

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND TEACHER COMMITMENT

by

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. The study focused on elementary schools in Northeast Alabama. Thirty-four elementary schools consisting of 522 teachers took part in the study. The teachers completed two survey instruments: the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ).

With the school as the unit of analysis, the OCI outlined and measured four elements related to school climate (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability). Those four elements were the independent variables used for the study. The dependent variable was teacher commitment measured by the 15 items of the OCQ. The socioeconomic status (SES) was a control variable. That variable was calculated from the percentage of free and reduced lunches at each school.

Results indicated that teacher commitment is related to school climate. The study showed that the most significant predictor of teacher commitment was teacher professionalism. Collegial leadership and academic press were predictors of teacher professionalism, while SES was a predictor of academic press.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

<i>a</i>	Cronbach's index of internal consistency
β	Beta
<i>df</i>	Degrees of freedom: number of values free to vary after certain restrictions have been placed on the data
<i>M</i>	Mean: the sum of a set of measurements divided by the number of measurements in the set
<i>p</i>	Probability associated with the occurrence under the null hypothesis of a value as extreme as or more extreme than the observed value
<i>r</i>	Pearson product-moment correlation
<i>t</i>	Computed value of <i>t</i> test
<	Less than
=	Equal to

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Every school has a different “feel” a different “personality.” Halpin and Croft (1963) describe this as the organizational climate of a school. The organizational climate of a school is much like the personality characteristics of an individual. Hoy, Tarter, and Kottkamp (1991) state that school climate is the relatively enduring quality of a school’s environment that is experienced by its members. These characteristics distinguish one school from another and influence the behavior of its members.

As pioneers in organizational climate in schools, Halpin and Croft (1963) developed the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) that measures the climate of elementary schools. Their approach identified the critical aspects of teacher-teacher and teacher-principal interactions in schools. In the years since 1963, the original OCDQ has been substantially revised while retaining its empirical character. Theoretically-based climate measures, specifically the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy et al., 1991), have supplemented the measure of climate. Hoy and Sabo (1998) brought the two streams of research--OCDQ and OHI--to develop the Organizational Climate Index.

Hoy and Sabo (1998) found that school climate is a critical component of effective schools. A healthy school climate consists of combined interaction between members of the school community. A school with an open climate tends to be healthy and conversely, a healthy

school tends to have an open climate. Hoy and Sabo (1998) also conclude that collegial behavior is a significant contributor to student performance.

Organizational commitment is a continuing relationship of the members with attachments to the organization's goals and values. An individual's attitude toward an organization is organizational commitment (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Organizational commitment develops slowly with member involvement. Commitment is influenced by characteristics of the organization (Riehl & Sipple, 1996).

Mowday et al. (1979) constructed an instrument frequently used to measure organizational commitment, the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The group defined commitment in terms of the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in an organization.

Commitment is associated with greater job effort and involvement (Mowday et al., 1979). A school with a positive climate for teachers is more likely to have committed teachers (Reihl & Sipple, 1996).

Need and Purpose

Organizational climate is considered the measurement of an individual's relationship with superiors and other employees in the work environment. Organizational climate is the internal characteristics of a school that distinguishes one school from another (Hoy, Smith, & Sweetland, 2002). Organizational climate influences the behavior of its members. A school's organizational climate varies from open to closed (Halpin & Croft, 1963). High morale can be classified as open. Teachers work well together without bickering and griping. They are not burdened down by busywork or routine reports. Teachers obtain a considerable amount of job satisfaction, and

they have the incentive to keep the organization moving. Teachers are proud to be associated with the school organization.

A closed climate is an unhealthy or sick climate. Closed climate is undesirable, crippling to both the faculty and the students (Halpin & Croft, 1963). Teachers are disengaged and do not work well together.

To measure school climate, Halpin and Croft (1963) developed the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) that measures the climate of elementary schools. The latest rendering of measuring climate is the Organizational Climate Index (OCI). The OCI is a combination of a revised Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) and the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). The OCI captures open and healthy dimensions of school climates at the student, teacher, principal, and community levels (Hoy et al., 2002). The OCI measures the climate of schools and the faculties' trust. The faculties' trust includes colleagues, principal, and clients (students and parents).

In the past years, school climate has been studied with several variables. Climate has been researched with school spirit, teacher morale, and effectiveness (Hoy & Ferguson, 1985). Tarter, Hoy, and Bliss (1989) studied six aspects of school climate: supportive principal behavior, directive principal behavior, principal influence, and resource support. A study of teachers' personal efficacy and general efficacy has been performed (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Hoy and Sabo (1998) studied school climate and critical components of effective schools. A study focusing on organizational health and what kind of school climate nurtures trust within a school was completed (Smith et al., 2001).

Along with climate, organizational commitment is also an important part of organizational research, with the focus demonstrating the links and the quality of life in the

organization (Mowday et al., 1979). With its emphasis on attachment to the organization, organizational commitment includes the organization's goals and values. Commitment goes beyond loyalty to an organization, it involves giving of one's self to the organization with teacher commitment influencing student achievement (Reihl & Sipple, 1996).

The characteristics of a school also influence the level of commitment (Riehl & Sipple, 1996). Teachers receiving administrative support are more likely to be committed to the school's goals and values. Teachers associated with an orderly school have a higher level of professional commitment. Another characteristic associated with commitment is classroom autonomy for teachers. Peer support is also a key element in teacher commitment (Singh & Billingsley, 1998).

Commitment has also been studied with several variables. Commitment has been studied with characteristics of the organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988). The commitment of teachers in various stages of their professional careers has been looked at (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990). Firestone and Pennell (1993) studied the differential incentive policies such as merit pay, career ladders, school incentive programs, and mentor programs affect on teacher commitment. Teacher commitment has been studied with the focus on organizational characteristics (Riehl & Sipple, 1996).

Positive school climate has become part of the effective rhetoric and is advocated by educational practitioners and reformers as a specific means for improving student achievement (Smith et. al., 2001). Hoy et al. (1991) provide some evidence that organizational climate is related to other important variables such as student performance and trust. There is a lack of study concerning the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. Clearly, there is a need to carry out research that can contribute to an expansion of theory that explains the relationship between commitment and climate, hence, this study.

Statement of the Research Question

What is the relationship of teacher commitment to school climate and its elements?

Definition of Concepts

Organizational Climate

Conceptual--Generally, constitutive definitions of organizational climate try to capture the image of the personality of the school as first conceived of by Halpin and Croft (1963). In the study at hand, the concept builds on Halpin and Croft and specifies climate as a “relatively enduring quality of the school environment that is experienced by participants, affects their behavior, and is based on their collective perceptions of behavior in the schools” (Hoy & Miskel, 2008, p. 198)” and is the measurement of an individual’s relationship with other employees in the work environment (Halpin & Croft, 1963). Organizational climate is description of the total organization and is gauged primarily by the perception of its members. Climate is representation of teachers’ views of critical characteristics (Smith et al., 2001). Organizational climate emerges from the joint interactions of students, teachers, and administrators (Hoy & Sabo, 1998).

Operational--Organizational climate is measured by the Organizational Climate Index (OCI). The OCI is a short organizational climate descriptive measure for schools. The index has four dimensions--principal leadership, teacher professionalism, achievement press for students to perform academically, and vulnerability to the community. The measure is a combination of the OHI and OCDQ. The OCI is a revision of the earlier SCI (Hoy & Sabo, 1998) and appears in full in Appendix A.

Organizational Commitment

Conceptual--Organizational commitment is an attitude, a belief, a sense of attachment to and in an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Commitment is influenced by characteristics of the organization with school climate variables being strong indicators of commitment (Riehl & Sipple, 1996).

Operational--Organizational commitment is measured by the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The OCQ contains 15 items used to identify the three aspects of the commitment definition (attitude, belief, and attachment). The instrument uses a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 7= *strongly agrees* to 1 = *strongly disagree*. The results are then summed and divided by 15 to arrive at a summary indicator of employee commitment. In addition, some items are negatively phrased to protect against response bias (Mowday et al., 1979). A copy is provided in Appendix B.

Scope and Limitations

The study sample was taken from elementary schools in the northeast area of the state of Alabama. The unit of analysis was the school. Respondents were elementary teachers that had at least 1 year of teaching experience.

Significance

The theoretical significance of the study is that it contributes to the knowledge concerning school climate and elements that contribute to school climate. The OCI, although a conception with a research history, is a relatively new measurement that uses four subtests that

define school climate (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability).

The practical significance is that the study will serve as a guide to practice framework for understanding organizational climate's effects on teacher commitment. Furthermore, the study will outline behaviors to accomplish workable climates within the school to achieve teacher commitment.

Summary

The school workplace has taken on new importance with school climate being a significant component of the effectiveness and reform movement in education (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). The continued study of organizational climate offers educators a means of better understanding the operation of schools. Since Halpin and Croft's development of the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) instrument there have been several revisions, lastly being the Organizational Climate Index (OCI). The OCI divides climate into four subtests enabling the research to narrow the significant aspects in relation to school climate. However, surprisingly, in the last 10 years little research has been conducted pertaining to organizational climate using the OCI and there is little research on the role of school climate and its effect on teacher commitment.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sections: conceptual framework, theoretical framework, and hypothesis. The conceptual framework section defines organizational climate and organizational commitment and gives a research history of each term. There is a theoretical explanation of how the concepts interact. Finally, hypotheses that test the theoretical framework are presented.

Conceptual Framework

Organizational Climate

Organizational climate is the measurement of an individual's relationship with other employees in the work environment (Halpin & Croft, 1963). It is descriptive of the total organization and is gauged primarily by the perception of its members. Key members of school climate are teachers with their perceptions of relationships, personalities, and leadership (Hoy et al., 1991). The organizational climate of a school represents teachers' views of critical characteristics (Smith et al., 2001).

Halpin and Croft (1963) were pioneers in the conceptualization and measurement of organizational climate in schools. They constructed the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) that measures the climate of elementary schools. Their approach identified the critical aspects of teacher-teacher and teacher-principal interactions in schools

(Hoy et al., 1991). Halpin and Croft take the position that how a principal or group behaves is less important than how its members perceive it. Perceptions of behavior motivate action.

