

High School Teacher Perceptions of Empowerment

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ABSTRACT

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As the responsibilities of principals become more complex and as accountability becomes more evident in K-12 cultures, it becomes increasingly important that high school principals be trained to empower teachers. This paper examined the research concerning the conditions of the empowerment of teachers. More specifically, it measured high school teachers' perspectives concerning their levels of empowerment by their principals based on the four domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. This quantitative study was designed to answer three questions. First, how do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four school conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture? Second, what are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact? Third, how do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment? The study modified an existing survey developed for measuring the level of empowerment of workers in corporations. The survey was used in this study as the basis for determining the perceived level of empowerment of high school teachers in three schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division. Analysis of the responses revealed that school culture was rated significantly higher than the other three empowerment conditions. High school teachers rated themselves significantly higher in the meaning and competence domains of empowerment. None of the four domains of empowerment related significantly to the meaning domain. The

principal training condition was the only domain significantly related to the competence domain, and the condition of school culture was significantly related to self-determination. Additionally, the teacher leadership condition was significantly related to the impact domain only.

DEDICATION

In loving memory of my parents who always encouraged me to pursue my dreams and reach my goals by teaching me to, "...always finish what you have started." I know that they are smiling down proudly on this accomplishment.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Through much of the twentieth century, education modeled its leadership system on industry's top-down management model. Schools today face new challenges that may render this model outdated. As teachers become more involved in decision-making, the role and function of the principal will likewise change. Working as part of a team may require principals to examine and redefine leadership. Teacher leaders and principals will need to rethink the assumption that a principal is the single source for instructional leadership. As teachers and principals redesign their roles, the search for new leadership models expands (Hart, 1995).

Based on Schlechty's research (1997) on school reform, there is evidence that public concern about the quality of education has been at an all-time high and the public's confidence that educators are able to fix the problems, has been low. Even today, few school divisions have included teacher leaders in their planning, assessment, and decision-making processes. They may not recognize that teacher leaders are positioned to provide knowledge and leadership as they move beyond their classrooms to shape which school- and division-level policies best fit student and community needs. As schools begin to provide teachers with more power and voice in matters directly related to teaching and learning, administrators will be tapping an important resource (Hart, 1995).

Principals educated to function under power-centered role expectations often lack the social skills and knowledge necessary to practice a shared leadership model (Hart & Murphy, 1994). In contrast, principals in schools with strong teacher leadership have moved beyond the traditional views of power-centered leaders to share the vision, key decision-making, and

motivation of faculty and staff. Administrators now view leadership as a role necessitating the building of learning organizations rather than protecting a power center (Hart & Murphy, 1994). Teachers, parents, and school administrators are now making decisions that once were made by the principal alone (Hart, 1995). A respectful relationship between principal and teacher leaders may become the key to lasting school improvement. The way that the principal supports and promotes teacher leaders and the role principals play in these groups will determine the success that teacher and principal leaders will have influencing student achievement.

During the past two decades, the United States has experienced unprecedented attempts to renew and reform public education. Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), forces inside and outside of school walls have demanded systemic reform of formal school practices. Coupled with this heightened interest in bringing changes to school practices, the business community in this country has also devoted time and interest in restructuring itself. *A Nation at Risk* provided the impetus for a series of reports indicating the need to restructure public schools in order to improve the status of education in America.

Leadership in schools has traditionally consisted of top-down mandates with little input from classroom practitioners (Tyack, 1974). Developing programs and reforms has never been considered the work of teachers. Instead, it has been the teacher's job to carry out plans and programs developed by others at higher levels. However, because teachers are always involved in the implementation of reforms, Fullan (1993) suggests that they should be given an active role in bringing about any type of change in schools.

