents. One administrator, a principal in a K-5 building noted how one parent has the ability to change the dynamic of an entire organization. He commented, "If you get a bad PTA president or someone that just doesn't agree with you, it makes your life very difficult."

One administrator (HS/LA - 53) noted that in the past two days, "There were three unannounced parent issues here, based on things that are happening outside the school that I have no control over, yet, they want us to take control over." An administrator at a K-1 building (LS/HA - 29) noted that, "there are certain parents, um, because we are the K-1, you know? We're their, I'm the first experience they have with this bureaucracy called school." Another administrator (HS/LA - 69) mentioned that "dealing with families that are going through a rough family crisis" was a regular case of stress in her position and another administrator (HS/HA - 43) commented that, "I'm sure it's what almost everyone else has said, dealing with the 1% of parents that it's impossible to deal with." Finally, (HS/LA - 55) noted that "unreasonable parents" were the leading cause of stress in his position. These administrators all commented on how parents can contribute to their stress, but offered no solutions and instead noted parent interaction as a responsibility of their position.

Other Causes and Conditions of Stress for School Administrators

Ten other causes and conditions of stress were reported by the interview respondents. Some of the more noteworthy responses are presented. One administrator, a K-6 principal,

(HS/HA – 24) compared the struggles she faced as an administrator in her previous district in analyzing data to her new position. She commented,

> "I think that's really the major issues, you know and with the principal evaluation model the way the state has it done, also, you really have to spend a lot of time looking at data, making sure that all of these building-level data, you know, all that's in place, so when you get evaluated, because you have to provide that information now to prove your effectiveness. It's not just a rating from a superintendent based on your job, it's all about data based on test scores. Test scores really, you know, they have everything to do with it."

This particular administrator had recently switched positions and had moved from one of the lower-performing elementary schools in the state of Pennsylvania to a much higher performing school. The majority of her interview was focused on teacher and principal evaluation and how data had a direct impact on her position.

Another administrator (HS/LA - 38) expressed challenges that come with the uncertainty of their budget at their position. He commented,

> "we're having meetings now about cutting our budget, we have, a budget shorting, like we're in the whole a little bit, so they're really really cracking down on what we're spending, and they're looking at cutting administrators here, and they're looking at cutting secretaries and teachers, you name it, they're looking at cutting it, and it's just really, I think the thing that stresses me out the most is knowing that dealing with all dealing with that, and still having, still keeping, trying to be an educational leader and just not manage"

This particular administrator had also expressed concerns about losing one of their two assistant principals due to budget cuts, which would increase the responsibilities of their position.

The lack of support from assistant principals was directly addressed by three of the respondents (LS/LA - 34; HS/HA - 24; and LS/LA - 25). LS/LA - 34 reported having a building of slightly below 600 students without an assistant principal.

Finally, HS/HA - 12 was the highest stressed administrator on the survey. This particular administrator self-reported experiencing stress either normally or almost always for 10 of the 30 tasks on the survey. When interviewed, this particular administrator noted six different causes to

his stress, including teachers, lack of time to accomplish objectives, budgeting, central administration, issues with the teacher contract, and facilities. HS/HA - 12 is an administrator in a 5-6 building, in his first few years in his position. 32 excerpts involving stress were taken from his interview, and he appeared to be an outlier for both the survey and the interview.

Summary

The overarching themes from the interview were that interactions with parents and student discipline caused the most stress. As teachers are the primary stakeholder that administrators interact with in their daily activities, it should come as now surprise that administrators reported their interactions as causing the most amount of stress in their position.

Also noteworthy is the fact that not one administrator responded with a solution as how stress could be removed from their interactions with teachers. While this was not directly asked in the interview protocol, administrators offered solutions for student discipline, interactions with parents, and interactions with central administration. This could indicate that the majority of administrators accept interactions with their teaching staff as a major stressor in their position and perhaps believe this is impossible to change in their positions.

Student discipline was the top reported stressor for the survey, and in the interview, discipline ranked second. This corresponds with findings reported in previous studies (Cooper, 1988; Gmelch, 1988) which found that overseeing student discipline and task-based stressors in general were the largest causes of stress in the position. Also of note was the fact that the types of conflicts with students that were reported by respondents were activities such as cyberbullying, which did not exist at the time of Gmelch (1998) and Cooper's (1988) study. As the sample used for this study was a convenience-based sample, it would be worthy of further

exploration to compare the level of stress involving student discipline from administrators with assistant principals vs. administrators without assistant principals in their buildings.

Much like relationships with teaching staff, relationships with parents were indicated as a condition that causes stress for administrators. Interaction with parents is an unavoidable responsibility of being a school administrator, and stressors related to those interactions are an important part of the position. Interestingly enough, respondents consistently shared stories about having good years with parents and bad years with parents and how a particular mix of parents can either create a positive experience or a negative experience for school administrators.

Research question #2 was open-ended and allowed administrators to respond to multiple causes of stressors in their positions. Research question #2a specifically asked administrators to describe what a high-stressed and low-stressed principal looked like, and Research question #2b asked administrators which single task caused the most amount of stress in their position. The data from research question #2 provided a solid foundation for responses to the preceding two research questions.

5.4.1 Research Question 2A

In order to determine the characteristics of high-stressed and low-stressed administrators, respondents (n = 22) were asked to describe administrators they knew that they considered to be high-stressed or low-stressed. Question #6 from the interview asked respondents: Tell me about a principal that you know that you consider to be highly stressed. What do you see that identifies them as a highly stressed principal? Question #7 from the interview asked a similar question, instead focusing on characteristics that low-stressed administrators exhibit. (Tell me about a principal that you know that you consider to be low stressed. What do you see that

identifies them as a low stressed principal?) All 22 respondents were able to describe an administrator they considered to be highly-stressed, while one administrator (LS/LA - 45) was unable to describe an administrator he knew whom they considered to be low-stressed. LS/LA - 45 had a different perspective and stated that he had never worked with a stressed administrator, because they all held their feelings. He stated, "we sort of contain those in ourselves and try to address them with the team, but I'm not aware of an administrator to where I could pinpoint an example of being stressed over." Because these were open-ended response questions, some administrators indicated multiple descriptors for high-stressed and low-stressed administrators. The following table presents the findings from these two interview questions.

Table 18: Characteristics of High-Stressed and Low-Stressed Principals as Described by Interviewees

What are the characteristics of high-stressed and low-stressed principals?	
High-Stressed (*n* = 21)	**Low-Stressed (*n* = 22)**
Unorganized (8 out of 21) - **38%**	Elementary School Principal (7 out of 22) - **32%**
Not Friendly (6 out of 21) - **29%**	Friendly (6 out of 22) - **27%**
Physical Appearance (4 out of 21) - **19%**	Organized (6 out of 22) - **27%**
General Job Demands (4 out of 21 – **19%**	Effective Delegators (5 out of 22) - **23%**
No Personnel Support (3 out of 21) – **14%**	Physical Appearance (3 out of 22) - **14%**
Large Student Population (2 out of 21) - **10%**	Retiring Soon (2 out of 22) - **9%**
Effects of Low District SES (1 out of 21) - **5%**	
Lack of Parent Involvement (1 out of 21) - **5%**	
Any High School Principal (1 out of 21) - **5%**	
Accountability Demands (1 out of 21) - **5%**	
Says "Yes" to Everything (1 out of 21) - **5%**	
Doesn't Understand District (1 out of 21) - **5%**	

Characteristics of High-Stressed Principals

Twelve unique characteristics and conditions were identified by respondents of what a high-stressed principal looked like. These characteristics and perceptions were further extrapolated during the interview process. The following statements expand upon the most common themes that emerged from the interview process.

Statement #1: High-Stressed Principals Appear Unorganized

38% of all respondents across all four domains described high-stressed principals as generally unorganized. This included discussion about a high-stressed principal's lack of ability to prioritize, to become easily distracted, or not to have a strong understanding of time management. Some respondents also mentioned that lack of organization had led to these individuals working 60-70 hour weeks when this wasn't necessary, to them being short with their staff, both teaching and administrative staff, and also being late to meetings. One respondent (LS/LA - 39) spoke about her mentor principal and his inability to prioritize. She commented,

> "this one that I'm thinking of is usually disorganized, um, doesn't have a good plan and I think that, you know, without them really realizing any kind of lens to their stress, um, maybe not, maybe they're, a good way to say it is not a good prioritizer, doesn't know when to put things to the backburner, and really doesn't focus on what needs to be dealt with at hand right now."

She further expanded upon this statement to note that this was her mentor principal while she was his assistant and guidance counselor, and she learned a lot from him of what to do, but also what not to do when she became the building principal in her building.

Another respondent (HS/LA - 56) who noted that disorganization was a characteristic of a highly-stressed principal spoke about a colleague whose desk was cluttered constantly and had challenges understanding the culture and context of the district. He noted,

> "When you walk in and see a pile of things on somebody's desk, it's just all over the place, and when you ask them a question and they can't even focus on it, and that sort of, like I said, is a sign of sort of some stress."

Another respondent (LS/HA - 19) categorized disorganization in their personal physical appearance as coinciding with their professional life as well. This could reflect a case of looking the part of an administrator so that others perceive organizational skills. From the responses, it is clear that many different factors influence whether or not an administrator is perceived as having the organizational capability or capacity to appear not stressed in their positions.

Statement #2: High-Stressed Principals Appear Unfriendly

The literature review for this study expressed the importance of administrators being one of the faces of the school district and in particular, each school building. Therefore, it is important that individuals in administrative roles appear to be friendly due to the litany of stakeholders they interact with on a regular basis. Because of this, it could be important that administrators appear to be friendly to their faculty and staff. In particular, when asked what a low-stressed principal looks like, the second most frequent response was that the administrator appeared to be friendly. The reverse of this, the unfriendly principal, was the second most common characteristic of high-stressed principals. 27% of respondents described administrators that appeared to be unfriendly as a sign of the stress they experienced. One administrator (HS/HA - 42) spoke about their principal while they were a staff member who was responsible for running both the high school and middle school. She described his unfriendliness as,

> "I saw how stressed he got into the point where his blood pressure you could see it coming on his face, and, he'd blow up and you'd see all the people shy away from him, and they're running around talking about him behind his back, and, I, I, constantly reminded myself, I don't want to be that, and when I wanted to get away, I'd just go in and close the door for a moment and then recuperate and go out and then try to confuse everyone with a smile on my face."

"Confusing everyone with a smile on my face" could be considered a charged phrase, as it may not reflect coping with stress, however, hiding it instead from her staff members. HS/HA - 42 highlights a tension that was commonly expressed throughout both questions directed toward high-stressed and low-stressed principals, whether or not they are actually stressed or appear to be toward their staff. Another administrator (LS/LA - 65) also related unfriendly to disheveled physical appearance. Their comment was particularly poignant, as they were the only administrator throughout the interviews to discuss an administrator potentially using illegal substances as a coping mechanism. He stated, "Um, unhappy. Complains, usually whines, I

think too, maybe drugs (laughs) I mean, these are the people, you know they're stressed, they just, they look tired, they look worn out, they look old, they (laughs) all those things, I mean, if we see a difference in them." .

Statement #3: High-Stressed Principals Have Physical Appearances that would identify them as High-Stressed

It is important to highlight this particular statement, as interview respondents spoke about physical appearance as a part of the discussion surrounding unfriendly and disorganized principals. Minor descriptors were noted such as, "fluctuates in weight" (LS/LA - 34) and "they look like they got run over by a bus" (LS/HA - 14). These could also be investigated as an indicator of administrators that appear to be highly-stressed. Further research could be conducted to determine whether an administrator is perceived to be unfriendly or disorganized based on their physical appearances.

Other Statements: High-Stressed Principals

There were nine other characteristics that were described of administrators exhibiting characteristics of being high-stressed principals. These included, the general job demands of the position, no personnel support (including administrative assistants or assistant principals), having a large student population, low district socio-economic status, lack of parent involvement, being a high school principal in general, cannot handle accountability demands, an individual who says "yes" to everything, and someone that doesn't understand the culture of the district. As each of these responses were provided by less than 20% of the respondents, a separate section highlighting particular cases of each of these stressors is not necessary, however, each of these (in particular, the lack of an assistant principal) are something that could be explored on a case-by-case basis for future studies.

A quote from a 5-6 principal (HS/HA - 12) summed up the conditions that cause stress for administrators. He stated, "I think that anymore our job has become a 10, 11, 12 hour job, and, um, you know, when you work those kind of hours, um, you know, it can lead you straight down to the path of burnout when you do that five days a week and you deal with the stress." This indicates how the changing role of the principal can contribute to the causes and conditions of stress in the position.

Summary

Interview respondents described many different characteristics of what a high-stressed principal looked like. As there were 12 separate indicators that the 21 interview respondents listed as representing a high-stressed principal, this indicates that many conditions or events contribute to the stress of school administrators. Also noteworthy is the apparent interconnectedness between stressors, such as organization and the demands of the position, or physical appearance and unfriendliness. Administrators that are considered to be disorganized and/or unfriendly can have an impact on their relationships on others and on the organizational culture of the school.

Characteristics of Low-Stressed Principals

When asked to describe what a low-stressed principal looked like, respondents identified six unique characteristics and conditions. Respondents spoke about

Statement #1: Elementary School Principals are Low-Stressed

32% of the 22 respondents specifically noted that elementary school principals are the least-stressed principals they had interacted with. It is important to note that of that 32% (7 out of 22), 5 respondents were not elementary school administrators, and instead were middle and high school administrators.

The two elementary administrators who noted that elementary school principals were low-stressed, both were classified in the Low-Stress/High Autonomy domain (LS/HA - 14; LS/HA- 29). Both administrators commented on how little stress existed in their positions. LS/HA -14 commented, "You know, as an elementary principal, there's not much," "coming from an elementary, I have little to no stress, if I was a high school person, I don't know how you would do that. You would have to miss a lot of home things to deal with school. There's no other way to do it" and LS/HA - 29, a male principal at a K-1 building commented, "I know you said not me, but like, I really can't think of any principal, because most buildings aren't configured like this. Most districts don't have a K-1."

The five administrators who noted that elementary school administrators were the least-stressed offered comparisons to their current positions to the problems they perceived that elementary school administrators experience. A male principal at a 9-12 high school (HS/HA - 66) spoke about how he perceived the elementary principalship to be a much easier position. He stated,

> "I think elementary principals don't have the demand of a high school principal, just because, as a high school principal, you're dealing with student drivers, you're dealing with, you know, kids being ignorant, you're dealing with a lot of the extracurricular activities, whether it's cheerleading, the band, um, coaching, um, those elementary principals don't deal with that, those stressors that a high school administrator deals with, so I would say that the elementary principals don't have nearly the stress level as generally secondary administrators."

It is important to note that this particular administrator was the most second-most experienced administrator included in the study (twelve years of administrative experience) and 17.5 years total in education, all of which were at the secondary level.

A 5-6 principal expressed a similar response when asked to describe a low-stressed principal. He commented,

> "I see them typically be in a typically small building. I see them having 200-300 students, in a K-3 or K-4, or even a K-2 arrangement, you know, I don't see a principal that, that is, um, you know, a 5-6, a 5, 6, 7, 8, or in the secondary range, um, in a high, in a district that is, you know, up against the wall with achievement, I don't see any principals in that way that aren't stressed."

This administrator also has no experience in the primary/elementary grades and had instead spent his career working in a middle school arrangement. Another respondent commented about a friend of his who had worked at an elementary school and noted,

> "I have a good friend that is a principal at an elementary school. And, um, not that he doesn't have any stress, but I'd say he's low-stressed, smaller kids, smaller problems, not as much, not as much time after school, not as much time going to different things, um, and he has a good staff behind him too."

Finally, another administrator (HS/LA - 53) at a 7-12 building commented on how the elementary position in his district appeared to be easier but he cautioned that, "where the grass looks greener, but we know when we get in there, it's not necessarily the case. It's work. Work should keep you working."

These responses could possibly indicate a tension between the perceived work expectations of elementary, middle, and high school administrators, and isolating each level by themselves might prove to be more effective in future research on stress on the principalship.

Statement #2: Low-Stressed Principals Appear Friendly

Much like the data reflected that high-stressed principals appeared to be unfriendly to their faculty and staff, the data reflected the opposite; that low-stressed principals frequently appeared to be friendly to their faculty and staff. This is another characteristic that is difficult to prove, because the perception of a friendly administrator might not always be how that administrator specifically feels.