The OCDQ measures the climates of elementary schools along a continuum from open to closed (Hoy et al., 1991). Teachers and principals are used to identify school patterns with 64 items. The items are short and to the point. The instrument is divided into eight dimensions with four referring to characteristics of the teachers and four pertaining to the characteristics of the principal as a leader. The answers given to statements in the OCDQ measure individuals' perception, not fact. It is teachers' and principals' perceptions of behavior that motivate action.

Table 1 shows the OCDQ dimensions and defines each.

Table 1

OCDQ Dimensions

Disengagement	Teachers ask nonsensical questions in faculty meetings. Teachers talk about leaving the school system.
Hindrance	Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching. Teachers have too many committee requirements.
Esprit	The morale of teachers is high. Teachers in this school show much school spirit.
Intimacy	Teachers invite other faculty members to visit them at home. Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school.
Aloofness	The rules set by the principal are never questioned. Faculty meetings are mainly principal-report meetings.
Production Emphasis	The principal checks the subject-matter ability of teachers. The principal corrects teachers' mistakes.
Thrust	The principal sets an example by working hard himself. The principal uses constructive criticism.
Consideration	The principal helps teachers solve personal problems. The principal does personal favors for teachers. (Hoy et al., 1991)

One criticism of the original OCDQ is the crude ranking of the types of climate in schools (Hoy et al., 1991). Schools are ranked from open to closed, with no clarification as to “middle climates.” Another criticism is that it is not suited for studies in urban and secondary schools. The OCDQ does not address the primary participants in schools, the students. Clearly the focus is on teacher-teacher and teacher-administrator. Finally, the OCDQ has conceptual problems with a lack of underlying logic to the framework.

The Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire completely revised is the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991). It has 42-items with six dimensions that measure elementary school climate (see Table 2). The instrument measures three behaviors of principals (leadership-supportive, directive, and restrictive). It also measures three behaviors of teachers (interactions-collegial, intimate, and disengaged behavior).

Table 2

OCDQ-RE Dimensions

<p>SUPPORTIVE PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR The principal uses constructive criticism. The principal compliments teachers. The principal listens to and accepts teachers’ suggestions.</p> <p>DIRECTIVE PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR The principal monitors everything teachers do. The principal rules with an iron fist. The principal checks lesson plans.</p> <p>RESTRICTIVE PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR Teachers are burdened with busywork. Routine duties interfere with the job of teaching. Teachers have too many committee requirements.</p> <p>COLLEGIAL TEACHER BEHAVIOR Teachers help and support each other. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues. Teachers accomplish their work with vim, vigor, and pleasure.</p> <p>INTIMATE TEACHER BEHAVIOR Teachers socialize with each other. Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school. Teachers have parties for each other.</p> <p>DISENGAGED TEACHER BEHAVIOR Faculty meetings are useless. There is a minority group of teachers who always oppose the majority. Teachers ramble when they talk at faculty meetings. (Hoy et al., 1991).</p>

Table 3 shows the reliability scores of each subtest of the OCDQ-RE (Hoy et al., 1991).

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha for OCDQ-RE Subtests and the Number of Items Measured

OCDQ-RE subtests items	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>	Number of items in the measure
Supportive Principal Behavior	.94	9
Directive Principal Behavior	.88	9
Restrictive Principal Behavior	.81	5
Collegial Teacher Behavior	.87	8
Intimate Teacher Behavior	.83	7
Disengaged Teacher Behavior	.78	4

The sister to the OCDQ-RE is the OCDQ-RS. The OCDQ-RS is designed to measure the climate of secondary schools (Hoy et al., 1991). It has 34 items with five dimensions. Two dimensions relate to principal leadership: supportive and directive behavior. Three dimensions relate to teacher interactions: engaged, frustrated, and intimate behavior (see Table 4). The OCDQ-RS assesses the success of the principal and the commitment of the teachers.

Table 4

OCDQ-RS Dimensions

SUPPORTIVE PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR

- The principal sets an example by working hard him/herself.
- The principal uses constructive criticism.
- The principal explains his/her reasons for criticisms to teachers.

DIRECTIVE PRINCIPAL BEHAVIOR

- The principal rules with an iron fist.
- The principal supervises teachers closely.
- The principal monitors everything teachers do.

ENGAGED TEACHER BEHAVIOR

- Teachers help and support each other.
- Teachers are friendly with students.
- Teachers spend time after school with students who have individual problems.

FRUSTRATED TEACHER BEHAVIOR

- The mannerisms of teachers at this school are annoying.
- Administrative paperwork is burdensome at this school.
- Assigned non-teaching duties are excessive.

INTIMATE TEACHER BEHAVIOR

- Teachers' closest friends are other faculty members at this school.
- Teachers invite other faculty members to visit them at home.
- Teachers socialize with each other on a regular basis. (Hoy et al., 1991).

Table 5 shows the reliability of the subtest of the OCDQ-RS (Hoy et al., 1991).

Table 5

Cronbach's Alpha for OCDQ-RS Subtests and the Number of Items Measured

OCDQ-RS subtests items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items in the measure
Supportive Principal Behavior	.91	7
Directive Principal Behavior	.87	7
Engaged Teacher Behavior	.85	10
Frustrated Teacher Behavior	.85	6
Intimate Teacher Behavior	.71	4

The alternate measurement to the OCDQ is the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI) (Hoy et al., 1991). The OHI is an instrument that contains 44-items that map the organizational health of secondary schools. The test consists of seven dimensions: (1) the institutional integrity dimension describes a school with integrity in its educational programs with the ability to cope with outside influences; (2) the initiating structure refers to the principal's ability to make his or her attitudes and expectations clear to the faculty and maintain definite standards of performance; (3) consideration describes the principal's behavior and his or her capability to look after the welfare of the faculty; (4) the principal influence refers to the principal's capacity to persuade the thoughts and actions of higher administration; (5) resource support is the school's ability to provide adequate resources; (6) morale is a sense of trust, confidence, enthusiasm, and friendliness among teachers; and (7) academic emphasis refers to the school's press for achievement. Table 6 shows the seven dimensions of the OHI and defines each.

Table 6

OHI Dimensions

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY	A few vocal parents can change school policy Select citizen groups are influential with the board.
PRINCIPAL INFLUENCE	The principal's recommendations are given serious consideration by his or her superiors. The principal gets caught in the middle between teachers and superiors.
CONSIDERATION	The principal treats teachers as equals. The principal goes out of his/her ways to show appreciation to teachers.
INITIATING STRUCTURE	The principal the principal maintains definite standards of performance. The principal corrects teachers' mistakes.
RESOURCE SUPPORT	Teachers are provided with adequate materials for their classrooms. Supplementary materials are available for classroom use.
MORALE	Teachers exhibit friendliness to each other. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm.
ACADEMIC EMPHASIS	Students try hard to improve on previous work. Students are cooperative during classroom instruction. (Hoy et al., 1991)

OHI's reliability scores are relatively high (Hoy et al., 1991; see Table 7).

Table 7

Cronbach's Alpha for OHI Subtests and the Number of Items Measured

OHI subtests items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items in the measure
Institutional Integrity	.91	7
Initiating Structure	.89	7
Consideration	.90	5
Principal Influence	.87	5
Resource Support	.95	5
Morale	.92	8
Academic Emphasis	.93	8

The OHI-E measures the organizational health of an elementary school. The OHI-E contains 37 items with five dimensions or subtests (see Table 8) that include institutional integrity, collegial leadership, resource influence, teacher affiliation, and academic emphasis.

Table 8

OHI-E Dimensions

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY
The school is open to the whims of the public.
Select citizen groups are influential with the board.
COLLEGIAL LEADERSHIP
The principal discusses classroom issues with teachers.
The principal treats teachers as equals.
RESOURCE INFLUENCE
The principal gets what he or she asks for from superiors.
Supplementary materials are available for classroom use.
TEACHER AFFILIATION
Teachers exhibit friendliness to each other.
Teachers identify with the school.
ACADEMIC EMPHASIS
Students try hard to improve on previous work.
Students are cooperative during classroom instruction. (Hoy, et al., 1991)

Table 9 shows the reliability scores of each subtest (Hoy et al., 1991).

Table 9

Cronbach's Alpha for OHI-E Subtests and the Number of Items Measured

OHI-E subtests items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items in the measure
Institutional Integrity	.90	6
Collegial Leadership	.95	10
Resource Influence	.89	7
Teacher Affiliation	.94	9
Academic Emphasis	.87	5

The dimensions of the OHI-E were selected to represent the basic needs of all social systems as well as the three levels of organizational control (Hoy et al., 1991). The institutional integrity dimension describes a school with integrity, not vulnerable to outside sources, and parental demands. The collegial leadership dimension refers to the behavior of the principal and the principal's ability to set the tone for high performance in the school. The resource influence dimension describes the principal's ability to obtain needed materials for teachers. Teacher affiliation dimension is the friendliness and commitment of the teachers to the school, colleagues, and students. Finally, academic emphasis dimension refers to the school's press for achievement, the expectation of high achievement, and the respect for other students who get good grades.

Both the OCDQ and the OHI are efficient measurements that mirror the interactive patterns in a school (Hoy et al., 1991). The measures are relatively unobtrusive, simple to administer, and easy to score. The instruments also require less than 10 minutes to complete.

When studying organizational effectiveness, Hoy and Ferguson (1985) used a subtest of the OCDQ to measure cohesiveness. The subtest reflected on 10 items of teacher satisfaction and

accomplishment. The study looked at teachers' school spirit and teachers' morale. Hoy and Ferguson's conceptual perspective was based on two contemporary theoretical models: goals and systems. The goals model is a traditional view of school effectiveness where the organization is successful in achieving its goals. Goals are defined clearly with official goals and operative goals. Official goals are the mission of the organization while the operative goals are the intentions of the organization. The systems model postulates that demands are so numerous it is impossible to define specific goals of the organization.