Within the arena of public school reform, teacher empowerment and participation in the decision-making process are of paramount importance. Murray, Tinney, Lasseter, Atkins, and

Puckett (1993) studied a collaborative team of teachers and administrators to assess various perceptions of site-based decision-making throughout the state of Georgia. The researchers found that the publication of *A Nation at Risk* placed a significant amount of external and internal pressures on public education reform. The 400 administrators and teachers who responded to the study indicated that the shared decision-making process should be closely monitored and updated to meet the changing needs and wants of the school as it is a recursive process. In addition, they found that the more decision making is shared, the more uncertainty both groups experience.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding the degree to which principals have empowered them. The study included an instrument to survey high school teachers regarding the effect principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture have on the four domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

Research Questions

1. How do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four school conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture?
2. What are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact?
3. How do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment?

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 graphically displays the conceptual framework for the study.

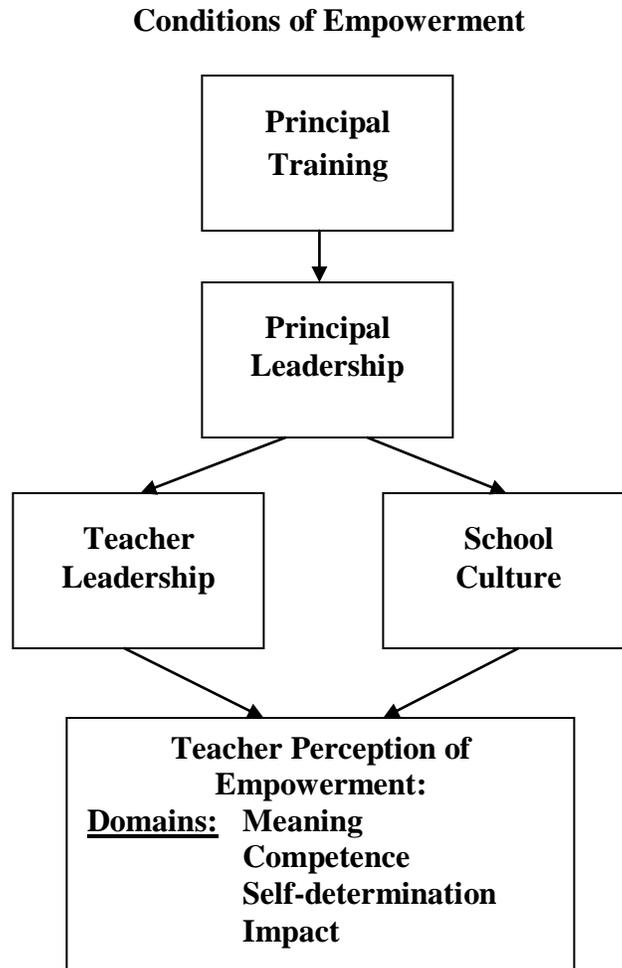


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for High School Teacher Perceptions of Empowerment

Overview of Methods

A survey was conducted to measure the high school teachers' perceptions of the level they are empowered by their principal. Teachers at four high schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division were surveyed to determine the level at which the high school teachers in these schools perceive themselves to be empowered.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following definitions are used.

Competence—an individual’s belief and capability to perform fixed tasks with skill (Gist, 1987).

Conditions—the factors or behaviors of principal empowerment.

Culture—reflects the shared ideas, assumptions, values, and beliefs, that give a school its identity and standards for expected behaviors (Tableman & Herron, 2004).

Domains—a means of measuring the level of empowerment of educators through meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Henkin et al, 2007).

Empowerment—“getting someone to do something they ‘want’ them to do” (LoVette, Holland, & McCall, 1999, p. 2).

Impact—the degree to which an individual can influence outcomes in the workplace (Ashforth, 1989).

Leadership—“an individual value system that embraces equity, empowerment, and moral purpose” (Harris, 2002, p.5).

Meaning—the value of a work goal or purpose that is judged in relation to an individual’s own beliefs or expectations (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).

Power—“getting someone to do something they ‘don’t want’ to do” (LoVette et al., 1999, p. 2).

Principal Leadership—the individual’s value system that embraces equity, empowerment, and moral purpose (LoVette et al., 1999).

Principal Training—learned tasks that enable an administrator to become an instructional leader (LoVette et al., 1999).

Psychological Empowerment—“focuses on intrinsic motivation, ...a mind-set that employees have about their organization,...and the state of mind where an employee perceives that he or she is exercising efficacious control over meaningful work” (Dee, Henkin, & Duemer, 2003, p. 258).