A female high school administrator (HS/HA - 43) spoke extensively throughout her interview of being visible as a part of being a friendly administrator. When asked to describe what a low-stressed administrator looked like to her, she expressed a similar reflection.

> "I think that they pretty much go about their day with a smile on their face, taking time to say hello to their students, taking time to at least be seen either in the morning or the afternoon by their faculty, um, you know, getting, making sure they are seen at the activities and sporting events, basketball games, baseball games, they just seem like they're everywhere for the students and staff."

While visibility might not always correlate with friendliness, she expressed the importance of smiling, conversing with students, and being seen in the morning or afternoon by her faculty on a regular basis.

Another administrator at the middle school level (HS/LA - 38) spoke about his successor who came across as upbeat and friendly to the students, "he just kind of, always smiling, the kids saw him, and he was just kind of like that, mascot almost to the kids, with our younger kids especially, they just loved him, gave him hugs, he was just really a great person." It should be noted that neither of these respondents said that the administrator was friendly, but that they were perceived as friendly by their faculty and staff. A high school administrator (HS/LA - 56) attributed friendliness with the ability to build relationships with staff and make conversations and connections. He noted that these are the types of administrators where,

> "they take time to get to know people, they know their staff so they can, when you start their conversation, they can ask how you're doing, and how's your brother doing, or whatever, and they have those conversations, and use it as a way to make that connection, before they get right into business. Just the things I've noticed in my three years."

Finally, a high school principal in a building with 1700 students (LS/LA - 65) offered this poignant comment about what a low-stressed administrator should look like. "I think, someone who takes their job seriously, and that doesn't take it personally, and um, they, I hate to say this, but they have a good time, they laugh, you know, and you know, one of my first principals I

worked for, they don't cheat themselves." This particular administrator fell into the low-stress domain for the survey, and didn't indicate any major stressors during the interview.

Statement #3: Low-Stressed Principals Appear Organized

Similar to what respondents stated about high-stressed principals appearing to be unorganized, respondents noted that low-stressed principals appeared organized to their faculty and staff. For some respondents, organization was directly related to how an administrator was able to manage their building. In reference to appearing low-stressed, a respondent (LS/HA - 14) stated,

> "Those people come in, they're prepared, they're attending meetings, I see the less stressed people out a lot at meetings, I see them doing things; they know they can leave their building and it's going to be ok, um, the one guy I talked about, keep in mind, I probably run 25 meetings a year for different things, and he can't come to any of them. You know, so these people are out and about, they're able to manage that, they're not worried about whether these buildings are going to fall over."

Having confidence in the management of faculty and staff and in the organization of job responsibilities appears to go hand-in-hand.

Another administrator (LS/LA - 34) spoke of one of their former principals while they served as a vice-principal. They stated,

> "he was meticulous, he'd go to a board meeting, he'd have everything prepared, he knew all of the staff, he wasn't afraid to speak up, he, he took time to recognize staff at lunches, he walked around the school, he never looked like he didn't have something done. He was just anal. But not in the weird way that made you hate him."

Finally, another administrator (HS/LA - 56), noted that organization was also connected to appearing calm and being a good listener. He commented,

> "I said, two things are they're calm, ok, so, regardless of what happens around the building they maintain that composure, stay calm, stay organized, you know, and they digest information, really those are the ones that I've learned, digesting information and not immediately responding. If something happened, they sit there and take their time, they get the information."

Not being reactionary and instead being proactive when a situation occurs was reflected by this particular administrator as a condition of appearing to be organized.

Other Statements: Low-Stressed Principals

There were six other characteristics that were described of administrators exhibiting characteristics of being low-stressed principals. These characteristics included, being effective delegators, their physical appearance, and being close to the retirement age. The ability to delegate was linked to the ability to be organized by a few of the respondents, three of the administrators said they were able to identify a low-stressed principal based on their physical appearance, and two respondents noted these were administrators that were ready to retire from their position.

Summary

Almost half of the respondents, regardless of their stress level or their autonomy and control over their building noted that elementary-aged principals were the least-stressed principals in their positions. The discussion with interviewees noted that secondary school principals perceived elementary school principals as having a much easier position, as one respondent indicated (HS/LA - 53), "the grass looks greener, but we know when we get in there, it's not necessarily the case." The two elementary school principals that indicated that elementary principalships were a less stressful occupation, both were low-stressed with high-autonomy, male, and had 10+ years of administrative experience. For this study, three other elementary administrators were interviewed (two females, one male, all with less experience) and none of those particular administrators acknowledged the elementary job as being less stressful than a secondary position. This could potentially lead to future studies involving the different levels of the principalship and the stressors that each potentially cause.

The term "friendly" as described by the respondents in this study, is a difficult term to define. Friendly could mean appearing nice to faculty, staff, parents, and students, or it could mean being prepared and organized in such a manner where faculty and staff perceive an administrator to being personable. Only one of the interview respondents noted an administrator that was friendly due to relationships they had with students in their building.

Based on this particular set of interviewees, the term "friendly" could also be interchanged with the word "organized." Respondents spoke about organized individuals as prepared and friendly, which could solicit discussion as to whether or not friendly and organized can be considered cohesive. Years of experience was only mentioned once for organization, and was the respondent mentioned the particular principal was so organized that "he'd spend about an hour a day checking his, um, fantasy football games" (LS/LA - 34). Organized leaders differ depending on the culture of the district and the culture of the building, but organization could correlate with less stress in the position.

The ability to delegate is also a personnel-specific question. It should be noted that 13 of the administrators of the 22 interviewed did not have assistant principals in their building (one of the 13 was in the process of hiring an assistant principal). Without having an assistant principal, delegating tasks is something that would be left to the teaching staff. This leads for potential exploration as to whether or not having (or not having) an assistant principal could lead to administrator stress.

Finally, it should be noted that the 22 interview respondents provided 12 specific descriptors that defined a highly-stressed principal, whereas, when asked the exact same question for a low-stressed principal, they were only able to provide 6 specific descriptors. This could indicate the lack of characteristics for low-stressed principals or limited exposure to

administrators that appear to be low-stressed. The median for years of experience for all administrators (n = 69) surveyed in this study was four years of experience, and the mean was 5.64. This indicates a relatively younger administrative staff, which could also contribute to the lack of context to make a connection to identify characteristics of low-stressed principals.

5.4.2 Research Question 2B

As administrators had discussed throughout the interviews conditions that lead to stress and characteristics of high-stressed and low-stressed administrators, this opened discussion toward the goal of determining which particular task that administrators engage in caused the most stress in their position. Each respondent was specifically told to only provide one response and to identify the one thing they considered to cause the most stress in their position. Question #8 from the interview asked, "What single task do you consider to be the most stressful element of being an administrator?" and the corresponding follow-up question (Q #8A) asked administrators "How do you deal with the stress of that particular element? This introduced the notion of coping, which some administrators noted in their responses. Table 19 reflects the responses from all 22 administrators for Question #8.

Table 19: Single-Most Stressful Task of Being an Administrator

High Stress/High Autonomy	
07	"dealing with irate parents."
12	"analyzing data."
24	"the time that it takes to get everything done is the most stressful thing."
42	"how I deal with um, dealing with the teachers as professionals."
43	"dealing with the 1% of parents that it's impossible to deal with."
66	"solving parent concerns."

High Stress/Low Autonomy	
38	"The first thing that came to my mind was scheduling."
53	"meeting your daily objectives of what you want to get accomplished, and I do think that goes back to that time element, not having enough time to get to everything."
55	"dealing with unreasonable parents and sometimes the school board."
56	"the toughest thing to me is evaluating teachers."
57	"you have to have the right answers at also the right times, so you have to really be able to multitask."
69	"dealing with the politics of the position."

Low Stress/High Autonomy	
14	"anytime you say yes to something, you say no to your family."
19	"discipline. And, um, it goes back to, you know, your interactions with those parents and how much support you get."
29	"School board presentations."
58	"making sure that every single student that leaves your school is prepared for the next level."

Low Stress/Low Autonomy	
25	"being overwhelmed with the discipline."
32	"knowing that you can't do everything with your time, I guess."
34	"Ethics."
39	"trying to have everyone's best interest at heart."
45	"when you have to handle a situation with a child that is, um, that comes from that, um, rough household in which you really can't, in terms of, legal issues and law, you really can't help as much as you want."
65	"I think dealing with death."

The following section outlines the responses provided by administrators, stratified by each of the four domains addressed in the study. The focus on this particular section is to examine the administrator's response based on their sub-domain category.

High Stress/High Autonomy

For administrators that were identified as high-stress and high-autonomy, it was hypothesized that these would be administrators that perceived an external threat to their autonomy. As they were considered to be among the higher-stressed respondents but still exhibited considerable autonomy in their positions, these individuals might be concerned with specific conditions that could impact their control over their position.

Administrators identified as high-stressed and high-autonomy reflected external threats to their autonomy in describing their greatest stressors. Their choice of words and descriptors when asked to discuss their stressors might indicate concerns with change. The majority of respondents interviewed described situations that have not yet impacted their position, but had the potential to through change. The use of emotionally charged words such as "dealing," "solving," and "angry" may indicate negative attitudes about certain stressors in their position.

The answers provided by the six respondents reflect the idea of an external threat. Emotionally charged words were used that relate to high-stress and high-autonomy. Of the 22 respondents, four used the word "dealing" when describing the most stressful element of their position, three of which were from this domain. Three of the respondents from the high-stress/high-autonomy domain spoke about challenging parents, one respondent spoke about challenging teachers, and the other two respondents spoke about data and time as the single-most stressful task about being an administrator.

A female K-5 administrator (HS/HA - 07) commented that "dealing with irate parents" was the most stressful task she faced in her position. This particular administrator reflected concerns throughout her interview with parents having control over her position. Throughout her interview, she mentioned parent or parents on three different occasions, and used the word "dealing" before each mention. Also worth noting, later in the interview, she commented, "I'm in a district that has a lot of parents and the parents control a lot." This response might reflect the hypothesis of an individual that feels threatened by parental control impacting the autonomy in her position. It also should be noted that this administrator had taught in a district with less socioeconomic status than the district where she was currently serving as an administrator.

Another administrator (HS/HA - 42), a female, middle school principal in a smaller building with 200 students and 25 teachers also used the term "dealing" when describing her biggest stressor, which for her, was dealing with her teaching staff. This particular administrator noted other stressors involving the teachers which impact her control, noting that she got the majority of her planning and professional development done in the summer when "the teachers are not in the building" and that was when she instituted her changes. This particular respondent was unique in the fact that she was a former teacher in the same building in which she became an administrator (the only one who noted that in their interview) and felt this created a challenging conflict at times. When asked directly about autonomy later in the interview, she noted that once again her teachers gave her the least amount of autonomy in her position, commenting that, "the teachers I just have more difficulty with." This could reflect an administrator that perceives her teaching staff as a direct challenge to the autonomy in her role as a building principal.

Finally, the other administrator (HS/HA - 43) that used the word "dealing" when describing her greatest stressor used it twice throughout her interview, both times to describe the

parents that she encountered in her position. She noted, "dealing with the 1% of parents that it's impossible to deal with" and would later use the word "dealing" to preface the stressors that she believed that parents encountered with their home lives such as "a teenage girl who is hormonal and is crying their eyes out." Her response reflected an understanding toward the stressors that parents experience at home, despite selecting parents as her greatest stressor.

A grade 5-6 administrator (HS/HA - 12) also perceived an external threat to his autonomy, specifically his interaction with data. He recognized data as a significant external threat and lamented the accountability provisions he faced in his position, comparing his accountability (being in two high-stakes testing grades) vs. an elementary school administrator, who faces less accountability provisions. He commented, "And when you have two years of accountability, and in some cases, some of these schools that are K-3, they only have one. Um, it makes it a lot easier and especially now so that they're tying the data into the principal evaluations." When asked at the conclusion of the interview how policymakers could help to make this a low-stressed but challenging occupation, he commented, "I don't know that they can. I mean, um, I mean, I guess you could take away the accountability, um, but that would sure take the fun out of it." His sarcastic nature to answer the question could be an indicator of an external threat to his autonomy, in this case, data-driven decision-making.

A high school administrator (HS/HA - 66) noted that "solving parent concerns" was his greatest stressor in his position. In his interview, he mentioned "parent" or "parents" four separate times, two of which the word "angry" came before "parent" or "parents" and the other responses were noting that the role of the administrator was "reporting to parents" and that "your logic as a building administrator does not, doesn't always make the parent happy." The choice of wording reflects parents as a potential external threat to his autonomy.

The other administrator in this grouping (HS/HA - 24) had no apparent trends in her responses. Her responses were very general, and her direct response to the question did not offer a specific stressor, instead reflecting that the time it took to get everything done was her most stressful task. It should be noted that this particular administrator was brand new in her current position, and had been an administrator previously in a district that she perceived to be "very financially strapped and, um, jobs were, um, sort of hit or miss." Therefore, her relative new relationship with her current position might not have given her enough time to fully target on a particular stressor impacting the autonomy to which she perceived.

High Stress/Low Autonomy

Individuals exhibiting high-stress and low-autonomy might perceive internal threats as their greatest stressor. The concerns about interacting with stakeholders both above and below them in the organizational hierarchy of schools could be a constant stressor or threat to their autonomy. These are individuals that are regularly interacting with stakeholders and perceive a lack of control from multiple directions within their organization. This could result in the beginning stages of a fight or flight syndrome, with individuals expressing either frustration or helplessness due to the stressor.

High-stressed/low-autonomy administrators appear to express concerns with internal threats in their positions both above and below them on their organizational hierarchy. Four of the six respondents from this domain spoke about stressors involving parents, teaching staff, and students, and also noted limited support or challenges from their central administrative staff. Two respondents (HS/LA – 57 and HS/LA – 56), did not specifically identify internal or external stressors, and did not use emotionally charged words during their responses.

The respondent who reflected the greatest perceived lack of control and pressure from stakeholders both above and beyond their position in the school district was a middle school administrator (HS/LA - 38) at a 6-8 building. This particular administrator kept coming back to scheduling throughout the interview, and when he was asked what his greatest stressor was, he selected scheduling. For the duration of the interview, this respondent particularly mentioned either "schedule" or "scheduling" thirteen different occasions, each time noting the frustrations and lack of autonomy that he had over the master schedule. This respondent lamented on how, due to the teacher contract and direction from central administration, that the master schedule for his building could not be released to teachers until early August. He commented, "it's really, every year that I've done the schedule I've thought why are we doing this, why the hell are we waiting so long, and for all of this, and it's just, this is the way the CBA has dictated to us how we're going to do it." This has caused him issues with staffing and hiring that has impacted the direction of the building for the entire school year, with no perceivable changes in the next iteration of the contract. He noted that, "it makes it for a real stressful situation, you kind of want to get it to fit just right, and everything perfectly, you kind of want things to happen that way, you know, and um, at the same time, you're still trying to carry on with all the other things you're doing, duties, deadlines, and whatnot." For this particular administrator, being in the middle of a directive from central administration and backlash from his teaching staff was his greatest stressor, but also reflective of his lack of autonomy.

The politics of school administration were a theme that emerged when speaking to a female high school administrator (HS/LA - 69). For her, the most stressful element of her position was dealing with the politics that comes from being a building principal. This particular administrator had previously served as an assistant principal in a district with highly involved

parents and high socioeconomic wealth, and had transitioned to her first role as a building principal in a similarly structured district. She noted politics from both parents and central administrators as the biggest challenges and stressor that she faced in her position. She noted that she had a particularly challenging school board when she started, but "the tides have changed here" and also commented that, "I think the first year was learning, me learning teachers and the community and my kids, and, um, you know, at this stage, I'm in year, like 3 and a half, because I started toward the end of the school year, um, there is definitely a trust, um, I don't get questioned about decisions that I make." This particular administrator, despite being identified as high-stressed/low-autonomy, felt as though her position had become easier as she gained experienced and learned and understood the culture of the school district.

A high school administrator (HS/LA - 55) offered little commentary or expansion on his biggest stressor, but specifically mentioned "dealing with, um, unreasonable parents and sometimes the school board." He chose not to expand upon his answer, and mentioned that if parents had difficulties with him, "Um, I think, you agree to disagree, and there's always avenues they can take that are above me." This statement could indicate a lack of autonomy in his position.