The goals and systems models share a common assumption that it is possible, and desirable, to arrive at the single set of evaluative criteria, single statement of organizational effectiveness.

In the Hoy and Ferguson (1985) study, overall school effectiveness was determined by an Index of Perceived Organizational Effectiveness (IPOE). The study correlated commitment with the IPOE. In the study the IPOE yielded an alpha coefficient of .87. They also used the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) to measure job commitment. An alpha coefficient of reliability of .89 was obtained.

Tarter, Hoy, and Bliss (1989) used both the OCDQ-RS and the OHI in their study of secondary schools in New Jersey. They also included the OCQ. The group selected six aspects of leadership and their effects on teacher commitment in their study on principal leadership and organizational commitment. Those aspects were supportive principal behavior, directive principal behavior, principal influence, resource support, initiating structure, and consideration. The group studied 72 schools. Teachers responded to leadership measures drawn from the OHI and the OCDQ-RS. A separate set of teachers responded to the OCQ.

The results of Tarter et al's (1989) study were that principals with upward influence earn the commitment of teachers to schools. Principals initiating structure also have committed teachers. Principals providing supportive social relations and furnishing resource support have committed teachers. Principals who over-control will likely upset the faculty and reduce teacher commitment. Principals who are most likely to bring about constructive change are effective leaders who are able to deliver for their teachers.

Hoy and Woolfolk (1993) used the OHI to examine teacher efficacy and school climate. Their study sample was composed of a randomly selected group of 179 teachers from 37 elementary schools in New Jersey. In the study, teachers' personal efficacy and general efficacy were calculated. Principal influence, academic emphasis, experience, and educational level were all significantly related to personal teaching efficacy. Integrity, academic emphasis, and experience were predictors of general teaching efficacy. The best predictor of general teaching efficacy was integrity and morale. Teachers' perceptions of the dimensions of organizational climate were moderately related to each other. Surprisingly the study found that personal teaching efficacy was not related to high teacher morale, that is, feelings of trust, confidence, friendship, cohesiveness, and warmth. The study did show that morale, job satisfaction, and the emotional support of co-workers are important to the psychological well-being of teachers.

Teacher efficacy plays a role in shaping students' attitudes toward school, the subject matter being taught, and even the teacher's attitude (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). Teachers' sense of efficacy is related to a number of school-level variables, one being school climate. School climate seems to enhance or erode teachers' efficacy beliefs.

Another important factor in teachers' psychological state is trust. Trust is recognized as a vital element in the functioning of an organization (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Trust is pivotal in efforts to improve education and seems ever more difficult to achieve and maintain.

Elements of trust include willingness to risk vulnerability, confidence, benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, and openness. The importance of each element depends on who is being trusted. Openness is known as an important facet of trust among teachers.

Trust is necessary for an open line of communication in an organization (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). High degrees of trust promote a higher level of disclosure, and a person is more willing to share thoughts, feelings, and ideas. As higher trust allows for an open exchange, information can be disclosed, diagnosed, and corrected before they are compounded.

School climate can be one that cultivates trust or makes trust difficult (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In an open school climate, trust is reinforced. Studies of school climate and trust show that the behavior of the principal and the behavior of teachers have differential effects on the quality of trust in a school. Supportive leadership has been shown to influence teachers' degree of trust in the principal and colleagues.

Trust and organizational health provide fertile ground for an important line of inquiry about the nature of the workplace (Smith et al., 2001). Smith et al. (2001) focused their study on organizational health and what kind of school climate nurtures trust within a school.

Teachers want a work environment in which interpersonal relations are trusting and healthy (Smith et al., 2001). The two concepts are complementary to each other. A healthy organizational climate facilitates the development of faculty trust; in turn, faculty trust promotes a healthy organization. In Smith et al.'s (2001) study, the group hypothesized that a school's health will be positively related to faculty trust. They also researched the question of "What

dimensions of organizational health are the best predictors of each dimension of faculty trust?”

The group considered three dimensions of faculty trust: trust in colleagues, trust in the principal, and trust in clients (students and parents).

In the study of Smith et al. (2001), they sampled 98 high schools in Ohio. Only schools with 15 or more faculty members were considered for the study. The OHI was used to measure aspects of school health. The Faculty Trust Survey was used to measure dimensions of faculty trust. The study showed that organizational health was related to aspects of faculty trust. The healthier the school climate, the stronger the degree of trust in colleagues ($r = .43, p < .01$), trust in the principal ($r = .56, p < .01$), and trust in clients ($r = .43, p < .01$). School health is positively related to faculty trust, and each aspect of faculty trust is related to the overall index of school health. Smith et al. (2001) suggested that the administrators use the OHI to map their own leadership style as perceived by teachers and the interpersonal interactions among teachers.

For decades, the OCDQ has provided the framework to measure school climate and the openness of schools. The OHI has provided a means to measure the health of a school (Hoy et al., 2002). Both measurements relate to the school workplace. The OCDQ measures climate by exploring relationships between teachers to principals and teachers to teachers. The OHI considers the relationships between the school and the students and the school and the community. Open schools tend to be healthy schools and healthy schools tend to be open schools.

To capture the openness of the OCDQ and the health frames of the OHI, Hoy, Smith, and Sweetland (2002) created a survey instrument called Organizational Climate Index (OCI). The group took the OCDQ's three dimensions of principal behaviors (supportive, directive, and

restrictive) and the OHI's dimension of administrative level to form the OCI's subtest of collegial leadership (see Table 10).

Table 10

OCDQ Dimensions + OHI Dimension = OCI Subtest (Collegial Leadership)

<u>OCDQ Dimensions</u>	<u>OHI Dimension</u>	<u>OCI Subtest</u>
Principal Behaviors Supportive Directive Restrictive	Administration Level Collegial Leadership	Collegial Leadership

Hoy et al. (2002) took the teacher's behaviors (collegial, committed, and disengaged) of the OCDQ and the teacher's level of the OHI and created the teacher professionalism subtest of the OCI (see Table 11).

Table 11

OCDQ Dimensions + OHI Dimension = OCI Subtest (Teacher Professionalism)

<u>OCDQ Dimensions</u>	<u>OHI Dimension</u>	<u>OCI Subtest</u>
Teacher Behaviors Collegial Committed Disengaged	Teacher Level Motivation	Teacher Professionalism

Hoy et al. (2002) used the administrative level (resource support, principal influence, and academic emphasis) of the OHI dimension to form the academic press subtest of the OCI (see Table 12).

Table 12

OHI Dimensions (Administrative Level) = OCI Subtest (Academic Press)

<u>OHI Dimensions</u> Administrative Level Resource support Principal influence Academic emphasis	<u>OCI Subtest</u> Academic Press
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Hoy et al. (2002) used the institutional level of the OHI and created the institutional vulnerability subtest of the OCI (see Table 13).

Table 13

OHI Dimension (Institutional Level) = OCI Subtest (Institutional Vulnerability)

<u>OHI Dimension</u> Institutional Level	<u>OCI Subtest</u> Institutional Vulnerability
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With a combination of the OCDQ and the OHI, Hoy et al. (2002) created the four dimensions or subtests (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, achievement press, and institutional vulnerability) of OCI.

In the development of the OCI, Hoy et al. (2002) collected data from a diverse sample group of 97 high schools in Ohio. Care was taken to select a sample from urban, suburban, and rural schools. Of the 149 public schools contacted, only 97 agreed to participate (65%). Schools participating in the study represented the entire range of socioeconomic status (SES).

Hoy et al. (2002) worked through several phases in constructing the OCI, which included the selection of items, factor analysis of the items, refinement of the conceptual framework, identifying the subtests, and checking the reliability of each subtest. The group selected 30 items from the OCDQ and OHI that measured four dimensions of climate (environmental press, collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, and academic press). The selection of the 30 items was guided by the earlier research of Hoy, Hannum, and Tschannen-Moran (1998). Next, the group performed a factor analysis on each item, which resulted in the removal of three items. The group renamed “environmental press,” which had a neutral or even positive connotation to “institutional vulnerability,” which better described the tone of subtest items. The result was a 27-item descriptive questionnaire that measures four critical aspects of school climate.

The OCI covers four dimensions: collegial leadership, professional teacher professionalism, achievement press, and institutional vulnerability. The collegial leadership subtest looks at how the principal treats teachers as professional colleagues and the openness of the principal. The collegial leadership subtest also notes the principal’s clear expectation and standards for the teacher. The teacher professionalism subtest focuses on the openness of the teacher-to-teacher interaction. The academic press subtest refers to the relationship between the school and academic success of the students. Finally, the institutional vulnerability subtest refers to the relationship between the school and the community. What effects do other sources outside the school have on the operation of the school?

The reliability scores for each subtest of the OCI are shown on Table 14.

Table 14

Cronbach's Alpha for the OCI Subtests and the Number of Items Measured

OCI subtests items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items in the measure
Collegial Principal Behavior	.94	7
Teacher Professionalism	.88	7
Achievement Press	.92	8
Institutional vulnerability	.87	5

Faculty trust is a significant ingredient of healthy and open school climate (Hoy et al., 2002). The relationship between the school and community is another key element in a school's climate. With organizational climate emerging from the joint interactions of students, teachers, and administrators (Hoy & Sabo, 1998) and the health of school climate providing teachers with a means in which they believe in themselves and set high goals, the OCI instrument offers subtests to measure these variables.

Organizational Commitment

Mowday et al. (1979) define organizational commitment as exerting extra effort, desiring to remain with the organization, and sharing the values and goals of the organization. Glisson and Durick (1988), using that definition, separated commitment from satisfaction in their finding that different arrangements of personal, job, and organizational variables showed that the organization rather than the job was the major predictor of commitment. While teacher commitment influences student achievement (Reihl & Sipple, 1996), there is little research on the sources of commitment. There are gaps in the literature explaining commitment and climate that this study intends to fill.

Organizational commitment is an individual's attitude toward an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). An individual's commitment is more than just a passive loyalty to an organization, it involves an ongoing relationship with the organization. Commitment emphasizes an attachment to the organization, including its goals and values. It goes beyond loyalty to an organization, it involves giving of one's self to the organization. Unlike job satisfaction that is a day-to-day attitude toward the work itself, commitment develops slowly over time as the employee considers the connection he or she has with the employer.