Self-Determination—an individual’s perception of choice in initiating and sustaining their action with tasks (Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989).

Self-Efficacy—“perceived judgments of one’s ability to effect change” (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004, p. 573).

Structural Empowerment—“uses the basic or built-in means to motivate others” (Dee et al., 2003, p. 258).

Teacher Leadership—“Teacher leadership is the process by which teachers, individually or collectively, influence their colleagues, principals, and other members of the school community” (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 287)

Significance

This study builds upon the existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of principal/corporate supervisor or manager behaviors for empowering workers of Fortune 500 companies or teachers. The study used an existing instrument, validated in a previous study that measures the level of empowerment in four domains. The instrument was used to assess the effectiveness of principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture used to empower teachers. The researcher used three high schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division. By focusing on the leadership of high school principals, this study adds to previous research conducted with a modified version of the instrument in elementary and middle schools, by providing a better

understanding of the importance of the leadership of high school principals that empowers teachers.

Overview

This document consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 includes an introduction, the purpose of the study, research questions, the conceptual framework, an overview of the methodology, definitions, and significance of the problem. Chapter 2 includes a review of the related literature. The methodology for the research study is described in Chapter 3. The findings and analysis of the research data are summarized in Chapter 4, and Chapter 5 presents the conclusion and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into five sections: the introduction, the conditions of empowerment, the domains of empowerment, the domains that affect empowerment, and a summary. The conditions of empowerment are discussed using literature related to principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture. Next, the historical nature of the domains of empowerment is reviewed along with the domains that affect empowerment.

Introduction

Most research studies concerning empowerment have been conducted in the private sector and have been used as a basis for research in school divisions. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) were the first to conduct research that conceptualized empowerment as being psychological in nature. They determined that four domains exist within empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

There are few research-based studies of what school principals do to empower teachers. Blasé & Blasé (1996) published a qualitative study that investigated how teachers perceived the characteristics of principals that influenced their sense of empowerment. They used an open-ended research method that offered no definitions of the words, *leadership* or *empowerment*. Data were collected from 11 schools (five elementary, three middle, and three high schools). All of the schools were members of Carl Glickman's Georgia-based League of Professional Schools. The 11 schools were committed to a shared decision-making structure that promoted collaboration and involvement for school excellence, and each had principals who were considered to be highly successful (1996). The 285 teacher participants answered survey questions as to why they considered their principal's behaviors to be empowering. The teachers

were also asked to write about two of the leadership characteristics listed on each page of the two-page survey. They also were asked about the impact the behaviors had on cognitive, affective, and behavioral parts of teacher empowerment. The results indicated that the overall influence principals have on teacher empowerment was a mean score of 6.1 on a scale of 1 to 7(1996). In this study, teachers suggested that the following principal strategies and characteristics were the factors that gave them a sense of empowerment: demonstrating trust in teachers; developing shared governance structures; encouraging/listening to individual input; encouraging individual teacher autonomy; encouraging innovation, creativity, and risk-taking; giving rewards; providing support; and caring with enthusiasm; optimism, honesty, an friendliness (1996).

Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) conducted three studies to find a “reliable measure to capture principals’ sense of efficacy” (p. 573). Their study was built on previous research by Leithwood and Steinbach (1995) which suggested the thought processes of principals were directly related to what principals do every day and why they do things a certain way. Further, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) believed that the principal was the major force within a school for any type of change. They felt that a “largely unexplored avenue to understanding principal motivation and behavior was the principals’ sense of efficacy” (2004, p. 573).