For another administrator (HS/LA - 53), meeting his daily objectives was his greatest stressor, and the feeling that he did not have enough time to accomplish all of his goals for the day. This administrator did not indicate any pressure from stakeholders either above or below him in any questions that were asked during the interview, but spoke about the tasks of his position as a cause for burnout and lack of time. He provided an example of his previous day and stated,

> "Yesterday, I was in meetings well-past work time here, but at the same time I was burnt out, and didn't accomplish what I wanted to get done, so I went home

> and I did e-mail at home yesterday. I didn't get a chance to check e-mail all day, last night I just walked in and went in and did some e-mail things and prioritized and came in early this morning and accomplished some of those goals that should have been completed yesterday."

This particular administrator noted that no matter what happened in his day, he never felt as though he had enough time, commenting that "There's never enough time to do what you have planned, because unplanned always interferes so no. You never have enough time." While this administrator did not specifically mention a stakeholder, the theme of helplessness was consistent throughout the interview.

Even though two administrators were positioned as high-stress/low-autonomy, their interviews did not reflect the high-stress component. A high school administrator (HS/LA - 57) used language that would appear nonchalant and lackadaisical toward stress during his interview. When expanding upon his greatest stressor, which he identified as "having the right answers at the right times" he noted,

> "You just gotta roll with it, roll with the punches man. You know, stressful times, I get, somebody's got to make a decision, you make it, you know, and if it doesn't work, you gotta be able to say it didn't work and try things different next time, but you have to take input from people too, but, a lot of the times, in the stressful moment like that, you just have to make the decision and go with it, and you know, be done. Move forward."

When asked at the conclusion of the interview how to make the position less stressful, he responded, "Never going to happen, um, you got what you got." His comments reflect low-autonomy, but not high-stress, as reported in the survey.

The final administrator in the high-stress, low-autonomy domain (HS/LA - 56) used words that did not reflect a high amount of stress in his position. Specifically he found conducting the new teacher evaluation system and the data involved in it to be the most stressful element of his position, but did not place blame or fault on the teachers, central administration, or any state or national agency, and spoke about a speaker from the Principal's Academy that

suggested depersonalizing the teacher evaluation system. He noted, "And you want to focus on, let's talk about that idea, not the way that you deliver that idea. And that was huge advice, I try to do that with all of my teacher evaluations." This administrator noted the time consuming nature of the position, but offered solutions for making the position less time consuming and stressful.

Low Stress/High Autonomy

Individuals who display characteristics of low-stress and high-autonomy could be individuals who see issues impacting their position as more of an annoyance than a threat. Theoretically, as these are low-stressed administrators that perceive a considerable amount of control in their position, these are individuals who would see stressors as peripheral and minor to their daily operations in their role.

The four administrators from the low-stressed/high-autonomy domain viewed stressors as annoyances and distractors from the everyday responsibilities of their positions. While each respondent noted a different stressor (school board presentations, family pressures, discipline and interactions with parents, and future trajectories of students), their descriptions indicated the stressors as having minimal impact on the obligations of their positions.

For the four individuals who identified in this particular domain, there appeared to be no consistent patterns to the stressor they identified as their biggest stressor in their position. The following reflections from these administrators appear more general than the responses given from respondents from other subgroups.

One administrator (HS/LA - 14) indicated that his stress was more driven by external factors, meaning his work and his family obligations. When asked about his largest stressor, he noted that, "anytime you say yes to something, you say no to your family." This was an

administrator that indicated throughout the interview that he felt a very limited amount of stress in his position ("You know, as an elementary principal, there's not much!") and viewed his external life as more stressful than his position.

Another administrator (LS/HA - 29) identified school board presentations as the most stressful element of his position, and reflected on the presentations being an annoyance more than a help. He commented, "Because school boards are these political things that I don't care to be involved with" when discussing how school board presentations are stressful, and recounted a story from when he started as an administrator. Early in his career, he had lost one of his administrative assistants due to financial constraints at the district. When asked at a school board meeting if there was anything he needed, he told the board that he would like his secretary back. He commented that, "after the meeting, I got, um, another school board member took me aside and said don't ever answer a question like that honestly ever again." This administrator noted that he learned that the question was meant not as a means to help him in his position, but to pit two school board members against each other, and the lesson for future interactions was that, "I say, you know what, if I ever need anything, I go right to whoever my direct supervisor is, it has changed over time, sometimes it's the assistant, sometimes it's the curriculum director, sometimes it's the superintendent, but I just say I got to that person and I get whatever I need, thank you." This interaction reflects annoyance more so than stress, which corresponds with the hypothesis on low-stressed, high-autonomy administrators.

The only high school administrator (LS/HA - 58) to identify in the low-stress/high-autonomy quadrant noted his biggest stressors was, "making sure that every single student that leaves your school is prepared for the next level." This was an administrator who was grateful that he was at a high-performing, high-socioeconomic district, and didn't reflect many stressors

in his positions. He commented, "I'm fortunate. I'm at *district name removed*. We need to make sure that we're recognizing the achievements that are made, we're making sure that the students are aware of it, the teachers are aware of it, and we have done, you know, exceptionally well on our AP exams, this well on our SAT's, our students have gone off to these colleges." He elaborated about different clubs that had gone on to national competitions, and also was one of the only respondents that noted the advantages of Common Core and the teacher evaluation system.

Finally, the last administrator (LS/HA - 19) in this domain noted discipline had changed over the years, and that he believed the parent support had changed from when he first started his career in education. He noted that with parent interactions, sometimes he prepares for the worst, but personally, "in keeping a good perspective on things and, you know, there's not a whole lot of way to deal with that stress. You know, it is what it is, it's just there." This administrator seemed nonchalant, and was more reflective on problems with administration as a profession, noting a challenge with administrator training and challenges with administrative interns working over the summer. In terms of his position, he did not any stressors or issues of control, and instead spoke about challenges for future school administrators.

Low Stress/Low Autonomy

Individuals that are low stress and low autonomy might also experience the fight or flight syndrome similar to administrators in the high-stress/low-autonomy domain, and could have already submitted to the "flight" characteristic. Potentially, these are administrators that are overwhelmed in their position, and could possibly respond when asked to reflect on stress in a fatalistic way.

Finally, administrators in the low-stress/low-autonomy domain appeared passive and indifferent in terms of stressors in their positions. Their responses indicated lack of concerns with the stressors and might indicate a resigned attitude toward the challenges and difficulties of school administration.

When prompted for the most stressful situation as an administrator, one respondent (LS/LA - 65) noted, "I think, dealing with death." When asked for clarification, he noted that it could be any kind of death, student, teacher, or parent. This respondent was the only administrator in any domain interview that even mentioned death as a stressor or something they didn't have control over (the word "death" did not occur once in the 21 other interviews), however, this particular administrator, had a unique perspective on his biggest stressor. When asked how he deals with this particular element he noted that, "try to move on as quickly as possible and, you know, and then, you know, try to deal with it, talk to my wife, you know, sit down, talk to her, she's an educator as well, so she knows what it's about." This response could also be symbolic, as his first reaction to his coping mechanism for an emotionally charged school situation is external, and not internally based in his school.

It should also be worth noting that this was the most experienced administrator out of any of the respondents (survey respondents included) with 21 total years of administrative experience and 31 total years of experience in education. Also noteworthy was the first few minutes of this administrator's interview. When asked to speak about his background in education, this particular administrator had already expressed regrets, a possible indicator of someone regretting the particular choices they made. This administrator noted his first ten years of teaching was in Catholic education and he would not be able to collect a full pension, he commented, "one of the biggest mistakes was that I stayed in Catholic education because I cry every time I get a

retirement check. I'm going to lose about 30% of it. I'll be 62 when I retire and I'll only have 23 years in." Coupled with his unique response to his biggest stressor, this particular respondent indicates having signs of resignation in the duties and responsibilities in his position.

While this particular administrator had a lot to say regarding the most stressful element, another respondent, (LS/LA - 34) only offered the word "ethics" when asked what the most stressful task in his position was. When asked how he dealt with the stress of being ethical, he commented, "Keep my chin up and try to stick with the codebook in everything that I do with teachers, kids, parents, I treat them like my own freaking family, and I know, and I don't think I have a weird family. But ethics, I keep my chin up and stay true to my fidelity. With following the truth and the data, staying ethical regardless of the consequences." This was another administrator that noted his family as a form of coping.

Also noteworthy in this administrator's responses was that he admitted to having who he thought was an unethical administrator above him previously, and it had been a stressor that he had dealt with up until recently. This might have impacted his response of "ethics" for his stressor and also the fact that he mentioned "ethics" or some derivation of the word on nine separate instances during his interview.

The third administrator from this domain (LS/LA - 32) also was nonchalant in his response to the most stressful element of his position. When asked, he stated, "I would say knowing that you can't do everything with your time, I guess. And just doing what you can and hoping that the chips fall when they fall." The addition of "I guess" and "hoping" are words that could indicate a laissez faire attitude towards his position, which was consistent through other responses throughout the interview. For example, when asked which stakeholder took up the most amount of time in his position, he responded, "Um, the teachers, I believe. Yeah. Um, I

don't know" before completing his response for that particular question. This administrator had also indicated earlier in the interview that he had never sought out an administrative position, and was essentially pulled in by his principal to be a "future administrator" and just started taking on duties such as summer school, evening extracurriculars, and alternative schooling, which led him down the path of becoming an administrator.

An administrator in a 7-12 building (LS/LA - 45) spoke about the challenges of dealing with legal issues, which are an uncontrollable necessity of school administration. He commented, "that's what is most, um, not necessarily stressful, but that's what's most bothersome because it's so easy to do, and you can't do it because of law or legal issues, but it's probably the child's that are in the most need that bother me the most." He further extrapolated by noting that when he couldn't control those situations in the building, he found that by building community partnerships and staying active in the community was his outlet. He noted, "I try to be involved with activities outside of school, so again, I think it's just being involved, either, um with the community or just involved yourself, making sure that you're active making sure that you're doing things outside the building." While this might indicate this particular administrator is resigned to issues that he is unable to control, he also finds an outlet in working with the community to help those that he may not be able to help in his position.

Similarly, a middle school administrator (LS/LA - 38) noted the importance of putting students first and keeping their best interests at heart. She noted that self-reassurance was a way for her to know that she was making a correct decision that benefitted students, saying,

> "I do a lot of, you know, just self-reassurance, like, no, this is fine, and I can put up with a little bit of hot water a little bit of heat from maybe the teachers or maybe whoever, and by knowing I have a clear conscious in my decision, but otherwise, I don't know if this is what you're going for, but I mean, as far as stress relievers, I run. I run everyday. To me, that's like therapy."

She also indicated this helped her to "just spend time with my kids and not worry about, you know, hashing it out again," which is another administrator resorting to an external coping mechanism to deal with her stressors.

Finally, a 7-12 administrator (LS/LA - 25) noted that his biggest stressor was "being overwhelmed with the discipline" and that "I think that the discipline is the biggest negative in my mind, but it's a must." This particular administrator used the term "overwhelmed" to describe his experience with discipline, but it should be noted at the time of the interview, this administrator was in the process of bringing a new assistant principal into his building to help with the discipline. Nevertheless, he still described discipline as a negative and overwhelming.

Summary

Both the direct responses to the question of the task that caused the most stress and the indirect descriptors of that task elicited charged responses from respondents. Administrators from all four domains had unique responses to the question; however, tone, terminology, and descriptors may indicate consistency among members of each subgrouping.

Overall, the responses for this particular research question reflect characteristics aligned with each of the respective domains utilized in this study. Although a few respondents did not directly align with distinguishable characteristics, for the most part, responses coincided with identifiers for each domain.

5.5 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

The purpose of research questions 3 and 3a were to determine the extent to which administrators feel as though they experience both autonomy and control in their position.

Research question 3 was to provide a general overview of the conditions to which administrators felt as though they had autonomy and control over and the conditions to which they do not. This was addressed both as a part of the survey (n = 69) and the interview (n = 22). Table 9 provides a rank-order list of all thirty tasks that administrators self-reported were considered to be the most stressful tasks in their position. Table 20 identifies the five tasks from the survey that administrators reported the least amount of autonomy and control and the five tasks that administrators reported the most amount of autonomy and control.

Table 20: Five Tasks with the Greatest and Least Amount of Autonomy and Control as Indicated by Respondents

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items	*N*	Category	Mean	SD	Median	Range
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	69	**2**	3.22	1.1404	3	1 - 5
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	69	**2**	3.13	1.0203	3	1 - 5
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	69	**2**	3.01	1.5369	3	1 - 5
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	69	**1**	2.93	1.0810	3	1 - 5
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	69	**5**	2.90	1.1689	3	1 - 5
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	69	**3**	1.28	0.6785	1	1 - 5
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	69	**4**	1.28	0.5075	1	1 - 3
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	69	**3**	1.26	0.5289	1	1 - 4
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	69	**3**	1.17	0.6128	1	1 - 5
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	69	**3**	1.13	0.4140	1	1 - 3

As a reminder, the column entitled "category" classifies the tasks into different categories:

Category #1: Instructional Responsibilities

Category #2: Organizational Responsibilities

Category #3: Internal Relations and Social Responsibilities

Category #4: External Relations and Social Responsibilities

Category #5: Administrative and Building Responsibilities

For this particular research question, it should be noted that the top three tasks in which administrators reported through the survey having the least amount of autonomy and control were organizational responsibilities. **Category #2**; organizational responsibilities consists only of four different tasks, three of which were the top three areas in which administrators reported not having autonomy and control. The other task in that category, "Attending and/or presenting at meetings" was ranked 16th out of 30 through the survey, and was 0.10 below the mean of 2.04 for reported autonomy and control tasks. The mean for **Category #2**: Organizational Responsibilities is 2.83, which is almost a full point above the mean response for overall autonomy and control.

The data reflects an inverse trend with **Category #3**: Internal Relations and Social Responsibilities. Six tasks were classified in this category, four of which respondents deemed to be the areas in which they had the most autonomy in control. Two other tasks were included in this category, "Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)," which was ranked 22nd out of 30 through the survey, and was 0.58 below the mean of 2.04 for reported autonomy and control tasks, and "Meeting and working with non-instructional staff," which was ranked 25th out of 30 through the survey, and was 0.75 below the mean of 2.04 for reported autonomy and control tasks. The mean for **Category #3**: Internal Relations and Social Responsibilities is 1.27, which is nearly a full point below the mean response for overall autonomy and control.

The other three categories, Instructional Responsibilities (0.08 below the mean), External Relations and Social Responsibilities (0.10 above the mean), and Administrative and Building Responsibilities (0.32 above the mean), were all very close to the mean for autonomy and control among respondents.

The interview was designed for themes to emerge throughout all questions reflecting upon to what extent administrators feel as though they have autonomy and control in their positions. Two specific questions, *#11 Have you gained any control and authority in this position from when you first started? If so, what impact has this had on your position?* and *#13 What stakeholder or stakeholders do you believe to give you the least amount of autonomy in your position?* directly prompted administrators to reflect on the autonomy and control they experience in their position. The interview questions focused specifically on stakeholders as conditions for autonomy and control, while the survey was directed toward tasks. This, connected with the results from the survey, provided for responses directed toward both stakeholders and tasks.

Perceptions of gaining control and authority from interviews

When prompted to address the notion of whether or not they gained control and authority in their positions, respondents offered diverse answers based on their experiences. Four respondents (HS/HA - 07, HS/LA - 57, LS/LA - 39, LS/LA - 65) felt as though they gained no control and authority in their positions. HS/HA - 07 noted that the position is the same; she manages teachers, staff, and communicates with families, and doesn't imagine that changing any time soon, and HS/LA - 57 commented that, "it's the same throughout, I've been in the same position, this is my 4th year at the school, it's been the same." LS/LA - 39 and LS/LA - 65 did not offer any additional comments or feedback for this particular question.

Table 21 depicts the responses from administrators who noted they felt they had gained control and authority in their positions. This reflects the 18 administrators that responded to this particular question. Because a number of these quotes were over 200 characters long, their responses have been paraphrased to better help with classification of answers.