Instruments used to measure organizational commitment are numerous (Mowday et al., 1979). Key elements of any instrument to measure organizational commitment are to exhibit acceptable psychometric properties within the constraints of attitude. One of the most frequently used measures of commitment can be found in the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Appendix B).

In Mowday et al. (1979) development of OCQ, 15 items were used to identify the three aspects (acceptance of the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert extra effort on behalf of the organization, and desire to remain in the organization) of their definition of organizational commitment. The instrument used a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 7 = *strongly agree* to 1 = *strongly disagree*. The results were then summed and divided by 15 to arrive at a summary indicator of employee commitment. In addition, some items were negatively phrased to protect against response bias. To examine the psychometric properties, the team used a validation strategy that included the use of multiple diverse samples of public employees, classified university employees, hospital employees, telephone company employees, scientist and engineers, auto company managers, psychiatric technicians, and retail management trainees. The mean level of commitment ranged from a low of 4.0 to a high of 6.1, which gives the mean

score slightly above the midpoint on the 7-point Likert scale. OCQ also presented acceptable levels of convergent, discriminant, and predictive validity. Alpha coefficients ranged from .82-.93 with a median of .90. Mowday et al., (1979) warn that the instrument has the possibility of employees distorting their responses if they feel threatened by completing the questionnaire or that their responses will be used.

Important predictors of employee commitment are characteristics of the organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988). Glisson and Durick examined commitment in human service organizations with emphasis on attachment to the organization. They defined commitment as the beliefs of the organization and the satisfaction of employees as a result of their current job experiences. Commitment has multidimensional components of attitude and behavior, much like the focus of Mowday et al. (1979).

There are differences between the predictors of job satisfaction and the predictors of organizational commitment within the same work environment (Glisson & Durick, 1988). There are three predictors of job satisfaction: job tasks performed, characteristics of the organization, and characteristics of the worker. Glisson and Durick studied predictors of organizational commitment as worker characteristics and characteristics of the job task. They hypothesized that the characteristics of the job tasks, particularly role ambiguity and skill variety, would be excellent predictors of job satisfaction but moderate predictors of commitment. They also hypothesized that the characteristics of the workers, particularly education and age, will be excellent predictors of commitment but poor predictors of satisfaction. Lastly, they hypothesized that the characteristics of the organization in which the tasks are performed, particularly organizational age as an indicator of dependability, and leadership, will be excellent predictors of commitment but moderate predictors of satisfaction. The results of Glisson and Durick's (1988)

study were that the characteristics of job tasks were the best predictors of satisfaction. The characteristics of the organization were the best predictors of commitment. The role of ambiguity and skill variety were two predictors of satisfaction but less powerful predictors of commitment. Results indicate that job satisfaction depends largely on the opportunity for the worker to use a variety of skills in performing job tasks and on the clarity of the requirements and responsibilities of the job.

A principal's influence with superiors and a principal's directness contribute to teacher commitment (Tarter et al., 1989). The principal sets the tone of the school and develops a distinct educational climate by offering organizational incentives and inducements; as a result, the behavior of the principal should influence the relative commitment of teachers to the school. The Tarter et al. (1989) study found that teachers will be committed to an organization when led by principals who provide structure, resources, consideration, useful influence, and professional support in an evenhanded, non-controlling manner. The study also showed that principals who initiate structure and demonstrate consideration in their behavior have the commitment of their teachers. The principal must create conditions so teachers can achieve their goals by directing their efforts toward the success of the school. The leadership of the principal is clearly not the only factor that influences teacher commitment, but it is an important one.

Various qualities of the organizational context influence teacher commitment (Rosenholtz & Simpson, 1990). A study involving 1,213 teachers from 78 elementary schools throughout the state of Tennessee found that six organizational conditions of schools were factors in teacher commitment. Performance efficacy was identified as one of the primary factors accounting for commitment. When performance efficacy was high people felt a close tie to their work. Psychic rewards or positive feedback was found to be a part of teacher commitment.

Learning about the positive results of their efforts largely contributed to teachers' willingness not to be absent and not to leave the teaching profession. Task autonomy and discretion was the third factor in organizational commitment. The opportunity and flexibility to pursue core tasks was found to be a valuable element in teacher commitment. Learning opportunities also increased teachers' commitment by expanding the professional growth of the teacher. The fifth factor in the study was schools' management of students' behavior. The time invested in dealing with students' misbehavior or the failure of the principal to help teachers solve disciplinary problems was found to attribute to teacher absenteeism. Finally, buffering by principals led to teacher commitment. This included unnecessary interruptions and principals shielding teachers from nonteaching tasks.

Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990) also addressed the socioeconomic status (SES) of the student body in their research. They stated that the SES of schools is not a quality of school or classroom organization, but it influences organizational qualities that affect commitment. Rosenholtz and Simpson found that social context was unrelated to teachers' commitment. School SES was unrelated to all six organizational factors identified as likely influences to teacher commitment.

Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990) tested the relationship of selected workplace conditions to teachers' commitment at various stages of their professional careers. They found that commitment changed modestly across the teaching career, falling after 5 years of teaching then returning at a teachers' later career stage.

Teachers' commitment is shaped by teachers' working conditions (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Firestone and Pennell studied the differential incentive policies such as merit pay, career

ladders, school incentive programs, and mentor programs affect on teacher commitment. They argued that policies influence teacher commitment by influencing working conditions.

Teachers' participation in decision-making is linked to commitment. Committed teachers have strong psychological ties to their school, their students, or their subject areas. Commitment comes when a teacher experiences responsibility for the outcome of his or her work. If the outcomes are accomplished by what the boss does or efforts of others, the teacher has no sense of success.

Feedback also enhances commitment of teachers (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Teachers in numerous studies report that they would like more feedback on their performance from administrators and colleagues. Where there is no feedback, teachers feel less responsible for their instructional choices and less committed.

Firestone and Pennell (1993) found that there are four areas to pursue to obtain teacher commitment. First, teacher participation could have substantial benefits. Second, in the area of communications and professional development there needs to be effective strategies for collaboration and learning opportunities. Third, there needs to be increased feedback, and fourth improvement changes in teachers' working conditions.

Teacher commitment is a significant factor in efforts to improve school outcomes, especially student academic achievement (Riehl & Sipple, 1996). Riehl and Sipple studied teacher commitment and focused on organizational characteristics. They looked at teaching tasks in terms of structural conditions. Research on teacher commitment thus far has focused on organizational conditions and has not included the effects of structural dimensions of teachers' task environment. Several dimensions of teachers' task environment were used in Riehl and Sipple's study such as number of classes, class size, and student abilities.

Riehl and Sipple (1996) examined organizational commitment by looking at the dependent variables of mission, time, and stayer. Mission is defined as the teachers sharing goals and values of school. Time is defined as teachers' time spent on school-related activities. And a stayer is defined as those who continue at their job. Teachers' personal characteristics and school demographics were also used as independent variables. Teachers' attitudes were included within these variables. The second independent variable used was teachers' task environment that considered among other effects the number of periods taught, number of classes, number of students, and average achievement level of students. The third independent variables measured the organizational climates within the teachers' work area. These variables focused on administrative support, buffers, teaching help, school influence, autonomy, and order.

Riehl and Sipple (1996) hypothesized that the more classes and the more class preparations teachers had, the more subjects they taught that were not in their qualified area, the more students they taught, and the lower achievement of the students, the less likely the teacher would develop a strong commitment. Teachers' attitudes toward class size and salary were related to professional commitment. Teachers that were committed to the school's mission had a greater professional commitment. School climate variables were the strongest indicators of professional commitment. Teachers who felt positive about their salaries and class size were also more likely to have a higher commitment.

The association between school climate and commitment shows that teachers who are provided with the resources, protected from intrusions, and receive administrative support are more likely to be committed to the schools goals and values (Riehl & Sipple's, 1996). Teachers associated with an orderly school had a higher level of professional commitment. Also associated with school climate was the teacher's ability to have classroom autonomy. Classroom autonomy

confirmed a positive relationship to teachers' commitment. Teacher commitment is greater in schools characterized by high levels of administrative support, teacher collegiality, professional influence, and positive student behavior. Schools built around these variables are likely to have teachers who are more committed to the profession and more committed to the goals and values of their schools.

Job satisfaction could directly predict teacher commitment (Fresko, Kfir, & Nasser, 1997). Teachers who have a sense of being able to affect pupils are more satisfied with their work and show greater reluctance to abandon the profession. Teachers enjoy engaging in their profession. They feel when given adequate opportunity to express their skills and knowledge, they are more satisfied with their profession.

Fresko, Kfir, and Nasser (1997) studied the relationship between commitment to teaching and some job-related and personal factors. The group hypothesized that teacher efficacy is related to a teacher's professional self-image and that efficacy or teaching ability is positively related to commitment. The teachers participating in the study were 175 former graduates of a teacher training college in Israel. Nine relevant variables were investigated as to their impact on teacher commitment. Among the variables were job-related factors including teaching experience, professional self-image, grade level of pupils, and professional advancement. Commitment was predicted from both intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction. Personal traits such as gender, cognitive ability, and teaching ability were also investigated. The findings were that two variables had a direct relationship to commitment: extrinsic satisfaction and professional advancement. In other words, when teachers enjoy engaging in their profession and feel that they are given adequate opportunity to express their skills and knowledge, or when they are satisfied with the income and social status attached to their job, the teachers' commitment is higher. The

two variables accounted for only 10% of the variance in commitment scores, meaning that most of the variance remained unexplained.

Peer support is another key variable in teacher commitment (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). Singh and Billingsley examined the effects of administrative support and peer teacher support to analyze a teacher's commitment to an organization. Administrator and peer support were tested simultaneously.