Using the notion that beliefs about self-efficacy could be used as “predictors of individual” principal behavior conditions, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2004) found their first two studies to be weak. The first study used a sample of 104 administrators; however, it had weak results because the research tool used was “of insufficient stability and reliability to be useful for future study” (2004, p. 577). The second study, which again used a sample of 104 administrators, had weak factor analysis results. The researchers used a new research tool for the

third study, modifying an instrument that was used in a previous study (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) to measure teacher self-efficacy. The sample for the study included 544 principals from Virginia, of which only 28% responded. Even with the low response rate the researchers felt that, with additional testing, the *Principal's Self-Efficacy Survey* (PSES) was the best measure because “the instrument was context specific without sacrificing the ability to make comparisons across contexts” (2001, p. 582). The researchers contend that “it is not enough to hire and retain the most capable principals—they must also believe that they can successfully meet the challenges of the task at hand” (2001, p. 582).

Conditions of Empowerment

Principal Training

In 1984, Johnson, Johnson, Holubec, and Roy indicated that effective schools research led to changes in the role of the principal. Some people even questioned whether or not principals received enough training to really be the “instructional leader” of a school. Principals may in fact have a very limited knowledge base but still be accountable for national mandates.

Whether or not principals have been trained to provide empowerment to teachers is addressed in *Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of “Empowering Activities” by Their Building Principals* (LoVette et al., 1999). The study questioned why principals have not been trained in the area of empowering teachers; it also explained that there is urgency for the training due to the responsibility and ownership of the school's governance system that teachers are being given. LoVette et al. (1999) further suggested that current principal training programs recognize the need for instruction concerning the value of empowerment and, consequently, provide some preparation for this training. However, in the study some teachers pointed out that principals from “past” training programs did not receive enough training and/or do not choose to share

power with their teachers. Survey participants suggested through their comments that many of the principals who had training relative to the advantages of empowering teachers chose not to use the approaches.

LoVette et al. (1999) posed the following question: “If empowerment of staff is related to teacher performance, has enough training been provided to principals to enable them to empower teachers?” (p. 3). Top-down leadership reform was explored in this research which determined the need for principal training in how to empower teachers. Another finding of the study suggested that there existed only a few principal leadership training programs to prepare principals for leading fundamental reforms (1999). The training of principals to empower teacher leadership is obviously needed based on LoVette et al.’s (1999) research.

Thus far, the research studies have generally emphasized the training of teachers for empowerment rather than the training of principals. This may be related to principals’ lack of comfort with risk that is associated with allowing teachers to lead. Training for principals is needed not only to shape the school culture, as indicated in the Suranna and Moss study (2000), but also to know and understand what has or has not worked.

Spiri (2001) indicated that principals from Philadelphia believed they had not received the proper training needed to foster organizational change within their schools. Many of the principals felt that the district’s central office held them accountable for student achievement but did not give them the authority to make decisions that would promote school excellence. Many emphasized they needed training or the communication of ideas and philosophies to assist them in running their schools. Feeling supported and guided through training from the central office was a high priority of the principals involved in Spiri study (2001).

Spiri (2001) further explained that one of the implications of her study was that principals

must be engaged in the design and implementation of plans for change through their own professional development, which is similar to what teachers should experience. The Philadelphia School District did not provide this training for principals, which left them feeling passive, resistant, and helpless (2001). The study gave the principals an avenue to discuss their work and frustrations, thus enabling them to explore possible solutions to their problems. In fact, this experience could possibly be a model for the professional development that many principals should have had to begin with (2001).

Tschannen-Moren and Gareis (2004) found that training programs that include mastery experiences are most useful to principals. Bandura (2000) suggested the following types of mastery experience for principals to develop self-efficacy: (a) guided mastery, which uses modeling or demonstrating to learn a skill; (b) cognitive mastery, which uses thinking skills to master a skill; and (c) self-regulatory competence, which uses personal monitoring, personal appraisal, personal goal setting, and personal motivation (p. 583).

The Wallace Foundation (2012) determined that principal training in the area of “management of people, data, and processes” (p. 12) was important. More specifically, the Foundation said that principals needed to be good managers. Analyzing statistical data and organizing it so teachers can work collaboratively with the data was another point made. Training is necessary for principals to learn how to approach tasks and follow the tasks through to completion. The study also determined that the following six processes are important for principals to know how to complete: planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring. Principals should be trained to perform these essential processes in order to be effective administrators (2012).