Table 21: Administrator Responses for Gaining Authority in their Positions

High Stress/High Autonomy	
12	went from being the leader of a building to the leader of a district
24	more respect from parents and teachers
42	no longer a peer, now a supervisor
43	no longer a peer, now a supervisor
66	feel as though the requirements of the position are understood better

High Stress/Low Autonomy	
38	moved up in building; former AP, went to P, much more leadership and professional development
53	learned the people better in the building
55	learned the people better in the building
56	split duties and trusted other administrators more, focused much more on curriculum
69	learned the people better in the building

Low Stress/High Autonomy	
14	gained a positive reputation throughout the school district
19	have to contact the superintendent less
29	gained power and trust **Quote:** "there is something to be said for longevity"
58	respect from other administrators

Low Stress/Low Autonomy	
25	learned the culture of the school district
32	gained respect and trust
34	more control over teachers and staff
45	an increased amount of respect from all district stakeholders

Their interview responses reflected scenarios on their personal experiences, and not one respondent offered linkage to how this might help prepare them for a future position or beyond their current position. This is similar to the finding from Johnson and Kruse (2012), who believed that "the leader in the field is preoccupied with immediate problems of practice at lower levels of abstraction in his or her specific organization" (p. xii). This made it extremely difficult to code for consistent themes from this question, as most respondents spoke of their own individual journeys in their position. Only two consistent themes emerged from more than two

respondents, that of "being a peer and no longer a supervisor/moving up from assistant principal to principal" and the idea of "better learning the people in the building."

Internal promotion impacting autonomy and control

It should come as no surprise that individuals who were promoted internally would be able to describe their experiences and changes to their perceived level of autonomy and control. One of the findings from Russell and Sabina (2014) was that internal candidates could have the ability to make an impact faster for an organization than an external candidate. In these three promotions, two of the three went from faculty positions to the principalship (one was a teacher, the other a guidance counselor) and the other went from an assistant principalship to the principalship. These three individuals were the only respondents of the entire 22 interviewed who were promoted internally within a school district. One individual (LS/HA - 19) had previously served as an elementary school principal and a middle school principal in the same district and had transitioned to the high school principal position, however, this could be construed as a lateral move more so than a direct promotion.

A female administrator (HS/HA – 42) who had no previous teaching experience. She had five years of experience as a school guidance counselor and worked in both the elementary and secondary schools as a guidance counselor for her particular district. Prior to her accepting her position as the middle school principal, the role did not exist in her school district. A secondary school principal handled both the middle and high school, however, when the school board determined that there was a need for separate secondary principals, she transitioned into the role as middle school principal. Her response in terms of gaining control and autonomy could reflect the challenge of internal promotion:

> "I went from a position where I was a co-worker with most of these teachers, um, moved into a position that was not there pretty much, the middle school was

> pretty much all on its own, because the high school principal, he had to spend so much time, um, in the high school area, so he set up the teams in the middle school and they did a lot of stuff on their own, made their schedules and that kind of thing, um, so I told everybody that I would never say whether I improved the position or not until after the third year, and um, it took at least those three years to, um, hammer out that, you know what, there is a principal here now, um, I'm no longer just a peer, um, and a co-worker, you know, I am your supervisor, I do make the final decisions, I will listen to you, I want to work with you as a teammate, and you know, you went through your honeymoon period and everyone's so excited, then year 2, everybody hates you, then year 3, everybody starts to get it, this is how it is, and you know, by this fourth and fifth year, things are just really kind of settled down and I feel like, I finally do have some power and control of the situations."

This response might indicate a number of internal factors that would cause the respondent to reflect changes in their perceptions of autonomy and control. First, while the promotion was an internal promotion, it was also a newly created position, which had not previously existed. Also, according to the respondent, the teaching staff was primarily autonomous in their positions prior to the position being created, as the secondary principal was dealing with high school challenges and concerns. Finally, it should be noted that this particular respondent may still have challenges from her teaching staff, as she noted that her teachers were her biggest cause of stress in her position. This response may indicate a challenge transitioning from a role as a peer to the role of a supervisor.

The other internal promotion came from an individual (HS/LA - 38) who moved from assistant principal to principal in his building, with a year appointment in another district in between. His promotion was unique in the fact that he had served as an assistant principal in the building, left and went to another district for a year to serve as a building principal, and then returned to the district as a building principal. He noted a change in going from a disciplinarian to educational leadership. He commented, "any disciplinary issues, I would always deal with that and keep that off the building principal's table or desk, and then, as I moved into the head principal position, it was more, it was a little bit, a little bit more leadership driven, um, excuse

me, educational leadership driven, um, I was responsible for, um, some professional development." This particular respondent did not directly mention any changes in his interaction with his teaching staff or with central administration.

Learning the people in the building better

The only other response that solicited at least three similar responses was the notion of respondents learning the people in the building better as they gained control and authority in their position. Interestingly enough, this particular response only came from individuals who fell into the high stress/low autonomy domain.

A respondent (HS/LA - 53) spoke about learning the people in his building in terms of establishing positive relationships and trust. He stated,

> "you come into a position and people need to learn you as you need to learn them, and it's building that trusting relationship. Once you have that trust and everybody knows, one, you're going to make the decisions that are in the best interests of everybody, particularly, putting students first and foremost, people see where you're coming from and once you establish that trust, things become, I don't want to say easier, but they understand why you're doing things and it's easier to get them to buy in and get them to follow you"

This response echoed the sentiments of another respondent (HS/LA - 69) who also spoke about learning people and learning the culture of the building. She commented,

> "I think the first year was learning, me learning teachers and the community and my kids, and, um, you know, at this stage, I'm in year, like 3 and a half, because I started toward the end of the school year, um, there is definitely a trust, um, I don't get questioned about decisions that I make, people know where I'm coming from, something simple like discipline, prior to me getting here, um, a student caught with drugs and alcohol, there was not consistent discipline, even though the board policy said there should be."

These responses show the importance of not only taking the time to know the teachers and staff in the school district, but also the students and the community as well.

Summary of perceptions of gaining control and authority from interviews

Because of the individualized levels of abstraction from respondents and unique experiences from each of their organizations, it was extremely difficult to categorize and classify responses related to this question. Theoretically, this seemed like a great question, but the inconclusive nature of the responses caused a challenge with consistent analysis. With the exception of the three individuals who were internally promoted in their building and the three individuals that were able to concretely describe how they learned the personalities of people in the building, no consistency existed in the responses for this question. It is possible that the question could be better addressed in future studies as a quantitative question or behavioral interview question where a scenario is presented to respondents.

After addressing the challenge of consistency, the three individuals who were promoted internally offered a unique perspective that may better inform future research or practice. It could be significant that all three of the respondents that were promoted internally noted their internal promotions as their response for gaining authority and control. However, with such a limited sample size, this would require additional research and a targeted population of internally promoted candidates.

What stakeholder provides the least amount of autonomy in your position?

Another interview question that supported research question 3 was asking administrators which stakeholder affiliated with their position provided them with the least amount of autonomy. This question solicited responses from all 22 interview participants, with six unique responses directly attached to a school district. Four respondents (HS/HA - 24, HS/HA - 66, HS/LA - 56, and LS/HA - 14) claimed that no stakeholders provide them with a lack of autonomy. Only one of these four respondents was in the high-stress, low-autonomy group.

This respondent, when prompted to explain, noted that he felt as though he had no autonomy in his previous position, which was as an athletic director, and transitioning into an administrative role actually gave him more autonomy. This inconsistency with his survey responses could be the result of a residual effect from his prior position as an athletic director.

Two other administrators offered responses that were not consistent with the other respondents. HS/LA - 53 could not answer the question and said that "it changes daily," and LS/LA - 32 offered a completely different responses and said "my wife." When prompted, he stated, "I would say my family, um, they stick me to a schedule, and I just kind of follow that schedule, balance personal time and family time and when it comes to the professional world." This was a very unique response to this particular question, and thus was not included in the overall sample. Table 22 reflects the responses from the sixteen administrators that offered a particular stakeholder affiliated with a school district.

Table 22: Stakeholder Causing Least Amount of Autonomy in Position

High Stress/High Autonomy	
07	central administration
12	parents
42	teachers
43	parents and central administration

Low Stress/High Autonomy	
19	state board of education
29	central administration
58	state board of education

High Stress/Low Autonomy	
38	parents (specifically parents of students with special needs)
55	school board
57	students
69	school board

Low Stress/Low Autonomy	
25	parents
34	school board
39	school board
45	school board
65	state board of education

The responses to this interview question, much like the responses to the interview question asking respondents to reflect upon whether or not they gained control in their positions, also offered individualized levels of abstraction in their responses for this question. Two subgroups, the low-stress/high-autonomy subgroup, and the low-stress/low-autonomy subgroup, had over 50% of the respondents in the domain respond with a specific stakeholder or stakeholders. In the case of the low-stress/high-autonomy subgroup, the state board of education was the stakeholder in which respondents felt as though offered them the least amount of autonomy in their positions, where in the case of the low-stress/low-autonomy subgroup, the

majority of the respondents credited the school board as the group that provided them with the least amount of autonomy in their positions. Additionally, 50% of the respondents in the high-stress/low-autonomy subgroup also chose their school boards as the subgroup that caused them to have the least amount of autonomy in their positions.

Lack of Autonomy Due to School Board Influence

As noted above, the majority of the low-stress/low-autonomy subgroup identified their school boards as the stakeholders that presented them with the least amount of autonomy in their positions. In addition, 5 out of the 9 total respondents classified in the low-autonomy subgroup (55%) noted the school board as causing them to have the least amount of autonomy in their positions. Two of the respondents (HS/LA - 55 and LS/LA - 45) expanded on their responses and noted that it was more of a challenge with chain of command and micromanagement than anything else. HS/LA - 55 commented, "Sometimes there's a group that wants to micromanage you. Um, you know, to me, there should be, you know, I come from the military, there's a definite chain of command, and, um, sometimes we don't always have that, or it's not always honored the way it should be. People are allowed to skip different steps and go to different people, get things done in different ways." This was similar to a response provided by LS/LA - 45. When asked to expand upon this, he explained that he worked for a very hands-on superintendent that didn't let the issues get to the school board, but the superintendent would control all aspects of his position to prevent school board interference. When directly explained how the school board impacted his autonomy, he responded, "if there are any issues, they don't get as far as the, um, as far as to the board, so a lot of the times, I only see for the board or hear for the board on board meeting nights." His response reflects a more preventative approach from his superintendent to prevent the school board from having control. The other three respondents

who selected the school board did not expand on their responses, only noting their influence as the stakeholders that cause them the least amount of autonomy in their position.

Lack of Autonomy Due to the State Board of Education

The other stakeholder which elicited the response of over half of one the subgroups was lack of autonomy due to the state board of education. Two administrators in the low-stress/high-autonomy subgroup and one administrator in the low-stress/low-autonomy subgroup reflected on ways in which the state board of education impacted their autonomy in their position. One respondent, a male high school administrator (LS/HA - 58), spoke about the challenges with state control and how it impacts him in his position. He commented,

> "I guess if I have to pick one, it would have to be the state, the reason being, just because some of the recent initiatives, and dictates they have and some of that even comes from the government obviously, we lose some of the control that they would want, even with that said, we're in a good position where we're still able to have the majority of control and do things the way they need to be done."

The other respondent from this domain (LS/HA - 19) described the state as a top-down hierarchy that directly impacted his superintendent, and thus impacted him in his position. He noted,

> "if they're making decisions around budget and state allocations of funds, that would be helpful, I think that, having the ability to have local control and have the financial support that you need to make it work, I mean, that would be very helpful, I mean, then in turn, to how it trickles down to the building level, I can provide the best things for my students, the best types, whether it's technology, professional development for my staff, you know, having that, and I would say if it wasn't budget, it would be around testing, but that's not going to go away, so, you know."

His response demonstrated the notion of top-down control, discussing the trickle-down effect of state control to his building.

The other respondent selecting the state board of education (LS/LA - 65) spoke about the positive support that he received from his superintendent and school board, but also noted that they were at the mercy of the directives determined by the state.

Lack of autonomy due to other stakeholders

Besides local school boards and the state board of education, respondents discussed four other stakeholders that impacted their autonomy. Three respondents spoke about central administration, three other respondents spoke about parents, one respondent selected teachers, and one other respondent chose students. These administrators presented responses that reflect their own individual conditions, which may or may not extend across conditions that other school administrators face.

The three respondents who selected central administration were all positioned in the high-autonomy subgroups. HS/HA - 07 noted that she was a building principal in a bigger district, and being in a larger school district meant that central administration had more control over her daily activities. HS/HA - 43 also responded with central administration, but noted that it could be because her district was in a contract year, and that it normally varies. Finally, LS/HA - 29 spoke about the challenges that he faced in his building with central office consistency. He described a number of situations including STAR Testing, Jeans Day, and scheduling that he felt should be handled by central administration but instead were left in the hands of the building principals, which caused conflicts among the principals. He noted his biggest challenge was, "the inconsistency on what's going to be and who's going to be, who's making decisions and whether or not it's going to be consistent across the district or across buildings" caused the least amount of autonomy in his position.

The respondents who spoke about parents were representative of three of the subgroups, with one respondent (HS/LA - 38) specifically mentioning a population of over 20% of the students in his building with IEP's and that the parents of these students caused him to have the least amount of autonomy in his position. He noted, "every now and again you'll get a case where it's my insensitivity and there's advocates and this person from this agency is there, and you'll have about 19 people sitting around a table for a meeting." He continued to speak about how this was also his most time consuming issue in his position as well.

One respondent (HS/LA - 57) mentioned that students offered him the least amount of autonomy in his position. This particular respondent took a ten second pause when asked "what stakeholder or stakeholders do you believe to give you the least amount of autonomy in your position?" and responded with "I don't know, I mean, um, I have to go back to the kids too!" Based on the response and the context from the response, it is possible the respondent did not know what "autonomy" was, and chose to answer the question with a response to move the interview forward.

Only one respondent (HS/HA - 42) mentioned their teaching staff as providing them with the least amount of autonomy in their position. This respondent also stumbled to come up with a response, and appeared to settle on her teaching staff to answer the interview question. She commented, "I just find that, like I said, I just find that the, the, for me, I expect, I just look at the parents, even the most difficult parents, and I'll say, well they love their kids, they love their child, but the teachers I just have more difficulty with." This respondent had spoken earlier in the interview about the challenges that she faced from being a peer to now becoming a building principal in the same building, so it may be possible this influenced her response.

Summary

This particular interview question did not appear to show consistent patterns from respondents. A number of causes could be the case for this apparent lack of consistency. In the case of the five respondents who chose the school board, these were individuals who were classified as part of the low-autonomy subgroup who directly credit their lack of autonomy to school board influence. However, three of these respondents noted that school board influence changes and that they have worked for boards that have less control, so this could be just a condition of a current school board in place and might not change over time. Also worth noting are the four respondents that chose the state board of education as the stakeholder that caused them the least amount of autonomy in their positions. Two of the respondents were categorized as low-stress/high-autonomy, and it may be possible they chose the state board of education, as other stakeholders in their building or in their district give them the freedom to make decisions as they need.

It must be mentioned that there were additional responses that were highly challenging to classify. One administrator (LS/LA – 32) discussed how the control at his district comes from his wife, who is a stay-at-home wife with his children. He felt as though that he had the freedom to do whatever he wanted in his building, but his wife and family keep him in check when he does too much. The administrator (HS/HA – 42) who noted that her teachers gave her the least amount of autonomy was a former guidance counselor in the building that had never taught in a classroom prior to becoming a building principal. Earlier in the interview she noted challenges with the new teacher evaluation system, which might be a condition that impacts the autonomy she has in her position. Finally, one administrator credited the students as providing him with the least amount of autonomy in his position. This administrator spoke about dealing with

student affairs and discipline as taking up the majority of time in his position, which might impact his perception of students providing him with the least amount of autonomy in this position.

The information from the survey and from the interview respondents reflective on this research question appears inconclusive, however, there are opportunities for further exploration with this data. A possible change to this question would be to ask participants what the term autonomy means to them before asking them to identify the task in which they feel the least amount of autonomy. As a number of respondents struggled with this question and either paused before responding, and some responded they had all the autonomy they needed in their positions. This could also be indicative of not wanting to respond to a question that targets another stakeholder that impacts them in their position. Despite guarantees of anonymity, some individuals might still feel uncomfortable responding to this question, because the stakeholders that cause them the least amount of autonomy have a direct impact on their position.

Also, this interview question had responses similar to the previous interview question where individuals were asked if they had gained control in their positions. One of the more interesting scenarios were presented by the respondents who were promoted internally and the challenges they faced in becoming a leader in their school district. As this particular population of the total sample is small (13.6%), their experiences may be inconclusive in terms of amount of autonomy and control. However, this opens up a possibility for future study looking at administrators that were promoted internally and the challenges they faced with autonomy and control in their positions.