Singh and Billingsley (1998) used a sample of 9,317 schools selected from the Quality of Education Data (QED) file of public schools. The survey used was a questionnaire containing items on teachers' perceptions of commitment, principal support and leadership, perceptions of peer support, and other background information, including teaching status, experience, gender, and race. Singh and Billingsley defined commitment as the disposition to remain in teaching, if able to choose would teachers still become teachers, and exerting effort beyond the minimal expectations to meet the goals of the organization.

Principals influence teachers' work experience in several ways; among them are communication, job design and autonomy, the provision of learning opportunities and resources, and the nature and extent of feedback given to teachers (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). The school's principal influences a collegial environment within a school. Principals' influence fosters shared goals, values, and professional growth. Singh and Billingsley studied principal support and influence on peer support, and peer support effects on commitment. The two categories included background variables such as gender, education, and experience.

Peer support exerts the largest direct effect on professional commitment ($\beta = .66$) with principal leadership also exerting a direct effect on commitment (Singh & Billingsley, 1998). Not only does a principal's leadership have a direct effect on commitment, but it also has an

indirect effect on peer support. The background variables showed little effect on professional commitment. The results suggest that when principals foster shared goals, values, and professional growth, harmony and a supportive learning community are likely to result. When the principal's leadership is perceived as strong and positive, teachers are more likely to work cooperatively and share a common sense of purpose. The principal not only has a direct influence on teachers' commitment, the principal enhances commitment through fostering a collegial environment.

In another study, Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, and Hogan (2008), studied teacher commitment by testing a predictive and mediation model of teacher commitment. They examined the role of teacher efficacy and teachers' sense of identification with school in mediating the relations of teaching experience, perceived organizational politics, and reflective dialogue to teacher commitment.

Teacher efficacy is a significant predictor of teacher commitment (Chan et al., 2008). Chan et al. (2008) defined teacher efficacy as a teacher's belief in his or her capabilities to execute the action to produce desired student outcomes and teaching experience as the number of years a teacher has in the profession. The team predicted that the longer a teacher's tenure the more likely the teacher is to stay in the profession. The study looked at perceived organizational politics. It was defined as behaviors that serve to promote self-interest without regard to or at the expense of organizational goals. Perceived organizational politics were expected to have a negative relation to teacher commitment. Reflective dialogue was identified as the process by which teachers engage in in-depth conversations about teaching and learning. The major objective of the study was investigating teacher commitment in relation to a mediating role of teacher efficacy and teacher identification with the school.

Chan et al. (2008) study results supported the hypothesis that teachers' identification with the school and teacher efficacy mediated the predictive relations of teaching experience, reflective dialogue, and perceived organizational politics to teacher commitment. The study also proposed four ways school administrators could build teacher commitment: clarifying mission, building cultural cohesion, providing a good reward system, and having high-quality leadership.

A Singapore study measured teacher efficacy by adapting items from Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001). Efficacy had three sub-dimensions. One was efficacy in classroom management, two was efficacy in institutional strategies, and three was efficacy in student engagement. After adaptations the final efficacy measure contained a total of 13 items from the sub-dimensions. The responses ranged from 1 (*not well at all*) to 5 (*very well*).

The Singapore group measured teacher commitment using an instrument-adapted form Ebmeier (2003) who, in turn, adapted it from the Diagnostic Assessment of School and Principal Effectiveness instrument (Ebmeier, 1990). The four items in the instrument consisted of "Teaching is an excellent profession," "I enjoy my school work very much," "I would leave teaching for another profession if I could," and "This job gives me professional satisfaction." Respondents rated items on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 = *completely disagree* to 5 = *completely agree*.

The study sample had 2,130 respondents from primary schools and 1,585 respondents from secondary schools. The findings supported the main hypothesis that teachers' identify with the school and teacher efficacy mediated the predictive relations of teaching experience, reflective dialogue, and perceived organizational politics to teacher commitment.

Successful principals generate a faculty committed to the school (Sinden, Hoy, & Sweetland, 2004). The structure and administration of a school are the prime responsibilities of the principal. School principals use their power and authority to help teachers by designing structures that facilitate teaching and learning. Sinden et al. (2004) studied collegial leadership and organizational commitment and how they relate to enabling school structure. The group hypothesized that collegial leadership and enabling school structures are positively associated with each other and that organizational commitment of schools is positively associated with enabling school structure.

The Sinden et al. (2004) study sample consisted of 97 high schools in Ohio. Only schools with 15 or more faculty members were considered for the study. Of the 149 high schools contacted and invited to participate, only 97 agreed to participate (65%). Schools that included Grades 9-12 defined high schools in the study. The sample represented the entire range of SES.

The Sinden et al. (2004) study used a scale from the OCI to measure the collegial leadership of the principals. The coefficient of reliability for the scale in the sample was .87. The OCQ was used to measure commitment. The alpha coefficient of reliability for this sample of schools was .92. The unit of analysis was the school.

In the Sinden et al. (2004) study, correlation analysis supported the first hypothesis that predicted a positive relationship between the collegial leadership of the principal and enabling school structure ($r = .68; p < .01$). Correlation analysis also supported the second hypothesis that predicted a positive association between organizational commitment and enabling school structure ($r = .60; p < .01$). In both hypotheses, SES was added as a control variable and the correlations remained the same.

The research of Sinden et al. (2004) shows the importance of both collegial leadership of the principal and organizational commitment of the faculty in the development of enabling school structure. Organizational structures need not be rigid, controlling, and coercive but just the opposite. Enabling school structure should promote problem solving, collaboration, flexibility, and professional judgment. The study suggests that the odds are against enabling structures unless the leadership of the principal is collegial and the faculty is committed to the school and its values.

Commitment is a belief, a sense of attachment to and in an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). Commitment is a desire to remain with the organization and share the values and goals of the organization (Glisson & Durick, 1988). The OCQ instrument offers 15 items to measure these variables of commitment.

Theoretical Framework

The organizational climate of a school is much like the personality characteristics of an individual (Halpin & Croft, 1963). It represents teachers' perceptions of critical characteristics of the school (Smith et al., 2001). A healthy school climate provides teachers a means in which they believe in themselves and set high goals for their students (Hoy & Sabo, 1998). Climate is a critical component of school effectiveness.

Organizational climate influences the behavior of its members (Hoy et al., 2002). Morale, job satisfaction, and co-workers' support are important elements of climate (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993). Teachers want a workplace that encourages a trusting and healthy environment between co-workers (Smith et al., 2001).

Organizational commitment focuses on the link and the quality of life in an organization (Mowday et al., 1979). With its emphasis on attachment to the organization, organizational commitment also includes the organization's goals and values. Commitment goes beyond loyalty to an organization, it involves giving of one's self to the organization with teacher commitment influencing student achievement (Reihl & Sipple, 1996).

Working conditions shape teacher commitment (Firestone & Pennell, 1993) along with various characteristics of an organization (Reihl & Sipple, 1996). Peer support (Singh & Billingsley, 1998), teacher efficacy (Chan et al. 2008), and administrative support (Reihl & Sipple, 1996) are all predictors of teacher commitment.

Commitment is influenced by characteristics of the organization (Reihl & Sipple, 1996), with school climate variables being strong indicators of commitment. However, there is little research on the sources of commitment and how organizational climate effects organizational commitment. There are gaps in the literature.

Teachers should be willing to commit to a school in which they feel supported by the leader and on which they can do their job. This literature review establishes the importance of a healthy school climate and strong teacher commitment. Research has examined school climate and its effects on teachers in general, but it has yet to focus on school climate and teacher commitment. This study argues that school climate influences teachers' commitment to their profession and to the school they are connected with. School climate is a key variable in influencing teacher commitment.

In studying school climate and teacher commitment, this study used two instruments, the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The OCI is a reliable and valid diagnostic tool to measure school climate. It is user friendly and

takes teachers a few minutes to complete (Hoy et al., 2002). Several years have passed since researchers have used the OCI instrument and performed an empirical study. Presenting information with the OCI instrument enhances understanding of school climate.

In measuring an employee's commitment to an organization, the most frequently used measurement is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Mowday et al., 1979). The OCQ identifies the important elements of commitment that Mowday et al. defined.

Rationale for Hypothesis

The review of literature argues from the body of professional research on the topics of organizational climate and organizational commitment that climate and commitment should be related. This study tested the theory by hypothesizing that teacher commitment is positively related to school climate and its elements.

Hypothesis--Teacher commitment is positively related to school climate and its elements.

CHARTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Overview

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section describes the sample, how it was selected, and the rationale for the selection. Section two explains the data collection procedures and how and where the data were collected. The third section is the measures section, and it describes the instruments used in the study and reports on their reliability and validity. Section four is statistical treatment; it describes the statistical analysis performed to test the hypothesis. Finally, the summary section summarizes the whole chapter.

Sample

The participants used for this study were practicing elementary teachers in the northeast area of the state of Alabama. The teachers taught in grades ranging from kindergarten to six. The teachers had completed at least 1 year of teaching to ensure the effects of school climate on job commitment.

To begin the survey, principals of selected schools were contacted to obtain permission to perform the two surveys (OCI & OCQ) at a regular faculty meeting. The study surveys were explained to the principal. He or she was told that the teachers surveyed would complete two survey instruments; one pertaining to school climate and the other concerning teacher commitment. Both survey instruments would take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The principal was told that teacher participation was voluntary. Principals were also told that

teachers' complete anonymity was guaranteed. They would not be asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code would be placed on the survey. The schools would not be identified in the study by name.

Before teachers completed the survey instruments they were told that the whole process would take less than 10 minutes to complete. Their participation was voluntary. There were no risks to participants in the study. Their complete anonymity was guaranteed. They were not asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code was placed on the surveys. No school was identified by name in the study.

Teachers were told there were no direct benefits to them from being in the study. The study would help educators learn how to assist school administrators with school climate and teacher commitment. The benefits are added knowledge in achieving committed elementary school teachers.

Thirty-four elementary schools participated in the study. The elementary schools' grades ranged from kindergarten to sixth grade. There was attention given to the socioeconomic status (SES) of each school. The SES was reflected by participation in the free-reduced lunch program at each school (Appendix C). The unit of analysis was the school.