Principal Leadership

LoVette et al.'s work (1999) suggest that a principal's leadership style and management skills affect both the culture and climate of the school. These authors found that principals indicated that their jobs had become much more complex, and that many would be retiring within the next 10 years. The researchers also pointed out that future administrators would have to use time more efficiently and equitably. Further, they observed that using a shared decision-making governance style might aid in this change (1999).

The qualitative research of Suranna & Moss (2000) suggested that teacher leadership is determined or fostered by the behaviors of the school principal. Many of the 12 participating elementary school teachers said it was important for teachers and principals to share the same goals and work together as partners. A majority of the teacher participants expressed how important it was for principals to support the work of teachers and serve as facilitators of teacher leadership. The study also concluded that if principals allow themselves to be perceived as hierarchical or bureaucratic, without considering the views of teachers, they could become a major hindrance in developing teacher leadership (2000). The researchers found that, although not all participants were familiar with the term *teacher leadership*, the participants were still able to articulate their perceptions during the study (2000). Using a two-step coding system, the researchers were able to organize the teachers' perceptions into the following four broad categories: professional development, great teaching, taking a stand, and facilitators and hindrances. The participant perception that emerged from the analysis of Suranna and Moss' data was that they had never received principal training on how to foster relationships (2002).

Spiri's (2001) case studies of 12 Philadelphia elementary and middle school principals were also designed to determine how the principals experienced transition. Factors were

identified that helped or hindered principal leadership efforts to empower teachers by implementing educational reforms for school excellence. The study also explored the nature of emerging responsibilities in which principals have interpreted their roles as instructional leaders for student achievement. Many of the participating principals reported they were becoming more vulnerable and less anonymous as the focus of accountability shifted from district to individual school (2001). According to Spiri (2001), the 12 principals still had a powerful commitment to education, but were powerless to understand what was expected of them. The principals in the study often felt that they lacked organizational support for change. A feeling of despair and frustration as to how to empower teachers was evident among a few participants. Some felt that they would be more vulnerable if they were perceived as risk-takers. These principals defined instructional leadership, not in terms of outcomes for teaching and learning, but rather in terms of activities in which they engaged (2001). The study did not assess principals' effectiveness as school leaders, nor did it critique the decisions the principals made or failed to make; instead, the study sought to understand the factors that influenced the participants' interpretation of their empowerment behaviors (2001).

Anafara, Roney, and Mahar (2003) used both qualitative and quantitative data to document school excellence efforts at a middle school. The researchers began their study by defining school excellence as "the ways in which schools: raise standards, enhance quality, increase efficiency, and achieve greater success in promoting pupils' moral, social, and cultural development" (2003, p. 3). They further explained that many professional organizations place a major emphasis on continuous school excellence efforts. Data-driven decision-making is a useful way to guide excellence in schools. In fact, the authors suggest that data is the essential element that separates successful schools from unsuccessful schools (2003). The researchers

found that, when major decisions were made at the central office level, principals experience the inability to lead which was a major impediment to school reform efforts. However, accountability had pushed many school districts into focusing on initiatives for school excellence (2003).

In the LoVette et al. (1999) quantitative study, the researchers also wanted to know how teachers perceive their building principal. Five of the research questions related principal activities, age, gender, school level, and school size to empowering-type activities. The *Principal Profile Survey* used in the study included items on various aspects of the principal's performance and personal qualities. These items on performance and personal qualities were divided among five categories: (a) management, (b) relationships, (c) delegation, (d) personal qualities, and (e) negative qualities or actions. The researchers used the survey responses of 66 graduate students in the Educational Leadership Program at Northeast Louisiana University during the 1999 spring, summer, and fall sessions. The students were full-time teachers who took classes in the evenings. The authors concluded that principals were using empowering-type activities and that the data analysis did not support the idea that principals were not using such activities (1999). Even though teachers informally told the researchers that principals did not use empowering activities/approaches, the data did not support these observations. The researchers felt that perhaps the teachers indicated their principals did not use empowering activities because the teachers were indirectly asking for more input and opportunities to be stakeholders in a shared decision-making process (1999). The research also found that principals' ages and genders had no significance on their performance as leaders of schools. The researchers further explained the "halo" response theory, where participants fear that their responses might identify them. They also noted that if participants gave low ratings to their principals on empowerment

activities, they also gave low ratings on the remaining parts of the survey. High principal empowerment activity ratings yielded high ratings in other areas (1999).