5.5.1 Research Question 3A

Research question 3A was included on the study to analyze if there were any demographic variables that would impact the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experienced in their position. One of the biggest challenges was determining the building level (elementary, middle, or high school) of which administrators served. In the state of Pennsylvania, the teacher certification model changed in 2012 to a new alignment for elementary and middle school. Pennsylvania's alignment is now Pre-Kindergarten through 4th grade for elementary/early childhood, 5th grade through 8th grade for middle school, and 9th grade through 12th grade for high school. Because the certification change was recent, many schools have not realigned to meet the current certification model, and have remained with K through 5th or K through 6th for elementary/early childhood, and 6th through 8th or 7th and 8th for middle school. Because of this, a total of 11 different building arrangements were noted from survey respondents, making it nearly impossible to stratify building configuration as a demographic characteristic of significance.

Gender of respondents, building size managed by respondents, assistant principals in the building, and years of administrative experience were each stratified with the survey responses for autonomy and control to determine whether or not any of the demographic traits identified in the survey. It is important to note that the total population of survey respondents (n = 69) were used to test for statistical significance for this research question.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also conducted to evaluate the relationships across autonomy and control and gender, years of experience, building size (number of students in the building), and number of assistant principals in each respondent's building. The means of respondents were stratified with each variable to test for significance. In

each ANOVA test, the alpha coefficient used to test for significance was 0.05. The findings of the variance analysis are presented on the proceeding tables.

Gender of Respondent

The following table represents the responses from the autonomy and control section of the survey stratified by gender. The total sample for the survey was n = 69, with 45 males and 24 females surveyed. The table (23) presented on the preceding pages show the results of ANOVA testing. An additional table showing mean, standard deviation, and median classified by gender is provided in the appendix as **Appendix E**.

Table 23: ANOVA: Single Factor-Gender

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
Male	45	93.86667	2.085926	0.253055
Female	24	46.76667	1.948611	0.187921

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	0.295127	1	0.295127	1.279294	0.262063	3.984049
Within Groups	15.4566	67	0.230695			
Total	**15.75172**	**68**				

Appendix E details comparisons when data was stratified by gender related to autonomy and control. Mean, standard deviation, median, and ANOVA show relatively little variance in responses by gender. When comparing the mean averages for autonomy, males are slightly above the average (reporting less autonomy and control) and females are slightly below the average of total respondents. Designing and developing curriculum was the most significant task in which variation existed by gender, in which male respondents reported less autonomy than

female respondents. ANOVA testing (with an alpha level of .05) shows that the test for statistical significance [F (1, 67) = 1.28, p > .01] was not met, indicating that when stratified by gender, this particular sample did not represent a significant difference for autonomy and control. An F-critical value of 3.98 is greater than the F-value of 1.28, meaning that the null hypothesis for this sample is accepted and one-way analysis shows no significance.

Building Size – Number of Students in Building

There were differences in the building sizes that were managed by the administrators that were surveyed in this study. The smallest building in the study was a building with 65 students (the students in the building were allowed to finish in the building before the building was closed and the elementary schools in this particular district were consolidated) and the largest building with 1700 students. Because of the large range of student population included in the sample, exploring whether or not building size was statistically significant was worthy of exploration. Below, the number of respondents in each domain is presented.

Building Size (Number of Students in Building)		
65 - 200	5	7.2%
201 - 399	14	20.3%
400 - 599	20	29.0%
600 - 799	13	18.8%
800 - 999	5	7.2%
1000 or More	12	17.4%

The table (**23**) presented on the preceding page shows the results of ANOVA testing. An additional table showing mean, standard deviation, and median classified by building size is provided in the appendix as **Appendix F**.

Table 24: ANOVA: Single Factor – Building Size (Number of Students in Building)

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
65-200	5	8.466667	1.693333	0.023556
201-399	14	27.7	1.978571	0.215317
400-599	20	38.66667	1.933333	0.313333
600-799	13	27.33333	2.102564	0.07916
800-999	5	11.06667	2.213333	0.359222
1000 and up	12	27.4	2.283333	0.247778

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	1.792682	5	0.358536	1.618147	0.16822	2.360684
Within Groups	13.95904	63	0.221572			
Total	**15.75172**	**68**				

When examining autonomy and control based on building size, no significance existed through ANOVA testing. ANOVA testing (with an alpha level of .05) shows that the test for statistical significance [$F(5, 63) = 1.62$, $p > .01$] was not met, indicating that when stratified by building size, this particular sample did not represent a significant difference for autonomy and control. An F-critical value of 2.36 is greater than the F-value of 1.61, meaning that the null hypothesis for this sample is accepted and one-way analysis shows no significance. When examining variance between mean, a linear trend of reduced autonomy appears as the building size increases. The mean for building size of 600-799 students, 800-999 students, and 1000 or more students were above the mean, whereas the building size for 65-200 students, 201-399 students, and 400-599 students were all below the mean. Further testing with this sample would be useful to determine if autonomy and control is reduced as building size increases, although the ANOVA for this particular sample reported no statistical significance.

Number of Assistant Principals in Building

One of the more interesting theories that could cause a change in response for autonomy and control is whether or not the number of assistant principals in the building has an effect on the autonomy and control the building principal experiences. This particular sample was unique in the fact that almost all respondents included in this sample had zero or one assistant principal in the building with them. Only ten respondents noted there were two or more assistant principals in their building.

Assistant Principal in Building		
0	31	44.9%
1	28	40.6%
2	9	13.0%
3	1	1.4%

The table (**25**) presented on the preceding page shows the results of ANOVA testing. An additional table showing mean, standard deviation, and median classified by building size is provided in the appendix as **Appendix G**. It must be noted that as there are only 10 respondents that had two or more principals in the building, which could potentially have an impact on the validity of the significance for this particular analysis

Table 25: ANOVA: Single Factor – Number of AP's in Building

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
0 AP	31	61.96667	1.998925	0.19248
1 AP	28	54.03333	1.929762	0.191304
2 or More AP	10	24.63333	2.463333	0.291963

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	2.184449	2	1.092225	5.313288	0.007252	3.135918
Within Groups	13.56727	66	0.205565			
Total	**15.75172**	**68**				

When examining the number of assistant principals in the building, significance was met through one-way ANOVA testing. ANOVA testing (with an alpha level of .05) shows that the test for statistical significance [$F(2, 66) = 5.31$, $p < .01$] was met, indicating that when stratified by number of assistant principals in the building, this particular sample represented a significant difference for autonomy and control. An F-critical value of 3.14 is greater than the F-value of 5.31, meaning that the null hypothesis for this sample is rejected and significance exists. When examining mean and median for this sample, similar hypotheses can be made, as the mean for two or more assistant principals in the building is 0.42 higher (less autonomy and control) than the total mean for the population. Specifically, when looking at two tasks, participating in grant writing and participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers, administrators in buildings with two or more assistant principals reported a median of 1.5 above the average across all respondents, which, in turn, affected the total mean across tasks. More

investigation could be done with a larger sample of buildings with two or more assistant principals to determine if lower autonomy and control exists.

Years of Administrative Experience

The final variable examined to determine if there was any statistical significance with autonomy and control was years of administrative experience. For this question, examining total years of administrative experience including years of experience as an assistant principal and years of experience as a principal in another district was important, as more than 75% of the administrators in this sample were in their first or second year in their current position. The median years of experience for the administrators in this study was *4*. The Standard Deviation was *4.6437*, and the mean years of experience was *5.64*. This reflects a large contingent of new administrators among this particular sampling.

In order to test years of administrative experience with autonomy and control, and find median, mode, and standard deviation, the following ranges were used:

Years of Administrative Experience		
1-2	20	29.0%
3-5	19	27.5%
6-10	20	29.0%
11 or More	10	14.5%

The table (**26**) presented on the preceding page shows the results of ANOVA testing. An additional table showing mean, standard deviation, and median classified by building size is provided in the appendix as **Appendix H**. It must be noted that as there are only 10 respondents that had 11 of more years of administrative experience, which could potentially have an impact on the statistical significance of the responses for this particular question.

Table 26: ANOVA: Single Factor – Years of Experience

SUMMARY

Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
1 to 2 Years	20	42.4	2.12	0.222035
3 to 5 Years	19	39	2.052632	0.272014
6 to 10 Years	20	39.13333	1.956667	0.197322
More than 10 Years	10	20.1	2.01	0.289889

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Between Groups	0.278688	3	0.092896	0.390243	0.760409	2.745915
Within Groups	15.47304	65	0.238047			
Total	**15.75172**	**68**				

Much like gender and building size, ANOVA testing for years of experience (with an alpha level of .05) shows that the test for statistical significance [F (3, 65) = 0.39, p > .01] was not met. Years of experience were the least significant indicator with this particular sample. An F-critical value of 2.74 is greater than the F-value of 0.39, meaning that the null hypothesis for this sample is accepted and one-way analysis shows no significance. In terms of descriptive statistics, the results across years of experience were very similar, with the least amount of autonomy and control reported from administrators with 1-2 years of experience, however, this was only 0.08 above the total sample mean of 2.04.

Summary

In terms of both descriptive and analytical statistics, no significance was found for gender, years of experience, or number of students in the building. While the ANOVA results did not show significance, there was more variation with respect to the mean, variance, and F-critical value for number of students in building than for gender or years of experience. Significance was found both analytically and descriptively for number of assistant principals in the building. The ANOVA had a significant P-value, significant F-value, and significant F-critical value. It may be that this particular sample size is fairly inexperienced in their positions (average years of experience n = 4), and that number of students may not be a factor in determining the amount of autonomy and control an individual has in their administrative positions. However, the significance for the number of assistant principals in the building is worthy of future exploration. It may be that administrators experience less autonomy in their position when they have other individuals in the building with similar responsibilities and duties to theirs, especially with the rapid rise in instructional leadership and supervisory compliance mandates. Also, some interview respondents did indicate a divide and conquer strategy among their assistant principals with the responsibilities of the position. Because style of leadership was not a direct question on either the survey or interview protocol, it is impossible to hypothesize at this point whether or not the styles of leadership amongst administrators in this particular sample have an effect on their autonomy and control.

It also must be noted that only ten respondents for the survey had two or more assistant principals in their building. All respondents with two or more principals were administrators in either a 6th grade through 8th grade, 7th through 12th grade, or 9th grade through 12th grade

building configuration. This could also be an indicator of a perceived shortage of autonomy and control for secondary administrators versus elementary and early childhood administrators, who do not have multiple administrators in their building and may or may not receive pressure from central administration or school board members to the extent that secondary school administrators experience. Also, building size could be a direct or indirect result of this as well, as many school districts will consolidate their middle and high schools from multiple elementary schools, facilitating the need for multiple assistant principals. This notion was also reflected in the interview responses, which indicate the possibility of duplicating this study among building-level configurations to better understand the conditions in which administrators report autonomy and control in their positions. Many factors could have influenced the level of significance among number of assistant principals in a building, however, the use of a convenience sample made this difficult to test.

Another descriptive factor which demonstrated significance was the mean responses amongst administrators with two or more administrators in the building. The mean response of 2.40 documented in the prior tables is almost two standard deviation units above the overall mean for the entire sample. Once again, external factors such as building configuration and a lesser sample size of ten must be considered, however, the results do indicate that number of assistant principals in a building is worthy of future exploration among administrators with respect to their perceived levels of autonomy and control in their positions.

In terms of the variables that did not demonstrate significance, gender proved insignificant based on the ANOVA testing; however, it must also be acknowledged that there was nearly a 2 to 1 ratio of male administrators to female administrators that were included in this study. This reflects the national trend reported earlier of a greater number of males in

administrative positions, which may or may not have impacted the results of this study. Building size is a difficult variable to assess, because of the considerable difference in building sizes among respondents. Also, building size does not take into account building configuration, which also may or may not impact the significance of the results of this study. The sample size clearly did not reflect much variance at all in terms of years of experience. The means for each subgroup were nearly identical, and the ANOVA testing reflected the least variation among all of the other variables tested. Once again though, it is important to note that this particular sample were fairly new to school administration, so this may or may not have had an impact on their perceived levels of autonomy and control. Finally, it is important to note that the variance was conducted with unequal groups. Glass, Peckham, and Sanders (1972) state, "When n's are unequal and variances are heterogeneous, the actual significance level may be greatly exceeded by the nominal significance levels when samples with smaller n's come from populations with smaller variances" (p. 245). This may or may not have had an impact on the ANOVA testing, specifically in the case of the number of assistant principals in each respondent's building.

5.6 RESEARCH QUESTION 4

Research question 4 intended to examine the relationship between (a) administrator stress and (b) autonomy and control, as presented in the data from both the survey and the interview responses. This research question is meant as a culmination of the data obtained from both indicators and as a way to compare and contrast the data obtained in the survey versus the data obtained from the interview. Comparisons of data are presented below that reflect the following comparisons:

#1 - Survey Responses for Autonomy and Control vs. Survey Responses for Stress

#2 - Survey Responses for Autonomy and Control vs. Interview Responses for Autonomy and Control

#3 - Survey Responses for Stress vs. Interview Responses for Stress

#4 - Interview Responses for Autonomy and Control vs. Interview Responses for Stress

As this information has been extensively explored in the prior research questions, this question is presented as a synopsis of the prior data and as a potential indicator for future studies and further exploration.

5.6.1 Comparing Survey Responses for Autonomy and Control to Survey Responses for Stress

As indicated in Chapter 4, the survey responses for both administrator stress and administrator autonomy and control reflect a population that on average, appear to have limited stress in their positions and feel as though they have a considerable amount of autonomy and control in their positions. On a 1.00 to 5.00 scale, the mean stress variables found in the survey response was only 1.82. This included all of the surveys from those identified as high stress. The mean for autonomy and control found in the survey responses also was only 2.04. On average, the population of administrators sampled in this study reflected low-stress in their survey responses, and a considerable amount of autonomy and control in their positions.

Comparing the averages of both conditions across the categorical representation of the tasks that principals perform as part of their day-to-day operations, the survey respondents indicated the greatest amount of stress from administrative and building responsibilities, such as overseeing student discipline, crisis management, and managing non-instructional staff, and the

least amount of stress with internal relations and social responsibilities, such as meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes and meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.

With regards to autonomy and control, administrators indicated the least amount of autonomy with organizational responsibilities of the principalship including performing HR-related tasks such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives, performing building or district-level budgeting and grant writing, and attending and presenting at meetings. Just as respondents found internal relations and social responsibilities to be the least stressful of their tasks, the respondents also reflected this to be the area in which they perceived the most autonomy and control in their positions. Tables 14 (stress) and 15 (autonomy and control) reflected the specific responses across the thirty different tasks that administrators engaged in. The following table below is a direct comparison of the mean and median for both stress and autonomy and control for each of the thirty tasks presented by category.

Table 27: Comparison of Mean and Median for Survey Responses to Autonomy and Control Vs. Stress

Identified Task	Cat.	A&C Mean	Stress Mean	A&C Median	Stress Median
Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	**1**	1.71	2.10	2	2
Conducting building walkthroughs.	**1**	1.43	1.65	1	1
Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	**1**	2.54	1.72	2	2
Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	**1**	1.43	1.28	1	1
Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	**1**	1.48	1.46	1	1
Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	**1**	2.17	1.90	2	2
Designing and developing curriculum.	**1**	2.93	1.90	3	2
Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	**2**	3.13	2.36	3	2
Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	**2**	1.94	2.20	2	2
Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	**2**	3.01	1.45	3	1
Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	**2**	3.22	1.86	3	2
Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	**3**	1.46	2.03	1	2
Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	**3**	1.28	1.64	1	1
Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	**3**	1.13	1.30	1	1
Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	**3**	1.29	1.55	1	1
Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	**3**	1.17	1.13	1	1
Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	**3**	1.26	1.57	1	1
Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	**4**	1.28	1.70	1	1
Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	**4**	1.87	1.62	2	1
Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	**4**	2.03	1.81	2	1
Partnering with local colleges and universities.	**4**	2.51	1.39	2	1
Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	**4**	1.91	1.81	2	1
Overseeing student discipline.	**5**	1.68	3.00	2	3
Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	**5**	2.45	2.48	2	2
Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	**5**	2.33	2.13	2	2
Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	**5**	2.58	1.87	3	2
Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	**5**	2.71	1.75	3	2
Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	**5**	2.14	1.61	2	1
Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	**5**	2.14	2.42	2	2
Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	**5**	2.90	1.88	3	2
AVERAGES		**2.04**	**1.82**	**1.90**	**1.53**

A comparison of the results from survey respondents suggest differences in the types of tasks that administrators engage in that cause stress vs. the tasks in which administrators report not having autonomy and control. The survey data reflects that respondents for this study experience less autonomy and control in their positions than stress. The task that administrators reported as being the most stressful in their position, overseeing student discipline, was one of the tasks in which administrators felt as though they had the greatest amount of autonomy. It should be noted that given certain tasks such as building-level budgeting or grant writing, administrators report having little autonomy; yet they also report low stress from those particular responsibilities of the position. This particular population reported low stress levels and high autonomy in meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons and also in meeting and working with non-instructional staff. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff was one of the only tasks in which administrators reported high levels of stress but also reported lower levels of autonomy.