Data Collection

The research conducted used two instruments. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was used to collect information on organizational commitment. The Organizational Climate Index (OCI) was used to test the organizational climate within the schools of the teachers participating.

The instruments were administered as part of a faculty meeting. The teachers were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. No teacher was asked to self-identify and participation was voluntary. A nonthreatening atmosphere was maintained before the surveys, during the surveys, and in the collection of the surveys.

Measures

The independent variables in this study were the subtests (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) of the OCI measuring school climate. The dependent variable was teacher commitment measured by the 15 items of the OCQ. The control variable was the SES of the school.

The Organizational Climate Index (OCI) was used to measure school climate. It is a short descriptive measure for schools (Hoy et al., 2002). The OCI is a combination of the Organizational Climate Descriptive Questionnaire (OCDQ) and the Organizational Health Inventory (OHI). It is a 27-item Likert-type scale that assesses critical aspects of the school workplace. The OCI has four dimensions: collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability to the community. In previous studies (Hoy et al., 2002) the reliability scores for each dimension were as follows: Collegial Principal Behavior (.94), Professional Teacher Behavior (.88), Achievement Press (.92), and Institutional Vulnerability (.87) (see Appendix A).

The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was used to collect information on teacher organizational commitment. Mowday et al. (1979) developed the OCQ, a 15-item, 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 7 = *strongly agrees* to 1 = *strongly disagree*. The reliability of the OCQ was tested with two samples for which multiple data points were available. For the

sample of psychiatric technicians, test-retest reliabilities were $r = .53$, $.63$, and $.75$ over 2-, 3-, and 4-month periods, respectively. For the retail management trainees, test-retest reliability was $r = .72$ over a 2-month period and $r = .62$ for 3 months (see Appendix B).

Statistical Treatment

Descriptive statistics were used in analyzing characteristics of the sample and respondents. Inferential statistics, especially correlation and multiple regressions, were used to test hypotheses. Cronbach's alpha was run on all measures to insure reliability.

Summary

To test the relationship of school climate to teachers' commitment to the school, 34 elementary schools were surveyed. The school was the unit of analysis. The sample was drawn from elementary schools in Northeast Alabama. Socioeconomic status (SES) data in the form of statistics for free and reduced lunch were collected as a control on the relationship of the variables. The variables were measured using the Organizational Climate Index and the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the sample and inferential statistics tested the hypothesis of the study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of this study and the analysis of the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. The chapter is divided into four sections: descriptive statistics, reliabilities, correlations, and test of hypotheses.

Descriptive Statistics

Three types of data were collected in the study. Data on school climate came from administering the OCI (Hoy, et al, 1991) instrument to participating teachers. Data on teacher commitment were obtained from administering the OCQ (Mowday et al., 1979) instrument to the same participating teachers. The effects of socioeconomic status (SES) were reflected by participation in the free-reduced lunch program at each school (see Appendix D).

The study focused on elementary schools in Northeast Alabama. Every school and teacher was guaranteed complete anonymity. The OCI and the OCQ instruments were administered at regularly scheduled faculty meetings. Of the 42 elementary schools contacted, 34 principals agreed to participate. Out of the 799 teachers at these schools, a total of 522 teachers volunteered to participate in the study, which resulted in a return rate of 65.3%. The teachers were current employees with at least 1 year of teaching experience.

To perform comparisons of the participating schools, each school was assigned a numerical title. Subtests of the OCI were analyzed as independent variables. Those subtests are collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability. The

SES was also analyzed and included as a control variable. School commitment was analyzed as the one dependent variable. Inferential statistics, especially correlation and multiple regressions, were used to test hypotheses. Cronbach's alphas were run on all measures to determine reliability. Table 15 shows descriptive statistics of means, standard deviations, and range of the tested variables.

Table 15

Descriptive Statistics of Means, Standard Deviations, and Range

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Commitment	87.57	5.20	18.56
Collegial leadership	21.54	3.45	11.65
Teacher professionalism	23.68	1.90	6.65
Academic press	21.88	2.26	9.90
Institutional vulnerability	9.83	1.70	7.38
SES	43.23	20.55	81.90

Reliabilities

The participants in this study responded to two surveys, the OCI and the OCQ. The OCI is a 27-item Likert-type scale that assessed critical aspects of the school climate by focusing on four dimensions of school climate: collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability. The study combined the OCQ instrument that consists of a 15-item, 7-point Likert-type scale to test teacher commitment.

In order to test internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's alpha (α) was used. The four subtests of the OCI (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) contain seven, seven, eight, and five evaluating items, respectively.

The OCQ contains 15 evaluating items for commitment. Table 16 shows Cronbach's alpha for each variable and the number of items measured in the two survey instruments (OCI and OCQ).

Table 16

Cronbach's Alpha for Study Variables and the Number of Items Measured in the Two Survey Instruments

OCI subtest items and OCQ items	Cronbach's alpha	Number of items in the measure
Collegial leadership	.87	7
Teacher professionalism	.82	7
Academic press	.70	8
Institutional vulnerability	.65	5
Commitment	.82	15

Correlations

Correlation analyses were run on the six test variables. Those correlation coefficients supported the hypothesis. As predicted, collegial leadership influenced the commitment of teachers ($r = .64^{**}, p < .01$). Teacher professionalism also influenced teacher commitment ($r = .79^{**}, p < .01$). Similarly, academic press provided support of hypotheses ($r = .65^{**}, p < .01$). Surprisingly, institutional vulnerability showed no relation to teacher commitment. Table 17 shows those findings.

Table 17

Correlations (Pearson) Among the Study's Six Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
Commitment						
Collegial leadership	.64**	--				
Teacher professionalism	.79**	.60**	--			
Academic press	.65**	.37*	.72**	--		
Institutional vulnerability	.14	-.01	-.02	.03	--	
SES	.38*	.26	.33	.45**	-.05	--

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$

The hypothesis predicted a positive relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. The study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between several of the elements of school climate and teacher commitment (see Table 17).

A multiple regression analysis examined the effects of collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability on teacher commitment (see Table 18). The four independent variables were entered simultaneously. The combined influence of the variables 67% of the variance in commitment, ($R = .84$; $p < .01$). Moreover, teacher professionalism was the predictor of commitment ($\beta = .50$ **); $p < .01$).

Table 18

Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Commitment on Predictor Variables (Collegial Leadership, Teacher Professionalism, Academic Press, and Institutional Vulnerability)

Independent Variables	<i>r</i>	Standardized Beta
Collegial leadership	.64**	.26
Teacher professionalism	.79**	.50**
Academic press	.65**	.19
Institutional vulnerability	.14	.15
		<i>R</i> = .84
		Adj. <i>R</i> square = .67**
		** = <i>p</i> < .01

A second multiple regression analysis was performed adding the control variable SES. Because SES was not related to any of the variables, it was not surprising that the correlations remained virtually the same. Again, the combined influence of the variables 67% of the variance in commitment, with the five variables explaining all of the variance ($R = .84$; $p < .01$). Again, teacher professionalism was the predictor of commitment ($\beta = .51^{**}$; $p < .01$). The multiple regressions including SES are summarized in Table 19.

Table 19

Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Commitment on Predictor Variables Including SES (Collegial Leadership, Teacher Professionalism, Academic Press, Institutional Vulnerability, and SES)

Independent Variables	<i>r</i>	Standardized Beta
Collegial leadership	.64	.25
Teacher professionalism	.79**	.51**
Academic press	.65	.15
Institutional vulnerability	.14	.15
SES	.38	.09
		<i>R</i> = .84
		Adj. <i>R</i> square = .67**
		** = <i>p</i> < .01

A multiple regression analysis was performed examining teacher professionalism as the dependent variable and collegial leadership, academic press, and institutional vulnerability as the independent variables (see Table 20). The three independent variables were entered simultaneously. The combined influence of the variables was 61% of the variance in teacher professionalism, ($R = .81$; $p < .01$). Moreover, collegial leadership showed significance to teacher professionalism ($\beta = .40^{**}$; $p < .01$) as did academic press ($\beta = .57^{**}$; $p < .01$).

Table 20

Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Professionalism on Predictor Variables (Collegial Leadership, Academic Press, and Institutional Vulnerability)

Independent Variables	<i>r</i>	Standardized Beta
Collegial leadership	.60**	.40**
Academic press	.79**	.57**
Institutional vulnerability	-.02	-.04
		$R = .81$
		Adj. R square = .61**
		** = $p < .01$

A second multiple regression analysis was performed examining teacher professionalism and adding the controlled variable SES. Again, teacher professionalism was the dependent variable, and collegial leadership, academic press, institutional vulnerability, and SES were the independent variables (see Table 20). The four variables were entered simultaneously. The combined influence of the variables was 60% of the variance in teacher professionalism ($R = .80$; $p < .01$). Moreover, collegial leadership showed significance to teacher professionalism ($\beta = .40^{**}$; $p < .01$) as did academic press ($\beta = .59^{**}$; $p < .01$).

Table 21

Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis for Teacher Professionalism on Predictor Variables including SES (Collegial Leadership, Academic Press, Institutional Vulnerability, and SES)

Independent Variables	<i>r</i>	Standardized Beta
Collegial leadership	.60**	.40**
Academic press	.79**	.59**
Institutional vulnerability	-.02	-.04
SES		<i>R</i> = .80
		Adj. <i>R</i> square = .60**
		** = <i>p</i> < .01

Test of Hypothesis

To test the hypothesis of this study a simple correlation coefficient between each subtest of school climate (OCI) and organizational commitment (OCQ) was computed, and then a multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the multiple correlations between the climate variables and commitment of the teachers.

The correlation analysis supported the hypothesis. Collegial leadership showed significance to teacher commitment ($r = .64, p < .01$). Also, teacher professionalism shows significance to teacher commitment ($r = .79, p < .01$). Similarly, academic press showed significance to teacher commitment ($r = .65, p < .01$). The one variable that showed no significance to teacher commitment was institutional vulnerability ($r = .14, ns$).

When multiple regression analysis was performed with the subtest of the OCI (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) entered as independent variables and the OCQ variable (teacher commitment) entered as the dependent variable, the findings show teacher professionalism as the predictor of teacher commitment ($\beta = .51^{**}; p < .01$).