Another study, the United Kingdom qualitative research study, *Effective Leadership in Schools Facing Challenging Contexts* (Harris, 2002), was funded by the National College for School Leadership. The major purpose of the study was to explore effective leadership styles in 10 secondary schools representing an array of socioeconomic and cultural differences as well as differing levels of student performance. The schools were “facing challenging circumstances” as chosen by the Department for Education and Skills in England (2002, p. 3). Harris began her comparative qualitative research study by researching effective leadership styles used in the schools to achieve school excellence. Harris discovered that head teachers, or more commonly known as principals in the United States, were described as possessing unconventional leadership styles when they orchestrated change in at-risk schools. She further found that using a variety of leadership approaches was most effective for achieving school excellence (2002). The study suggested that the head teachers, or “heads,” operated a shared or distributed type of leadership that built on positive relationships and empowered others to lead (2002). One of the most compelling themes of the study was that the head teachers gave others the responsibility to lead. Head teachers used a democratic leadership approach in these schools to deliberately distribute management throughout the school. The researcher found that all 10 schools demonstrated teacher leadership, which influenced shared problem solving and decision making. Harris states, “Leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances is defined by an individual value system that embraces equity, empowerment, and moral purpose” (Harris2002, p.5).

Heads trusted and respected their teachers enough to create a shared vision together as a

school. From this sense of direction came a shared set of core values. Harris found strong evidence within the study that the school vision was centered on the heads' personal values such as respect, fairness, equality, caring, integrity, and honesty (2002). Many interviewees noted that heads used a people-centered leadership style, modeling their personal values each day. The staff and students felt motivated by the shared decision-making process and were encouraged that student achievement was emphasized.

In order to manage change, heads distributed leadership responsibilities using a variety of strategies while working with individuals and teams. These strategies included: giving praise, involving others in shared decision-making, and fostering professional independence (Harris, 2002). The heads reported that they would change their leadership style to fit particular situations facing their schools at different times. For instance, during the governmental pre-inspection stage, they adopted a more top-down management style. Then, during the actual inspection stage, they adopted a more supportive form of leadership to support their staff during the process. Appropriately, switching leadership styles for various situations was a strong characteristic of the heads involved in this study (Harris, 2002).

In order to maintain morale and motivation, heads concentrated on promoting staff development with their staffs. Harris (2002) noted that heads promoted in-service training, visits to other schools, and peer observations as a means of building the self-esteem of staff members. Placing an emphasis on staff development promoted the idea that teachers are the "most important resource" (2002, p. 10). Taking risks and fostering innovative thinking were held in high regard by heads. Additionally, each school in the study focused on improving teaching and learning within their schools.

The heads involved in the Harris study found that developing and maintaining

relationships were key points to relationship building. Interviewed staff and students felt that the heads were fair, open to ideas, honest, and genuine (Harris, 2002). When interviewed, head's shared the importance of admitting to making mistakes and engaging in self-criticism. They promoted leadership by others and emphasized the importance of people rather than systems. Harris summarizes the interviewees' thoughts stating "this form of leadership starts not from the basis of power and control but from the ability to act with others and to enable others to act" (Harris, p. 11).

In summary, Harris' research found that effective leaders: (a) managed tensions and problems, (b) were people-centered, (c) distributed leadership to others, and (d) were able to combine moral purpose and leadership through collaboration with staff, students and parents. The leaders within this study were all able to convince their schools and communities that the school's vision was worth pursuing, thus changing the school for the better. The participants represented the majority of groups within the school community.

In another study, a survey conducted by Simkin, Charner, & Suss (2010) asked educational administrators about 21 educational issues. These issues ranged from special education and English language learning to school violence and dropout rate. When asked to rank the 21 issues, the administrators participating in the study ranked principal leadership as second only to teacher quality (2010).