5.6.2 Comparing Survey Responses for Autonomy and Control to Interview Responses for Autonomy and Control

In comparing the survey responses to the interview responses for autonomy and control, respondents indicated different aspects of their position in which they perceived to have autonomy or a lack thereof. While survey responses predominantly listed organizational responsibilities as the area in which administrators felt as though they had the least amount of autonomy, the interview responses indicated lack of autonomy due to either conditions or

stakeholders. Even when individuals were prompted to indicate specific aspects of their positions in which they had a limited amount of autonomy, respondents related their lack of autonomy or lack of gaining control in their positions to a particular stakeholder or stakeholders such as central administration, parents, or their teaching staff.

Only one respondent (HS/HA - 66) did not note a stakeholder and instead indicated that they had more autonomy because they understood the responsibilities of the position better. Despite being consistently mentioned as a cause of stress and as a task that takes up a significant amount of time, not one respondent noted the new teacher evaluation system in Pennsylvania as an area in which they felt as though they had limited autonomy.

he table presented on the following page compares the ten conditions in which administrators indicated the least amount of autonomy in their survey responses contrasted with the number of respondents that mentioned each condition as a part of the interview. This particular coding reflects responses not only from interview questions that were directly related to autonomy (*Question #11* and *Question #13*) but also from any other question during the interview. If a respondent indicated a lack of control, lack of autonomy, a comment alluding to autonomy or control, such as "I wish I could…" or "My job would be easier if...," those responses were included in the analysis below. The table component highlighted yellow indicates the number of respondents that commented on a particular task during the interview.

Table 28: Comparison of Autonomy and Control from Survey to Interview

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items	*N*	Category	Number of Respondents Commenting on Task Either Positively or Negatively During Interview
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	22	**2**	**1**
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	22	**2**	**3**
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	22	**2**	**0**
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	22	**1**	**2**
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	22	**5**	**0**
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	22	**5**	**1**
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	22	**5**	**4**
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	22	**1**	**0**
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	22	**4**	**0**
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	22	**5**	**6**

The interview and survey provided different responses and considerations for autonomy and control. The interview featured responses that predominantly spoke about the human/relational and person-environment fit conditions that limit autonomy, while the survey reflected task-based conditions. It is important to consider that the survey was specifically written to reflect task-based conditions, however, the interview, while semi-structured, allowed for fairly open-ended responses.

Only one individual spoke about budgeting as an area in which they felt a limited amount of control, despite this being the task that respondents recognized as the area in which they experienced the least amount of autonomy. Of the ten tasks that administrators self-reported as having the least amount of autonomy and control, only standardized testing was discussed in the

interview. All six respondents that discussed standardized testing spoke about the process of giving standardized tests in general and not how to administer and supervise standardized testing.

5.6.3 Comparing Survey Responses for Stress to Interview Responses for Stress

Much like the differences in responses between interview and survey for autonomy and control, there were similar differences in responses for administrator stress. However, despite those differences, there were clear tasks that were identified by respondents that caused stress in their positions in both the survey and the interview. There appeared to be consistent responses from both components of the study, and the data reflects certain tasks as stressors in an administrator's position.

The table presented on the following page compares the ten conditions in which administrators indicated the greatest amounts of stress in their survey responses compared to the number of respondents that mentioned each condition as a part of the interview.

Table 29: Comparison of Stress-Related Tasks from Survey to Interview

Section 3: Stress Index Items	*N*	Category	Number of Respondents Commenting on Stress During Interview
1. Overseeing student discipline	22	**5**	**6**
2. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)	22	**5**	**2**
3. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues	22	**5**	**1**
4. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	22	**2**	**8**
5. Attending and/or presenting at meetings	22	**2**	**1**
6. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings)	22	**5**	**4**
7. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	22	**1**	**12**
8. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)	22	**3**	**1**
9. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessments)	22	**1**	**6**
10. Designing and developing curriculum	22	**1**	**7**

All ten of the tasks that administrators reported as causing the most stress in their positions from survey respondents were accounted for at least once during the interviews. Categorically, administrators spoke most on instructional responsibilities and administrative and building responsibilities. The interview data and the survey data appear to be fairly similar in the responses related to stress. With a few exceptions in terms of ordering, the interview and survey accurately reflected the challenges that administrators face from dealing with task-based stressors in their positions.

Summary

The survey and interview responses reflected similar challenges in terms of stress for school administrators. Perhaps the most noteworthy task that differed from the interview and survey responses was the discussion surrounding the teacher evaluation cycle. As noted in prior discussion, at the time of the survey, the old Pennsylvania protocol for teacher evaluation was under a system in which tenured teachers were observed a minimum of once a year and non-tenured teachers were observed a minimum of twice a year. For the start of the 2013-2014 school year, many administrators began piloting a new evaluation system required by the state of Pennsylvania, which changed the total number of observations and included both a pre-and-post conference, as well as a teacher portfolio component, with no mandated reductions in any other mandated responsibilities. The change in the evaluation system, as noted in the analysis for research question 1 and 1A, caused respondents to discuss the evaluation system as a major stressor in their positions. This was in part due to the system being newly implemented, and because administrators believed they did not have time to familiarize themselves with the protocol and practice to effectively conduct the evaluation system. Because of this, teacher evaluation and walkthoughs were ranked 7 out of 30 quantitatively, and 1 out of 30 qualitatively.

Survey data overwhelmingly reflected student discipline as the top stressor that administrators faced in their positions, while interviews indicated student discipline as a primary stressor of their position as well. Overseeing student discipline was ranked 1 out of 30 quantitatively, and tied for 4 out of 30 qualitatively. Despite the growing responsibilities of their positions and the many hats that administrators are forced to wear, a fair amount indicated that student discipline was still one of the most challenging and stressful tasks in their positions.

Stressors associated with working with the teachers union and disciplining teachers were ranked 2 out of 30 quantitatively, and 2 out of 30 qualitatively. It is also important to note though that respondents, when discussing their interactions with unions, mentioned the teacher evaluation system as a reason for their meetings with union representatives. Because this question was not part of the interview protocol, it is impossible to assume if these conditions correlated with each other for respondents, however, as there appears to be a connection between union meetings and the new teacher evaluation system, this might be worthy of further exploration in a later study, after the teacher evaluation system has been conducted regularly in school districts.

Designing and developing curriculum was ranked 10 out of 30 quantitatively, and 3 out of 30 qualitatively. Respondents indicated during the interviews challenges with selecting curriculum for their teaching staff while remaining under the directive of curriculum directors and the school board, and also challenges associated with implementing new curriculum including the use of their summers to learn and understand when new curriculum is to be implemented.

Finally, data-driven decision-making and analyzing data was indicated as a stressor in both the interview and the survey. Stressors contributed to data ranked 9 out of 30 quantitatively and tied for 4 out of 30 qualitatively. Most commentary surrounding assessment and analyzing data revolved around the lack of time to devote to analyzing data or to the emphasis from central administration to place data as one of the top priorities of their position.

5.6.4 Comparing Interview Responses for Autonomy and Control to Interview Responses for Stress

The final comparison in examining the relationship between autonomy and control and stress consisted of a comparison of the interview responses for both indicators. Comparing stress and autonomy and control solely based on interview data proved to be the most challenging comparison to make, based on the lack of continuity in responses when interviewees spoke about conditions impacting their autonomy.

Table 30 compares the five most popular interview responses for both autonomy and control and stress-related conditions discussed by respondents. Only the five tasks that were coded the most frequently for each domain were included in the table.

Table 30: Comparison of Interview Responses Related to Stress and Autonomy and Control

Tasks	*N*	Category	Number of Codes Related to Stress	Number of Codes Related to Autonomy and Control	Total Number of Codes
1. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)	22	**1**	**12**	**0**	**12**
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives	22	**2**	**8**	**3**	**11**
3. Designing and developing curriculum	22	**1**	**7**	**2**	**9**
4. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests)	22	**5**	**2**	**6**	**8**
5. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessments)	22	**1**	**6**	**0**	**6**
6. Overseeing student discipline	22	**5**	**6**	**0**	**6**
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	22	**5**	**1**	**4**	**5**
8. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility management.	22	**5**	**0**	**1**	**1**

This table shows that the most common categories that were discussed related to both stress and autonomy and control were instructional responsibilities (Category 1) and administrative and building responsibilities (Category 5). One organizational responsibility (Category 2) was discussed, relating to the human resources functions of school administration. It should be noted that no respondents spoke about any internal relations and social responsibilities (Category 3) or external relations and social responsibilities (Category 4) during any interview questions related to stress or autonomy and control.

Summary

When comparing interview responses, it is apparent that more comments were directed toward administrator stress than autonomy and control. A possible consideration for the lack of coding in general for autonomy and control may be the vague relationship between stress and autonomy and control. For respondents, many indicated being stressed over their lack of autonomy and control over a particular aspect of their job, but no respondents attributed their lack of autonomy and control due to stress. Autonomy and control can be considered (a) environmental, (b) structural, and (c) procedural, as indicated from the responses from this study, whereas stress is a personal condition that people face. As autonomy and control can impact stress but stress does not necessary impact autonomy and control, this could have been the reason why less indicators were discussed related to the amount of autonomy administrators experience in their position.

While administrators described teacher evaluation as a stressful element in their positions, administrators did not mention the teacher evaluation cycle as an area in which they felt as though they had a lack of autonomy. A similar pattern existed for both overseeing student discipline and engaging in data-driven decision making. It appeared from this population of

administrators that most of the autonomy came from decisions that were made at either the district level, from the school board, or in some cases, the state board of education.

Only three tasks, (a) overseeing standardized testing, (b) participating in crisis management, and (c) participating in facilities management had more responses relating toward autonomy and control. However, some respondents did note standardized testing and participating in crisis management as stressful, whereas facilities management was only noted as a challenge by one administrator who was dealing with an overcrowded school and not enough space for his students.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This section will discuss the data obtained in the findings, recommendations for practice, and implications for future research opportunities.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

The survey results for the study clearly indicated that respondents generally self-reported themselves as low-stressed, and having considerably high autonomy in their positions. When interviewed, respondents reported specific stressors and areas in which they felt they were limited and empowered in terms of their overall autonomy in their positions. The difference between the survey and interview responses could be the result of a mixed-methods study, which must be taken into consideration. As this was the first study of its kind to stratify respondents into domains utilizing the anchors from Karasek's Demand/Control Model (1979), the results offer something unique to the literature in terms of avenues for future study and exploration.

In terms of stress, administrators reported that their primary stress from their positions came from either discipline or management issues and the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system. The stressors associated with student discipline correspond with previous findings from Koch, Gmelch, Tung, and Swent (1982) who also found that student discipline

occupied a significant amount of time and caused a high-level of stress for administrators. Not one previously conducted study offered conducting teacher evaluation as a major cause of stress, however, other studies did note general indicators such as role overload and growing responsibilities as a major cause of stress (Savery & Detiuk, 1986; Cooper, 1988; Gmelch, 1988).

In relation to autonomy and control, almost all respondents self-reported a perceived high-level of autonomy through completion of the survey. However, during the interview process, when prompted to discuss areas in which respondents felt a limited amount of autonomy, those interviewed targeted hierarchical conditions from a) central administration, b) school board governance, and c) the state board of education as cause for a perceived lack of autonomy. All four subgroups, high-stress/high-autonomy, high-stress/low-autonomy, low-stress/high-autonomy, and low-stress/low-autonomy had respondents who spoke about how hierarchical conditions impacted their autonomy in their positions. Very few respondents noted conditions in their building in which they felt a lack of autonomy, which was similar to findings from Whitaker (1996) and Devos, Bouckenoohe, Engels, Hotton, & Aelterman (2007).

Examining age and years of experience was attempted, but not conclusive to the population utilized in this study. As the administrators in this study had a mean years until anticipated retirement of 18.80 and a mean years of experience of 5.64, this sample was fairly new to school administration. In fact, when the two most experienced administrators (one with 21 years of experience and another with 24 years of experience) are not factored in, the mean declines to slightly under four years of experience. Because the structure of sample for this population could not be stratified across difference age groups and years of experience, testing the influence of these conditions on administrator stress or autonomy and control proved

difficult. Despite previous findings in which age and/or years of experience were considered significant (Tomic & Tomic, 2008; Allison 1997; Sarros, 1988) this particular sample failed all tests of significance.

When conducting basic analyses using: mean, median, standard deviation, and ANOVA, on conditions impacting autonomy and control, a significant finding was that administrators who have two or more assistant principals in their building experience less autonomy and control than administrators with zero or one assistant principals. This could be contributed to shared responsibility in the position or management directives from central administration. Also, it must be noted that only a limited number of administrators sampled (n = 10) were in buildings with two or more assistant principals.

Finally, in examining the relationship between autonomy and control and stress for school administrators, the interviews indicated that lack of autonomy and control for school administrators is a cause of stress, but stress did not appear to be caused by lack of autonomy and control. This was clearly noted in the qualitative coding and in comparing task-based indicators reflecting both stress and autonomy and control.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The findings and conclusions for this study offer future and practicing school administrators with a realistic look into the roles and responsibilities of this position. First, new administrators must be cognizant of the job demands of the position and the growing responsibilities that principals are faced with on a daily basis. It is imperative to note that the implementation of a new teacher evaluation system across the state of Pennsylvania had a

significant impact on the results of this study. The survey for this study was conducted before the new teacher evaluation system had been piloted, and the interviews were conducted while the new teacher evaluation system was piloted. The timing of the interviews demonstrate how the challenges administrators face change on a daily basis, and sometimes can be a more dramatic shift than what they would expect. This implies to current and future administrators that the role of the principal changes regularly and that both their training and practice is something that must constantly be redefined in order to meet the current job demands of the position.

Longevity in a building or district appears to be something that has an impact on the amount of autonomy and control that administrators experience in their positions. Much can be said for responsibilities increasing in the position once trust and successful performance has occurred over a certain amount of time. While no "magic amount of time" was indicated by respondents in the study, respondents with more experience in a school district reported more autonomy. For administrators requiring autonomy and control to increase their job satisfaction and reduce stress, remaining with a particular district seems to be a factor.

Finally, it is important for school principals to understand the various levels of abstraction within their role within an organization. Administrators appeared to be focused on the quotidian events occurring in their building. They did not compare these events with those of others. They may simply be unaware of what happens in other buildings in the district or in surrounding districts. They also might be apt to blame other factors such as the school board, central administration, or the state board of education for their lack of autonomy and stress. Having a better understanding of schools as organizations could go a long way in providing school administrators with satisfaction and reduced stress in their positions.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following is a list of recommendations for future research based on the findings and data collected from this study:

1. Interview respondents who were not administrators in elementary or early childhood aged buildings spoke of the elementary principalship as being much easier than a secondary principalship. By specifically comparing a fixed sample of elementary principals and secondary principals and examining their stress levels, further exploration could be done to determine whether or not building level is significant in the amount of autonomy and control or stress that administrators experience in their positions.
2. Also, as number of assistant principals in the building was significant with this particular sample, it is also worth exploring with a different population if number of principals in a building impacts the autonomy and control that an administrator experiences. If another study is conducted that supports the data obtained from this study, this finding might go a long way in addressing how multiple administrators in one building impact autonomy and control.
3. Discussion of internal promotion were an emotionally-charged condition that some high-stressed administrators reported during their interview. Examining principal succession for internal promotions could be measured against principal stress. It could be noteworthy to examine how school districts prepare their teaching staff for the internal succession of one of their own and the impact this has on principal performance.
4. Based on the timing of the survey and the interviews, a unique tension occurred that could be further examined by future research. The teacher evaluation system could very well be a disrupting factor in examining administrator stress. Perhaps it isn't the

evaluation system, but instead is educational reform in general. Not one respondent in the 13+ hours of interview data mentioned No Child Left Behind, but if this study was conducted 5 to 10 years earlier, it is very possible that respondents would have commented on the challenges and constraints of that particular reform. The same can be said about Common Core, which was also not mentioned by one interview respondent. The newness of the teacher evaluation system probably affected the data obtained from the interviews. More examination needs to be done once the teacher evaluation system has been fully implemented as to whether or not it is a factor in the amount of stress that an administrator experiences or if change itself is the cause for stress.