A second multiple regression analysis was performed, adding the control variable SES with the OCI subtests as the independent variables and the OCQ variable teacher commitment as the dependent variable. The regression analysis remained virtually the same with teacher professionalism as the predictor of teacher commitment ($\beta = .51^{**}; p < .01$).

Another multiple regression analysis was performed with teacher professionalism as the dependent variable and collegial leadership, academic press, and institutional vulnerability as the dependent variables. The findings showed that collegial leadership is a predictor of teacher professionalism ($\beta = .40^{**}; p < .01$). The findings also showed that academic press is a predictor of teacher professionalism ($\beta = .57^{**}; p < .01$).

Again, a second multiple regression analysis was performed with teacher professionalism as the dependent variable and collegial leadership, academic press, and institutional vulnerability as the dependent variables, and SES is added. The regression analysis remained virtually the same with collegial leadership ($\beta = .40^{**}; p < .01$) and academic press ($\beta = .59^{**}; p < .01$) as predictors of teacher professionalism.

Does SES affect commitment? The study shows that SES is significant to one element of teacher commitment, academic press ($r = .45^{**}; p < .01$), as shown on the bivariate table of correlations (see Table 17). Moreover, SES is a predictor of academic press, academic press and collegial leadership are predictors of teacher professionalism, and, finally, teacher professionalism is a predictor of teacher commitment.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. This chapter will discuss the findings, identify implications, and make recommendations for future research.

Discussion of the Findings

Two survey instruments guided this study. The OCI was used to measure school climate, while the OCQ was used to measure teacher commitment. The four subtests of the OCI instrument (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) were the independent variables of the study. The 15 items of the OCQ were compiled to form the study's dependent variable, teacher commitment. Along with these variables, SES was added as a control variable.

As hypothesized, the study shows the significance of school climate to teacher commitment. The correlation coefficient between the four subtests of the OCI and organizational commitment was computed. Collegial leadership showed significance to teacher commitment ($r = .64, p < .01$). Teacher professionalism also showed significance to teacher commitment ($r = .79, p < .01$), as well as academic press ($r = .65, p < .01$). The variables that showed no significance to teacher commitment were institutional vulnerability ($r = .14$) and SES ($r = .03$).

Note that the independent variables (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) are internally correlated in the bivariate

correlations (see Table 17). To control for these internal correlations, multiple regressions analysis were performed.

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between the set of subtests of the OCI (collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and institutional vulnerability) and commitment of teachers. The study showed that only teacher professionalism was a predictor of commitment ($\beta = .50^{**}; p < .01$). When the same multiple regression analysis was performed adding the control variable SES, the betas remained virtually the same ($\beta = .51^{**}; p < .01$).

The findings show that teachers are more likely to be committed to a school when they feel the help and support of other teachers. Collaboration can help teachers experience the rewards of teaching. Interaction with colleagues can provide a sense of professionalism to help overcome a sense of isolationism and build a feeling that “we are all in this together.” Teachers accomplish their jobs with a degree of enthusiasm. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues and interact with other teachers. Committed teachers exercise professional judgment and “go the extra mile” for their students. Therefore, it seems that the collective norm of the teacher culture influences commitment more than any of the other subtests, especially collegial leadership; a finding that has implications for the role of the administrator. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the SES of a school has little effect on teacher commitment.

Another multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the relationship between teacher professionalism and the remaining subtests of the OCI (collegial leadership, academic press, and institutional vulnerability). The study showed that collegial leadership ($\beta = .40^{**}; p < .01$) and academic press ($\beta = .59^{**}; p < .01$) were predictors of teacher

professionalism, but SES had no effect. Again, the same multiple regression analysis was performed adding the control variable SES. The betas again remained virtually the same, collegial leadership ($\beta = .40^{**}; p < .01$) and academic press ($\beta = .57^{**}; p < .01$).

The findings show that a principal's leadership impacts the professionalism of the teacher. The findings support Singh and Billingsley (1998) in that the principal enhances commitment through fostering a collegial environment. Are principals able to explore all sides of topics and admit that others have an opinion? Schools with this type principal are more likely to have committed teachers. The principal treats others as his or her equal and is friendly and approachable. The principal lets the faculty know what is expected of them and defines the high standards for the school. The collegial principal sometimes puts suggestions made by the faculty in operation and shows a willingness to change. An important finding of collegial leadership in school was that the school's SES had no effect in relation to the principal and teacher commitment.

Not only does collegial leadership of the principal have an independent effect on teacher professionalism, the study shows that academic press is another important factor. These findings are consistent with Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990), which found that performance efficacy was identified as one of the primary factors accounting for commitment. When performance efficacy was high, people felt a close tie to their work. Schools set high academic standards for their students and recognize and acknowledge students when those academic standards are met. Parents pressure school leaders for high academic standards and school improvements, while students achieve the goals that have been set. Students also respect others who get good grades.

Not surprisingly, academic press was the only independent test variable affected by SES. These findings agree with Tarter and Hoy (2004), in that student achievement is directly linked

to the SES of the student. The correlations analysis of the study showed that the academic press subtest of the OCI was significant to SES ($\beta = .45^{**}$; $p < .01$) (see Figure 1). These findings are somewhat disturbing, in that it indicates that the poorer suppressed schools have little or no parent involvement. Low SES schools place less importance on high academic standards. Parents do not press for school improvement, while students find it hard to improve on grades and achievement.

The findings can also be interpreted as good news, because a school with a collegial leadership can have committed teachers no matter the SES. Teachers can focus on a school climate that helps and supports other teachers. Principals and teachers accomplish their jobs with interaction and a degree of professionalism. Principals set high academic standards that are achievable for students.

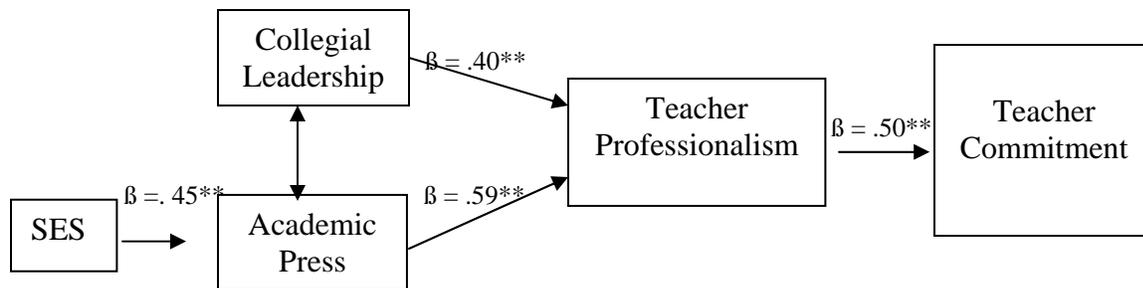


Figure 1. Path analysis diagram.

Implications

The results of the research have implications not only for the principals of the schools that participated in the study, but also for all principals in the field that strive for teacher

commitment. The findings that teacher professionalism dominates teacher commitment emphasize the need for principals to take a greater responsibility toward promoting teacher cooperation and collaboration. Teachers can make greater commitment if principals encourage such behaviors.

Drawing on the subtest items gives the following expectation of teacher behavior if teacher professionalism is to be improved. Teachers must experience support from each other. Teachers must demonstrate a feeling of professional competence for their colleagues and also provide strong social support. When teachers “go the extra mile” with their students and demonstrate enthusiasm, they become “a part of” or they are committed to the organization. The study agrees with Rosenholts and Simpson (1990) that task autonomy and discretion are factors in organizational commitment.

Singh and Billingsley (1998) point out that peer support exerts the largest direct effect on professional commitment with principal leadership also exerting a direct effect on commitment. The principal must create conditions such as grade level meetings where teachers can exercise collaboration. Mentoring programs should be utilized to help insure teachers have a sense of cooperation. Teacher-to-teacher collaboration should be addressed in professional development along with principals utilizing tutorial programs that address group effort issues and organizational acceptance.

The results of this study are consistent with the theory that teachers will be committed to an organization when led by a principal who provides structure, resources, consideration, useful influence, and professional support in a nonthreatening, noncontrolling manner (Tarter et al., 1989). Principals must support their teachers, protect their teachers, and provide opportunity for their teachers to develop social rapport. Principals must explore all sides of topics and

acknowledge that other opinions exist. They should exercise a more flexible decision-making process, adapting behaviors that demonstrate a more shared method. Some examples of the decision-making process may include; parent involvement activities, academic alternatives to achieving objectives in the courses of study, or discipline options concerning students. Teachers' participation in decision making is linked to commitment (Firestone & Pennell, 1993). Principals should listen and weigh options, but principals should also outline to teachers what is expected and be willing to make changes where they are needed.

However, change is one of the thorny problems for all administrators (Tarter et al., 1989). Teachers are typically resistant to change because they are uncertain on how the change will affect them. The principal is the key player in galvanizing teachers together when changes must be made. Principals must treat teachers as professionals when change occurs to create a healthy organization that allows for teacher collaboration.

The study agrees with Riehl and Sipple (1996) in that teachers receiving administrative support are more likely to be committed to the schools goals and values. Teachers associated with an orderly school have a higher level of professional commitment. Principals must develop a climate where their teachers feel they are protected and supported by their principal, and that their principal will deliver for their teachers. Principals must be as committed to their school as the teachers (Tarter et al., 1989).

Not only do teachers need support from the principal, but they also need support from the central administration through the principal (Tarter et al., 1989). The teachers need to see that the principal has influence with superiors. Principals can exercise influence for benefits and rewards by promoting the contributions of the teachers. When central administration rewards teachers, the principal is seen as the go-between who informs central administration of the efforts of

teachers. Increased teacher commitment, shared values, and intent to remain with the organization is obtained when the principal and the central administration has this type of relationship.

The study is consistent with Riehl and Sipple's (1996) study, which states that teacher commitment is a significant factor in efforts to improve school outcomes, especially student academic achievement. Schools should set high achievable goals for students and recognize students when those goals are accomplished. Parents should be encouraging and become involved with the academic activities of the school. They should press for school improvement and exert pressure on children to maintain high standards.