The Wallace Foundation (2012) surveyed a number of school administrators and policymakers and determined that principal leadership was one of the most important aspects of public school education. According to the Wallace Foundation, the principal continues to be the main source of leadership authority in a school building. With this authority, effective principals work with others in the school to create the school's vision for student success. The study

contends that, in the last 10 years, the role of the principal has shifted from being solely a school manager to being held to the same high expectations that others in the school have faced for years. The essential element of principal leadership is the expectation that they will manage, and, additionally, lead the school through shared expectations and vision of standards (2012). Further, principals are responsible for monitoring student achievement and improving instructional practices within their school. These instructional practices are reinforced for teachers by providing professional learning to improve teaching and learning. Ultimately, principal leaders grow and nurture leadership in others, with the hope of improving teacher practice (2012).

Mendels (2012) used the Wallace Foundation study as the basis of her article, *The Effective Principal*. Mendels stated that the following five practices of principals effect leadership in education: shaping a vision; school climate; building leadership, improving instruction, and management of a school. Mendels wrote that not only do principals need to know the five practices, they also need to know how to use them properly. She further states that principals are the “guides along the path in education” (2012, p. 58) for emerging teacher leaders.

Teacher Leadership

In *Teachers Who Lead: The Rhetoric of Reform and the Realities of Practice*, Wasley (1991) states that teacher leadership “is fueled by important and conclusive research conducted over 20 years that demonstrates that teachers, too long silent and isolated in classrooms, must take more leadership in the restructuring of public education” (p. 5). Wasley used the following guiding question to interview teachers in three case studies: What is the nature of teacher leadership as it currently exists today? The researcher contended that defining teacher leadership

was a major issue in her study. She noted in her research that some teacher leaders found it difficult to define their leadership role because they felt it was meaningless to spend time talking about the topic. They feared that the discussion might challenge the long established leadership norm of the principal (1991).

In the qualitative research study, Suranna and Moss (2000) probed the nature of teacher leadership as perceived by elementary school teachers. They based their study on the 1995 Holmes Group premise that teacher empowerment is the key to educational reform and used the research of Smylie and Denny (1990) to determine how teacher leaders defined their roles. Teacher leaders used words and phrases such as “facilitator, helper, catalyst for improvement, emotional support, and source of knowledge” (Suranna & Moss, p. 2). The researchers later used these words and phrases as descriptors within their study. They believed that, if teachers were to be the change agents of schools, they would need to exhibit leadership characteristics across a number of areas. They contend that teachers should be in roles of leadership, which entails principals empowering the teachers to play a major role in what actually occurs in schools (2000). Six of the 12 elementary teachers who participated in the study had difficulty defining the term *teacher leadership*. Although not all were familiar with the term, all were able to articulate their perceptions during interviews. Many participants were reassured and put at ease when told that a focus of the study was to obtain their personal views on the topic of leadership (2000). A majority of study participants expressed the view that teachers in leadership roles who participate in professional development would enhance the school as a whole. Engaging in these types of activities is not easy for many teachers as they are stretched to the limit with every day classroom responsibilities. For example, “taking turns” in leadership was an idea that researchers Suranna and Moss (2000) discussed within their research. Many participants agreed

that mentoring teachers was another aspect of leadership that made teachers better instructional leaders in the classroom. Participants believed that a true teacher leader is someone who wants to have a say in the way the school plans for academic success. Additionally, they said great teaching is another way teachers could show leadership (2000). Many participants stated that teacher leaders “take a stand” for what they believe is the right thing and are willing to express their thoughts to others. The researchers note that even in a school with top-down management, true teacher leaders are willing to challenge issues that are of concern to them. According to them, teacher leaders will not close their classroom doors and allow decisions to be made without their opinions being heard (2000).

An additional focus of the Suranna and Moss (2000) study was related to whether or not a teacher facilitates or hinders change in a school. The relationship between teacher leaders and principals can hinder or motivate teacher leadership. However, partnering between teachers and the principal was also discussed as a strong component for building teacher leadership. The majority of the participants felt that it was important for the principal and teacher leaders to work together as a team to attain school goals. Many also said that principals who support the work of teachers were able to act as facilitators of teacher leadership. In contrast, principals who thrived in a hierarchical environment may truly hinder any effort toward teacher leadership (2000). The researchers focused on the perception teachers had regarding the nature of teacher leadership. They emphasized that the major conclusion of their study is the idea that teacher empowerment is key to producing educational reform (2000).