5. While this study did address task-based stressors and conditions in which administrators feel a lack of autonomy, this study did not address specific coping skills that administrators engage in when experiencing a lack of autonomy or stress. Prior follow-up studies from both Gmelch (1988) and Whitaker (1996) addressed coping strategies, and this is a clear future direction this particular research could eventually be moved toward.

6. Although no significance was found in examining any of the demographic variables other than number of assistant principals in the building, a more targeted population of mid-career professionals could re-examine gender, years of administrative and professional experience, race, or number of years teaching could be examined and tested to determine significance.

7. As the Pittsburgh Public Schools were completely omitted for this study due to a conflict with their policies requiring individualized IRB for inclusion, no large-scale urban school districts were examined. By targeting an urban population, new challenges and stressors

might arise that are worthy of commentary to assist in the training and preparation of future school leaders.

8. This study specifically looked at building-level administrators and their conditions. Another possible direction would be to look at district-level administrators or teachers and explore the conditions they face. If district-level administrators are better prepared to understand the levels of support or resources they could provide to reduce stress or provide their principals with the necessary autonomy and control to be successful, it could go a long way in retaining talented administrators and recruiting future administrators to the profession.

This study updated existing research on principal stress and offered a perspective on both stress and autonomy and control research. The findings in this study will hopefully open doors for further exploration on causes and conditions that school administrators experience in their careers and ways in which the position of school principal could be made more attractive to future candidates. As the job of the school principal continues to become more demanding and challenging, it is important that individuals that enter the profession are aware upfront of the challenges and conditions they may face. The implications of administrator stress coupled with autonomy and control must continue to be investigated to better understand the changing role of the school principal in contemporary society.

APPENDIX A

ORIGINAL LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT FOR STUDY

The following letter displays the initial letter of endorsement for this research study. It was authored by Dr. Maureen McClure, dissertation advisor.

University of Pittsburgh

School of Education
Department of Administrative and Policy Studies

5902 Wesley W. Posvar Hall
230 South Bouquet Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-648-7101
Fax: 412-648-1784

11 November 2011

To whom it may concern,

Lou L. Sabina is a fifth year doctoral student in the Social and Comparative Analysis in Education Program in the Department of Administrative and Policy Studies in Education at the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh. Lou is currently conducting his dissertation study entitled "Causes and Implications of Stress and Burnout for School Principals." This study is significant because it is one of the first of its kind to address the conditions that school administrators face in the 21st century. We are aware that these are very complex issues and we will appreciate your help as we sort them out.

Lou will be sending you a letter and an e-mail asking you to participate in his study, which involves completing a brief survey through Survey Monkey and an optional qualitative research component. This study will carry your voice and raise awareness to aspiring and current principals on the conditions that create challenges for school administrators.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Maureen W. McClure
Associate Professor
Department of Administrative and Policy Studies
School of Education
University of Pittsburgh
mmcclure@pitt.edu

APPENDIX B

ORIGINAL RECRUITMENT LETTER

The following letter is the letter that was provided to respondents completing the survey and interview for this study.

Dear _____:

My name is Lou Sabina, and I am a nearly completed doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh. I am writing you to ask you to participate in a brief survey regarding causes of stress for principals. As part of this study, I am contacting all principals currently participating in the Western Pennsylvania Principals Academy. The survey will collect basic demographic information and a brief questionnaire that should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete, based on initial pilot testing.

I currently serve as an education and business instructor for Butler County Community College and Point Park University. I am hoping upon completion of my dissertation to obtain a position where I can continue research on the principalship. My focus will be ways to better prepare aspiring principals for the realities of the principalship and target ways to implement those techniques into training provider programs. I also plan to focus on exit interviews as an organizational practice to better help districts plan for future staffing.

At the conclusion of the survey, there will be a check box if you are willing to participate in a follow-up portion of the study. If interested, we would schedule an open-ended qualitative interview component to be conducted by phone, which would take around 20-25 minutes for completion. Your willingness to participate in either of the stages of the study would be greatly appreciated and would go a long way in helping advance research involving the principalship. If you do not want to participate in the interview component, I still would hope that you would take the 15-20 minutes to complete the survey online.

As part of this study, all information obtained will be kept confidential and names of school districts and participants will not be identified. Samples will be stratified by years of experience in the principalship, gender, and grade level (elementary, middle, and high school).

If you choose to participate in the interview component of the study, you will be contacted to schedule times at your convenience. I cannot thank you enough for your willingness to take the time from your busy schedule to help with my dissertation study. I hope that the data gathered through this study can help current and future school administrators in preparing for the realities of the principalship.

Thank you,

Lou L. Sabina
412-849-3345
lls25@pitt.edu

If you have any additional questions, you may contact any of the faculty members who are assisting in the coordination of my dissertation study.

Maureen McClure	Jennifer Russell	William Bickel	Michele Langbein
Academic Advisor	Research Scientist	Research Scientist	Program Director
Associate Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Associate Professor
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APPENDIX C

SURVEY PROTOCOL

Appendix C is the survey protocol for the study. This was provided to all respondents through Survey Monkey.

Response Date

_____/_____/_____

Month Day Year

_____

Subject Last Name

Section #1 Demographic Information

1. Please identify your gender. _____

2. How many years of experience do you have in your current position as building principal? If this is your first year in the position please list your answer as "1," if this is your sixth year in the position, please list your answer as "6." (Do not include time served as an assistant principal or dean of students). _____

3. How many years of experience did you serve as a building principal in a different school district? (Do not include time served as an assistant principal or dean of students). _____

4. Did you serve as an assistant principal? _____

   If so, how many years did you serve as an assistant principal? _____

5. How many total years of experience do you have in education? _____

6. How many years of experience do you have teaching in a K-12 setting? _____

7. How many years do you estimate that you would have to remain in education to reach your planned retirement age or time served? (If you are already at retirement age or time served age, please respond with 0. _____

8. Approximately how many students are at your building? _____

9. How many teachers are at your building? _____

10. How many teachers are you responsible for evaluating per year? _____

11. Do you have an assistant principal that works with you? _____

If so, how many? _____

12. How many months a year is your position? _____ (for example: some districts have 10 month principals and 11 month principals as opposed to all year principals)

13. If you could average out the time spent on the job either in the building or doing district work per week, how many hours a week do you work in this position? _____

14. How many personal days do you get per year? _____

15. How many vacation days do you get per year? _____

16. How many sick days do you get per year? _____

17. On average, how many personal days do you take per year? _____

18. On average, how many vacation days do you take per year? _____

19. On average, how many sick days do you take per year? _____

Question	0–1 Hour	1–2 Hours	2–3 Hours	3–4 Hours	4–5 Hours	5 or more Hours
PART 2: TASK ANALYSIS						
During a typical week (Monday through Sunday) I engage in the following activities AT SCHOOL for approximately the following amount of time:						
1. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)						
2. Conducting building walkthroughs						
3. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers						
4. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school						
5. Time in school devoted to graduate studies of continuing education						
6. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessment)						
7. Designing and developing curriculum						
8. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives						
9. Attending and/or presenting at meetings						
10. Performing building- or district-level grant writing						
11. Performing building- or district-level budgeting						
12. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)						
13. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes						
14. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons						
15. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff						
16. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates						
17. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations						
18. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)						
19. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach						
20. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building						
21. Partnering with local colleges and universities						
22. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities						
23. Overseeing student discipline						

24. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)						
25. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducing IEP meetings)						
26. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management						
27. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance						
28. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures						
29. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues						
30. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff or meeting with union representatives						

Question	Rarely or Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Normally	Almost Always
PART 3: STRESS ANALYSIS					
Please place a check in the appropriate box based on the following indicators: 1 - rarely or never bothers me, 2 - seldom bothers me, 3 - occasionally bothers me, 4 - normally bothers me, 5 - almost always bothers me					
1. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)					
2. Conducting building walkthroughs					
3. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers					
4. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school					
5. Time in school devoted to graduate studies of continuing education					
6. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessment)					
7. Designing and developing curriculum					
8. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives					
9. Attending and/or presenting at meetings					
10. Performing building- or district-level grant writing					
11. Performing building- or district-level budgeting					
12. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)					
13. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes					
14. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons					
15. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff					
16. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates					
17. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations					
18. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)					
19. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach					

20. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building					
21. Partnering with local colleges and universities					
22. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities					
23. Overseeing student discipline					
24. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)					
25. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducing IEP meetings)					
26. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management					
27. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance					
28. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures					
29. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues					
30. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff or meeting with union representatives					

Question	Full Autonomy	Autonomy with Minimal Supervision	Autonomy with supervision	Supervised Autonomy	No Autonomy
PART 4: AUTONOMY AND CONTROL					
Please place a check in the appropriate box based on the following indicators: ***Full Autonomy*** *- (in most instances, you have complete control with no check-ins required from another member of the organization)* ***Autonomy with Minimal Supervision*** *- (in most instances, when conducting the task, you choose to check-in with another member of the organization before arriving at a final decision)* ***Autonomy with Supervision*** *- (you have the final decision-making authority, but are required to check-in with members of the organization* ***Supervised Autonomy*** *- (other organization members make the final decision, but you provide input)* ***No Autonomy*** *- (you have no control and are given directives from other organization members)*					
1. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers)					
2. Conducting building walkthroughs					
3. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers					
4. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school					
5. Time in school devoted to graduate studies of continuing education					
6. Engaging in data-driven decision making (conducting and developing better assessment)					
7. Designing and developing curriculum					
8. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives					
9. Attending and/or presenting at meetings					

10. Performing building- or district-level grant writing					
11. Performing building- or district-level budgeting					
12. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities)					
13. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes					
14. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons					
15. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff					
16. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates					
17. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations					
18. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)					
19. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach					
20. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building					
21. Partnering with local colleges and universities					
22. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities					
23. Overseeing student discipline					
24. Overseeing standardized testing (administering tests)					
25. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducing IEP meetings)					
26. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management					
27. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance					
28. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures					
29. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues					
30. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff or meeting with union representatives					

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Appendix D are the 15 questions (and subquestions) that were asked to the individuals that were selected to participate in the interview component of the study.

1. Please tell me about your background in education. What was your career path to becoming an administrator? - (ex.) Subject 1 – High Stress: Response…
2. What made you decide to become an administrator?
3. How have your prior career experiences prepared you (and not prepared you) for your role as an administrator?
4. What tasks do you feel that administrators engage in that are the most stressful?
5. Do you believe that you have enough time in your day to accomplish your planned and mandated activities, when you are often called to respond to unplanned activities?
5a. (if needed) Are there any types of activities that typically don't get done because you are responding to unplanned activities that require immediate attention?
5b. (if needed) If so, what types of activities are they?
6. Tell me about a principal that you know that you consider to be highly stressed. What do you see that identifies them as a highly stressed principal?
7. Tell me about a principal that you know that you consider to be low stressed. What do you see that identifies them as a low stressed principal?
8. What single task do you consider to be the most stressful element of being an administrator?
8a. How do you deal with the stress of that particular element?
9. What initiatives, if any, do you think are changing in the principalship that are helping you do your job better?
10. What initiatives do you think are costing you the most amount of time in your position?
11. Have you gained any control and authority in this position from when you first started? If so, what impact has this had on your position?
12. What stakeholder or stakeholders do you believe to take up the most amount of time in your position?
13. What stakeholder or stakeholders do you believe to give you the least amount of autonomy in your position?
14. How could policymakers help to make this a low-stressed but challenging occupation?
15. What might I have overlooked in this interview or survey that could be helpful to others?

APPENDIX E

AUTONOMY CLASSIFIED BY GENDER

Appendix E represents the findings from the autonomy portion of the survey classified by gender. This includes statistical calculations that might be pertinent for someone reading the study, including mean, median, and standard deviation.

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Male/Female)	Total Mean	Male Mean	Female Mean	Total SD	Male SD	Female SD	Total Median	Male Median	Female Median
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3.22	3.22	3.21	1.1404	1.2956	1.1788	3	3	3
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3.13	3.09	3.21	1.0203	1.1866	1.1413	3	3	3
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3.01	3.13	2.79	1.5369	1.7363	1.6413	3	3	2
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	2.93	3.06	2.67	1.0810	1.2682	1.2394	3	3	2
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	2.90	2.87	2.96	1.1689	1.3286	1.1197	3	3	3
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	2.71	2.64	2.83	1.0509	1.0734	1.0901	3	3	2.5
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	2.58	2.58	2.58	0.9541	1.0000	0.9743	3	3	2.5
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2.54	2.60	2.42	1.0978	1.2275	1.0598	2	2	2
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2.51	2.64	2.25	1.1749	1.2659	1.0321	2	2	2
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2.45	2.60	2.16	0.9859	1.1326	0.7020	2	2.5	2
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2.33	2.47	2.08	1.1121	1.2649	1.0598	2	2	2
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2.17	2.27	2.00	0.9161	1.0103	0.8341	2	2	2
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2.14	2.11	2.21	0.9821	1.0207	0.9315	2	2	2
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2.14	2.18	2.08	1.1582	1.2864	1.1765	2	2	2
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2.03	2.11	1.88	1.1289	1.1100	1.0760	2	2	2
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.94	2.00	1.83	1.0479	1.1289	0.9630	2	2	2
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	1.91	1.96	1.88	0.9528	1.0343	0.9918	2	2	2
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	1.87	2.00	1.63	0.9312	0.8315	0.8423	2	2	1
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	1.71	1.73	1.67	0.8530	0.9296	0.7020	2	2	2
20. Overseeing student discipline.	1.68	1.73	1.58	0.7321	0.8782	0.5836	2	2	2
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.48	1.55	1.33	1.0441	1.0227	1.0072	1	1	1
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1.46	1.49	1.42	0.7723	0.9250	0.7755	1	1	1
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1.43	1.40	1.50	0.9851	1.0672	1.0215	1	1	1
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1.43	1.47	1.38	0.8072	0.8733	0.7110	1	1	1
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1.29	1.29	1.29	0.7041	0.5852	0.5500	1	1	1
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1.28	1.36	1.13	0.6785	0.8053	0.3378	1	1	1
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1.28	1.31	1.21	0.5075	0.5613	0.4149	1	1	1
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1.26	1.31	1.17	0.5289	0.6387	0.3806	1	1	1
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1.17	1.24	1.04	0.6128	0.7510	0.2041	1	1	1
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1.13	1.16	1.08	0.4140	0.4795	0.2823	1	1	1
AVERAGES	**2.04**	**2.09**	**1.95**				**1.90**	**1.92**	**1.77**

APPENDIX F

AUTONOMY CLASSIFIED BY BUILDING SIZE

Appendix F represents the findings from the autonomy portion of the survey classified by building size. This includes statistical calculations that might be pertinent for someone reading the study, including mean, median, and standard deviation.