The results of this study are consistent with the theory that teachers will be committed to an organization when teacher professionalism exists in a school. The study shows that a principal who is collegial and provides structure, consideration, useful influence, and professional support for a school enables the school to have a committed teaching staff. The study supports Riehl and Sipple's (1996) study that says administrative support, buffers, teaching help, school influence, autonomy, and order are key variables in teacher commitment. Moreover, the principal who over-controls will likely frustrate faculty initiative and reduce commitment (Tarter et al., 1989).

The findings in the current study agree with the findings of Riehl and Sipple (1996), that academic press is positively related to organizational commitment of teachers in schools. Schools need a collegial leader who sets forth academic goals obtainable for their school. Students must see the importance of getting good grades while parents exert pressure for high academic standards.

Perhaps the most important findings of the study are the effect SES had on teacher commitment. These findings suggest that all schools have the opportunity to have committed

teachers no matter the socioeconomic status. There is a note of optimism here for school administrators. A school that is poor may still have a committed faculty, if the principal finds ways to build up the expertise of the teacher subculture. It is optimistic because the findings suggest that neither the principal nor the school is hostage to the economics of their school environment.

The relationship between school climate and teacher commitment is complex. Climate and teacher commitment are critical components of school effectiveness. Climate influences the behavior of its members (Hoy et al., 2002). The study shows that teacher commitment is shaped by their working conditions, agreeing with Firestone and Pennell (1993). Teachers are willing to commit to a school in which they feel the support of the principal and other teachers. Feedback enhances the commitment of teachers (Firestone & Pennell, 1993).

The study leaves no doubt that teacher professionalism is a significant factor in teacher commitment. Results of the study also show that there is a strong academic expectancy variable in teacher commitment. This study gives rise to some practical implications for teachers, principals, parents, and student academics. The practical implications are that teachers are more committed to schools when they have a cordial professional relationship with other teachers in the school. The practical implications of the study also show that principals should promote teacher collaboration and camaraderie. Schools should set high academic standards and award high academic achievement.

The continued study of organizational climate offers educators a means of better understanding the operation of schools. The commitment of one of the most vital resources (teachers) of any school is of significant importance.

Recommendations

The current study is one piece of the puzzle in understanding more about the relationship between school climate and teacher commitment. The research implications are that further research is needed in school climate and school commitment. The following are possible research opportunities.

A study is needed that includes more variables related to school climate in order to narrow and isolate particular aspects of teacher professionalism, collegial leadership, and academic press. For example, perform a study using the OCDQ and the OCQ with teachers from the elementary school population. It is likely that the more collegial leadership the more enabling the school structure. Identify more items in the survey instrument related to collegial leadership.

Conduct a study with the focus on how students effect teacher commitment. The study could include such variables as class size, gender percentage in class, age of students, and disciplinary problems relating to students. Any of these variables could be the control variable with teacher commitment as the dependent variable (OCQ) and school climate (OCI) as the independent variable.

A study should be performed that focuses on the academic assessment of schools and its relation to teacher commitment. The academic assessment could come from the grading periods of the school or from state achievement tests. These academic assessments could be another variable in the school climate index.

The current study was the result of a sample of only elementary school teachers. The study should be expanded to include middle and high school teachers. Also included in the study should be the demographics of the teacher with educational experience intervals.

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APPENDIX A
ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE INDEX SURVEY

OCI

DIRECTIONS: THE FOLLOWING ARE STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH EACH STATEMENT CHARACTERIZES YOUR SCHOOL BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE.

R O =Rarely Occurs **S O** =Sometimes Occurs **O** =Often Occurs **V F O** =Very Frequent Occurs

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. The principal explores all sides of topics and admits that other opinions exist | RO SO O VFO |
| 2. A few vocal parents can change school policy | RO SO O VFO |
| 3. The principal treats all faculty members as his or her equal | RO SO O VFO |
| 4. The learning environment is orderly and serious | RO SO O VFO |
| 5. The principal is friendly and approachable | RO SO O VFO |
| 6. Select citizens groups are influential with the board | RO SO O VFO |
| 7. The school sets high standards for academic performance | RO SO O VFO |
| 8. Teachers help and support each other | RO SO O VFO |
| 9. The principal responds to pressure from parents | RO SO O VFO |
| 10. The principal lets faculty know what is expected of them | RO SO O VFO |
| 11. Students respect others who get good grades | RO SO O VFO |
| 12. Teachers feel pressure from the community | RO SO O VFO |
| 13. The principal maintains definite standards of performance | RO SO O VFO |
| 14. Teachers in this school believe that their students have the ability to achieve academically | RO SO O VFO |
| 15. Students seek extra work so they can get good grades | RO SO O VFO |
| 16. Parents exert pressure to maintain high standards | RO SO O VFO |
| 17. Students try hard to improve on previous work | RO SO O VFO |
| 18. Teachers accomplish their jobs with enthusiasm | RO SO O VFO |
| 19. Academic achievement is recognized and acknowledged by the school | RO SO O VFO |
| 20. The principal puts suggestions made by the faculty into operation | RO SO O VFO |
| 21. Teachers respect the professional competence of their colleagues | RO SO O VFO |
| 22. Parents press for school improvement | RO SO O VFO |
| 23. The interactions between faculty members are cooperative | RO SO O VFO |
| 24. Students in this school can achieve the goals that have been set for them | RO SO O VFO |
| 25. Teachers in this school exercise professional judgment | RO SO O VFO |
| 26. The school is vulnerable to outside pressures | RO SO O VFO |
| 27. The principal is willing to make changes | RO SO O VFO |
| 28. Teachers "go the extra mile" with their students | RO SO O VFO |
| 29. Teachers provide strong social support for colleagues | RO SO O VFO |
| 30. Teachers are committed to their students | RO SO O VFO |

APPENDIX B
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE
(MOWDAY, STEERS, AND PORTER, 1979)

1. I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful.
2. I talk up this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for.
3. I feel very little loyalty to this organization. (R)
4. I would accept almost any type of job assignment in order to keep working for this organization.
5. I find that my values and the organization's values are very similar.
6. I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization.
7. I could just as well be working for a different organization as long as the type of work was similar. (R)
8. This organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.
9. It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave this organization. (R)
10. I am extremely glad that I chose this organization to work for over others I was considering at the time I joined.
11. There's not too much to be gained by sticking with this organization indefinitely. (R)
12. Often, I find it difficult to agree with this organization's policies on important matters relating to its employees. (R)
13. I really care about the fate of this organization.
14. For me this is the best of all possible organizations for which to work.
15. Deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part. (R)

Note: Responses to each item was measured on a 7-point scale with scale point anchors labeled: (1) strongly disagree: (2) moderately disagree: (3) slightly disagree: (4) neither disagree nor agree: (5) slightly agree: (6) moderately agree: (7) strongly agree. An "R" denotes a negatively phrased and reverse scored item.

APPENDIX C
IRB APPROVAL

Office for Research
Office of the Director of
Research Compliance

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA
R E S E A R C H

March 13, 2009

Larry Don Smith
Department of Educational Leadership
College of Education
Box 870302

Re: IRB : EX-09-CM-017, School Climate and Teacher Commitment

Dear Mr. Smith:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given exempt approval according to 45 CFR part 46.101(b)(2) as outlined below:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

This approval expires on 3/12/10. You will receive a notice of expiration 90 days in advance. If the study continues beyond that date, you must complete the appropriate portion of the Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you modify the application, please complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. When the study closes, please complete the Continuing Review and Closure for closure.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this application, please include the assigned IRB application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,



Carpanato T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director of Research Compliance & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama



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APPENDIX D
PARTICIPATION IN THE FREE-REDUCED LUNCH PROGRAM
AT EACH SCHOOL

Schools	Free/reduced Lunch %
1-10010	66.0
2-10040	38.9
3-10045	50.4
4-10060	88.5
5-10065	35.2
6-10070	37.9
7-10080	39.4
8-10085	93.4
9-10100	37.8
10-10110	70.5
11-10120	17.2
12-10125	99.1
13-10150	49.2
14-10160	31.6
15-10190	28.8
16-10210	92.6
17-11090	62.3
18-11140	61.9
19-12004	48.4
20-12005	58.9
21-12010	74.2
22-12020	49.6
23-12030	48.9
24-12040	71.1
25-12050	43.7
26-12070	58.9
27-12090	66.0
28-12100	52.4
29-12105	36.0
30-12110	46.0
31-12120	55.5
32-12140	49.2
33-12240	92.4
34-12270	78.4

APPENDIX E
INVITATION SCRIPT FOR PRINCIPALS

Dear (Dr., Mr. Or Ms.) Principal,

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Alabama. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education I am conducting research for my dissertation regarding organizational climate's effect on organizational commitment. My doctoral committee has approved this study.

Fifty elementary schools in the state of Alabama have been selected at random to participate in this study. I seek your permission to administer two survey instruments. One is the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) that measures the climate of the school. The other is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) that measures the commitment of the teachers.

With your permission, I will administer the surveys. The surveys will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Teacher participation is voluntary. Teachers' complete anonymity is guaranteed. They will not be asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code will be placed on the survey. The school will not be identified in the study.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Don Smith

APPENDIX F
INVITATION SCRIPT FOR TEACHERS

Dear Teachers,

I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Alabama. I am conducting a dissertation study about organizational climate's effect on organizational commitment. This study has two survey instruments; one is the Organizational Climate Index (OCI) that measures the climate of schools. The other is the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) that measures the commitment of teachers.

You have been identified as a viable candidate for this study because you are elementary school teachers in the state of Alabama. I realize that your time is valuable, but I assure you that the information you provide is important. It will help inform educational leaders as to the importance of school climate and its relationship to job commitment.

This whole process will take less than 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. Your complete anonymity is guaranteed. You will not be asked to sign the survey questionnaire and no identifying code will be placed on the surveys. Also, your school will not be identified in the study

Thank you for your time,