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Building Size *Number of Students*)	Total Mean	65-200 Mean	201-399 Mean	400-599 Mean	600-799 Mean	800-999 Mean	1000 and Up Mean
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3.22	3.20	2.93	3.25	3.15	3.60	3.42
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3.13	2.40	3.36	2.70	3.46	3.20	3.50
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3.01	3.20	2.86	2.90	2.77	3.40	3.25
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	2.93	1.80	2.71	2.70	3.15	3.20	3.67
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	2.90	2.60	2.79	2.55	3.15	3.20	3.33
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	2.71	2.00	2.79	2.45	3.00	3.00	2.92
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	2.58	2.00	2.50	2.40	2.85	2.60	2.92
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2.54	1.60	2.36	2.40	2.46	3.40	3.08
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2.51	1.40	2.07	2.45	2.46	3.00	3.42
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2.45	2.00	2.43	2.40	2.46	2.40	2.75
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2.33	2.00	2.86	2.30	2.15	2.00	2.25
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2.17	1.60	1.93	1.95	2.46	2.60	2.58
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2.14	2.00	2.21	1.75	2.46	2.40	2.33
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2.14	1.20	2.29	1.80	2.53	2.20	2.50
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2.03	1.60	1.79	1.90	1.92	2.00	2.83
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.94	2.40	1.64	1.60	2.31	2.20	2.17
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	1.91	1.40	1.86	1.85	1.69	2.20	2.50
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	1.87	1.00	1.71	1.85	2.00	2.20	2.17
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	1.71	1.80	1.57	1.75	1.54	1.80	1.92
20. Overseeing student discipline.	1.68	1.40	1.50	1.80	1.77	1.40	1.83
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.48	1.40	1.71	1.40	1.38	1.80	1.33
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1.46	1.00	1.36	1.45	1.38	1.60	1.83
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1.43	1.80	1.64	1.25	1.38	2.00	1.17
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1.43	1.60	1.29	1.40	1.31	1.80	1.58
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1.29	1.00	1.21	1.25	1.38	1.20	1.50
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1.28	1.00	1.14	1.50	1.31	1.20	1.17
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1.28	1.00	1.22	1.25	1.31	1.80	1.25
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1.26	1.00	1.22	1.35	1.38	1.00	1.25
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1.17	1.00	1.36	1.20	1.23	1.00	1.00
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1.13	1.00	1.07	1.20	1.23	1.00	1.08
AVERAGES	**2.04**	**1.69**	**1.98**	**1.93**	**2.10**	**2.21**	**2.28**

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Building Size *Number of Students*)	Total SD	65-200 SD	201-399 SD	400-599 SD	600-799 SD	800-999 SD	1000 and Up SD
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	1.1404	1.3038	1.1411	1.2085	1.0682	1.3416	1.1645
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	1.0203	0.5477	1.1507	0.9787	0.9674	1.3038	0.7977
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	1.5369	1.5165	1.4064	1.6511	1.5359	1.5166	1.7645
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	1.0810	0.8366	1.1387	1.0310	1.0682	0.8367	0.8876
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	1.1689	0.5477	1.0510	1.2763	1.1435	1.3038	1.3027
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	1.0509	0.7071	0.9750	0.8870	1.2247	1.2247	1.2401
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	0.9541	0.7071	1.2247	0.8207	1.0682	0.5477	0.9003
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	1.0978	0.8944	1.0818	1.1424	1.0500	0.8944	0.9962
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	1.1749	0.5477	0.7300	0.9986	1.3301	1.5811	1.2401
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	0.9859	0.7071	0.9376	1.2732	0.8771	0.5477	0.9653
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	1.1121	1.4142	1.4064	1.2182	0.6887	0.7071	0.9653
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	0.9161	0.5477	0.8287	1.0500	0.7763	0.8944	0.9003
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	0.9821	0.7071	1.1883	0.6386	0.8771	1.1402	1.3027
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	1.1582	0.4472	1.0690	1.1964	0.9674	1.6432	1.2432
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	1.1289	0.8944	0.8926	1.0711	0.8623	1.0000	1.6422
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.0479	1.5166	0.7450	0.8207	1.4367	1.0954	0.9374
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	0.9528	0.8944	0.7703	0.9333	0.6304	1.0954	1.3143
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	0.9312	0.0000	0.8254	0.8751	1.0801	0.8367	1.1146
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	0.8530	1.0954	0.6462	1.1180	0.6602	0.4472	0.9003
20. Overseeing student discipline.	0.7321	0.5477	0.5188	0.9514	0.4385	0.5477	0.9374
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.0441	0.8944	1.4373	0.9403	0.6504	1.3038	1.1547
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	0.7723	0.0000	0.4972	0.7592	0.6504	1.3416	1.0299
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	0.9851	1.3038	1.4469	0.7164	0.6504	1.7321	0.3892
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	0.8072	0.8944	0.6112	0.9947	0.4804	0.8367	0.9962
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	0.7041	0.0000	0.4258	0.7164	0.6504	0.4472	1.1677
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	0.6785	0.0000	0.3631	1.1002	0.4804	0.4472	0.3892
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	0.5075	0.0000	0.4258	0.5501	0.4804	0.4472	0.6216
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	0.5289	0.0000	0.4258	0.7452	0.5064	0.0000	0.4523
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	0.6128	0.0000	0.7449	0.8944	0.4385	0.0000	0.0000
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	0.4140	0.0000	0.2673	0.6156	0.4385	0.0000	0.2887

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Building Size *Number of Students*)	Total Median	65-200 Median	201-399 Median	400-599 Median	600-799 Median	800-999 Median	1000 and Up Median
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3	2	3	3	4	3	3.5
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3	4	2.5	2	3	3	3.5
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	3	2	3	2.5	3	3	4
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	3	3	3	2	3	3	4
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	3	2	3	2.5	2	3	3
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	3	2	3	2	2	3	3
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2	1	2	2	2	4	3
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2	1	2	2	2	3	3.5
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2	1	3	2	2	2	2
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.5
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	2	2	1.5	1	2	2	2
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	2	1	2	2	2	2	2
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	2	1	1.5	1	1	2	2
20. Overseeing student discipline.	2	1	1.5	2	2	1	1.5
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.5
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
AVERAGES	1.90	1.50	1.86	1.67	1.83	2.03	2.17

APPENDIX G

AUTONOMY CLASSIFIED BY NUMBER OF ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS IN BUILDING

Appendix G represents the findings from the autonomy portion of the survey classified by number of assistant principals in the building. This includes statistical calculations that might be pertinent for someone reading the study, including mean, median, and standard deviation.

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Number of Assistant Principals in Building)	Total Mean	0 AP Mean	1 AP Mean	2 or More AP Mean
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3.22	3.13	3.18	3.60
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3.13	3.16	2.86	3.80
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3.01	2.94	2.89	3.60
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	2.93	2.68	2.89	3.80
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	2.90	2.81	2.68	3.80
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	2.71	2.77	2.57	2.90
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	2.58	2.61	2.50	2.70
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2.54	2.45	2.32	3.40
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2.51	2.16	2.50	3.60
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2.45	2.42	2.29	3.00
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2.33	2.74	1.79	2.60
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2.17	1.94	2.21	2.80
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2.14	2.10	2.14	2.30
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2.14	2.10	1.96	2.80
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2.03	1.97	1.75	3.00
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.94	2.00	1.68	2.50
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	1.91	1.90	1.68	2.70
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	1.87	1.77	1.82	2.30
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	1.71	1.68	1.61	2.10
20. Overseeing student discipline.	1.68	1.77	1.50	1.90
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.48	1.52	1.36	1.70
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1.46	1.35	1.36	2.10
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1.43	1.45	1.43	1.40
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1.43	1.35	1.36	1.90
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1.29	1.19	1.25	1.70
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1.28	1.29	1.29	1.20
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1.28	1.16	1.36	1.40
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1.26	1.23	1.32	1.20
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1.17	1.29	1.11	1.00
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1.13	1.03	1.25	1.10
AVERAGES	**2.04**	**2.00**	**1.93**	**2.46**

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Number of Assistant Principals in Building)	Total SD	0 AP SD	1 AP SD	2 or SD
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	1.1404	1.2039	1.0560	1.2649
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	1.0203	1.0676	0.9705	0.7888
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	1.5369	1.5692	1.4742	1.7127
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	1.0810	1.1658	0.9560	0.7888
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	1.1689	1.1081	1.1564	1.1353
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	1.0509	0.9560	1.0338	1.4491
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	0.9541	1.0223	0.9623	0.8233
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	1.0978	1.1787	0.9449	0.9661
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	1.1749	0.8601	1.3194	1.0750
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	0.9859	0.9228	1.0491	0.9428
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	1.1121	1.2102	0.8759	0.8433
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	0.9161	0.8538	0.8759	1.0328
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	0.9821	0.9783	0.8483	1.4181
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	1.1582	1.1359	1.0709	1.3984
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	1.1289	0.9826	0.9280	1.6330
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.0479	1.1547	0.8630	1.0801
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	0.9528	0.9076	0.7228	1.3375
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	0.9312	0.9560	0.8189	1.1595
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	0.8530	0.9447	0.7373	0.8756
20. Overseeing student discipline.	0.7321	0.7620	0.5774	0.9944
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.0441	1.2348	0.5587	1.4944
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	0.7723	0.6607	0.6215	1.1972
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	0.9851	1.0595	0.8357	1.2649
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	0.8072	0.8774	0.5587	1.1005
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	0.7041	0.4774	0.6455	1.2517
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	0.6785	0.7829	0.6587	0.4216
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	0.5075	0.5739	0.5587	0.6992
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	0.5289	0.4250	0.6696	0.4216
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	0.6128	0.8638	0.3150	0.0000
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	0.4140	0.1796	0.5853	0.3162

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Number of Assistant Principals in Building)	Total Median	0 AP Median	1 AP Median	2 or More AP Median
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3	3	3	4
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3	3	3	4
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3	3	2	4.5
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	3	3	3	4
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	3	3	2	4
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	3	3	2.5	3
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	3	3	2	3
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2	2	2	3.5
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2	2	2	4
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2	2	2	3
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2	3	2	3
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2	2	2	3
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2	2	2	2
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2	2	2	2.5
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2	2	1.5	2.5
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	2	2	2	2.5
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	2	2	2	2.5
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	2	2	2	2
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	2	1	1.5	2
20. Overseeing student discipline.	2	2	1	1.5
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1	1	1	1
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1	1	1	2
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1	1	1	1
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1	1	1	1.5
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1	1	1	1
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1	1	1	1
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1	1	1	1
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1	1	1	1
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1	1	1	1
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1	1	1	1
AVERAGES	**1.90**	**1.90**	**1.72**	**2.40**

APPENDIX H

AUTONOMY CLASSIFIED BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Appendix G represents the findings from the autonomy portion of the survey classified by years of experience. This includes statistical calculations that might be pertinent for someone reading the study, including mean, median, and standard deviation.

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Years of Administrative Experience)	Total Mean	1 to 2 YoAE Mean	3 to 5 YoAE Mean	6 to 10 YoAE Mean	11 or More YoAE Mean
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3.22	3.13	3.18	3.60	3.22
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3.13	3.16	2.86	3.80	3.13
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3.01	2.94	2.89	3.60	3.01
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	2.93	2.68	2.89	3.80	2.93
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	2.90	2.81	2.68	3.80	2.90
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	2.71	2.77	2.57	2.90	2.71
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	2.58	2.61	2.50	2.70	2.58
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2.54	2.45	2.32	3.40	2.54
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2.51	2.16	2.50	3.60	2.51
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2.45	2.42	2.29	3.00	2.45
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2.33	2.74	1.79	2.60	2.33
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2.17	1.94	2.21	2.80	2.17
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2.14	2.10	2.14	2.30	2.14
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2.14	2.10	1.96	2.80	2.14
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2.03	1.97	1.75	3.00	2.03
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.94	2.00	1.68	2.50	1.94
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	1.91	1.90	1.68	2.70	1.91
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	1.87	1.77	1.82	2.30	1.87
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	1.71	1.68	1.61	2.10	1.71
20. Overseeing student discipline.	1.68	1.77	1.50	1.90	1.68
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.48	1.52	1.36	1.70	1.48
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1.46	1.35	1.36	2.10	1.46
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1.43	1.45	1.43	1.40	1.43
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1.43	1.35	1.36	1.90	1.43
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1.29	1.19	1.25	1.70	1.29
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1.28	1.29	1.29	1.20	1.28
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1.28	1.16	1.36	1.40	1.28
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1.26	1.23	1.32	1.20	1.26
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1.17	1.29	1.11	1.00	1.17
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1.13	1.03	1.25	1.10	1.13
AVERAGES	**2.04**	**2.12**	**2.05**	**1.96**	**2.01**

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Years of Administrative Experience)	Total SD	1 to 2 YoAE SD	3 to 5 YoAE SD	6 to 10 YoAE SD	11 or More YoAE SD
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	1.1404	1.0463	1.3355	1.0712	1.1595
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	1.0203	0.9234	1.2140	0.8870	1.1972
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	1.5369	1.4464	1.3744	1.7852	1.5670
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	1.0810	0.9787	1.1496	0.9787	1.3375
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	1.1689	1.0052	1.1055	1.3870	1.0328
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	1.0509	0.7678	1.1822	1.2258	1.0801
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	0.9541	0.9987	1.0457	0.8256	1.0750
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	1.0978	1.0954	1.1723	0.8885	1.5055
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	1.1749	1.2763	1.2612	1.1459	1.0593
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	0.9859	0.8208	1.1239	0.9445	1.2649
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	1.1121	1.2397	1.0485	0.8870	1.2649
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	0.9161	0.7327	0.9428	0.9787	1.1547
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	0.9821	0.9333	1.0733	1.0208	0.6992
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	1.1582	1.2085	1.3355	0.9445	1.2472
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	1.1289	1.1180	1.1773	0.9787	1.3984
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	1.0479	0.9177	1.5121	0.5712	1.0328
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	0.9528	1.0400	0.9177	0.5130	1.2293
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	0.9312	1.0195	0.9582	0.8584	0.9944
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	0.8530	0.8645	0.6840	0.6048	1.3984
20. Overseeing student discipline.	0.7321	0.6156	0.6118	0.8751	0.9189
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1.0441	1.0513	1.1239	0.9234	1.2517
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	0.7723	0.8870	0.7685	0.5501	0.9189
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	0.9851	1.1367	1.3765	0.3078	0.4216
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	0.8072	0.6708	0.6967	0.5712	1.4757
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	0.7041	0.7327	0.4189	0.9987	0.3162
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	0.6785	0.6708	0.4524	0.4104	1.2517
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	0.5075	0.6806	0.4189	0.4443	0.4216
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	0.5289	0.7539	0.4189	0.4443	0.3162
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	0.6128	0.4894	0.5353	0.2236	1.2649
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	0.4140	0.4894	0.3153	0.3078	0.6325

Section 5: Autonomy and Control Index Items (Total/Years of Administrative Experience)	Total Median	1 to 2 YoAE Median	3 to 5 YoAE Median	6 to 10 YoAE Median	11 or More YoAE Median
1. Performing building-or-district-level budgeting.	3	3	3	3	3.30
2. Performing HR-related tasks with instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining teachers or meeting with union representatives.	3	3.5	3	3	2.90
3. Performing building-or-district-level grant writing.	3	3	3	3.5	2.30
4. Designing and developing curriculum.	3	3	3	4	2.70
5. Performing HR-related tasks with non-instructional staff such as hiring and disciplining non-instructional staff.	3	3	3	2	2.20
6. Discussing, planning, or participating in facility maintenance.	3	3	2	2	2.50
7. Discussing, planning, or participating in crisis management.	3	2.5	3	3	2.40
8. Participating in or developing professional development activities with teachers.	2	3	2	2	2.60
9. Partnering with local colleges and universities.	2	2	2	2	2.70
10. Overseeing standardized tests (administering tests).	2	2	2	2	2.40
11. Participating in the IEP process (either writing IEP's or attending or conducting IEP meetings).	2	3	2	2	2.40
12. Engaging in data-driven decision-making (conducting and developing better assessments).	2	2	2	2	2.00
13. Discussing, planning, or participating in school procedures - drills, bus procedures.	2	2	2	2	1.60
14. Creating, changing, or developing the master schedule for the building and/or handling any scheduling issues.	2	2	2	2	2.00
15. Overseeing or participating in fundraising activities for district or building.	2	2	2	1.5	2.20
16. Attending and/or presenting at meetings.	2	2	2	2	1.80
17. Helping to organize or run extracurricular activities.	2	2	2	1.5	2.20
18. Developing relationships or meeting with local stakeholders and/or performing community outreach.	2	1.5	2	2	1.90
19. Conducting the teacher evaluation cycle (observing and conferring with teachers).	2	1.5	2	1.5	2.20
20. Overseeing student discipline.	2	2	1	1	1.80
21. Time in school devoted to graduate studies or continuing education.	1	1	1	1	1.70
22. Attending or supervising after-school functions (extracurricular activities).	1	1	1	1	1.80
23. Directly teaching students before, during, or after school.	1	1	1	1	1.20
24. Conducting building walkthroughs.	1	1	1	1	1.80
25. Meeting and working with non-instructional staff.	1	1	1	1	1.10
26. Directly meeting with teachers for non-evaluative purposes.	1	1	1	1	1.70
27. Developing relationships or meeting with parents (NON-IEP and NON-STUDENT DISCIPLINE)	1	1	1	1	1.20
28. Time spent meeting about students and discussing student expectations.	1	1	1	1	1.10
29. Eating lunch with students, colleagues, or subordinates.	1	1	1	1	1.40
30. Meeting with students for non-disciplinary reasons.	1	1	1	1	1.20
AVERAGES	**1.90**	**1.93**	**1.83**	**1.80**	**2.01**

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