Harris (2002) found that within secondary schools, effective head teachers shared the leadership with their teachers. Teachers were at first skeptical but soon realized that the heads, “were not just delegating headship tasks” (2002, p. 8). The teachers felt empowered not only

with day-to-day roles, but also with being asked to be a member of the governing boards that English schools have within their school communities. Harris pointed out in her study that, “Within schools, professional capital is created as a fabric of reciprocal responsibilities and mutual support” (2002, p. 12). She further suggests that the roles teachers possess are cultivated and invested in by heads of the schools. The heads in this study involved their teachers in decision-making and trusted them professionally. In a sense, they developed the professional and intellectual aspect of teacher roles for school excellence.

Anafara et al. (2003) conducted a mixed design study that explored the roles of empowered middle school teachers in establishing school excellence. The way in which a school embraces the school improvement plan process by empowering teachers was examined. The study “emphasized the need for the involvement of all stakeholders” (2003, p. 42). Any time a change occurred or when a new principal seemed reluctant to support their ideas, the teachers abandoned their efforts and the teacher leadership roles that were established by empowerment fell by the wayside and the reform failed (2003).

Danello (2008) conducted a qualitative study that examined teacher leadership through knowledge skills and developmental influences. The researcher used six teachers in one school district and conducted two interviews, three e-journals, one observation, five portfolio items, a profile sheet, and administrator recommendations. In conducting a cross-case analysis, Danello found that teacher leaders need opportunities to see leadership in action. She further concluded that teachers needed an opportunity to practice the leadership skills they observed. Formal training was found to be at a minimum. However, some teachers already possessed internal leadership characteristics that enabled them to create a decision-making relationship with principals. Danello concluded that fellowship building was the key to teacher leadership (2008).

According to the Wallace Foundation (2012), effective principal leaders need to depend on teacher leaders to assist in the achievement of the school. It is essential that principals develop the leadership that is motivational for many new teacher leaders. The study suggests that, when teachers are motivated to lead, the work place is more harmonious. A shared leadership approach leads to higher achievement and a stronger school community of learners (2012).

School Culture

LoVette et al. (1999) suggested that teacher leaders build trust by engaging in supportive communication, building a support group, developing shared influence, and building a set of relationships which allows them to be productive. Principals who share their school governance role were determined in their efforts to build and support an environment of trust. Some were conflicted about how many empowerment activities they should thrust upon teachers. Principals exhibited trust by encouraging teacher involvement, eliminating intimidation, and by subtly facilitating empowerment. Principals, however, must question whether they are really giving teachers empowerment activities or are they merely offering the appearance of it. Together, teachers and principals believe that building trust is critical to creating a culture in which teachers are empowered (1999).

School culture was also an important theme in the study conducted by Anafara et al. (2003). School improvement research has contributed to the theory and practice of school-level change in that it has endorsed professional development, has focused on the importance of school culture, and has emphasized the need for involvement of school stakeholders. Accountability has pushed many school districts to focus on school improvement initiatives (2003, p. 2). The study suggests that principals must first understand the culture of the school

before they can reshape it to create change for school excellence. In order to understand the culture, a principal must be able to “see” it or sense its existence (2003).

Harris (2002) also emphasizes the importance of identifying the culture of the school and building strong relationships to empower others to lead. Schools that are motivated to achieve school excellence must work together as a learning community. The study found that a climate of collaboration and a commitment to work together was found within the schools. This climate took time to cultivate within and outside the school. Social trust allowed for increased communication between staff and parents. The heads in the study also realized that “family, school, and community relationships directly affect student outcomes” (2002, p.12).

School culture is the deeply embedded “personality” of a school and its setting. School culture consists of the shared experiences both in and out of the school, as well as the traditions, celebrations, and the sense of community, family, and team (Wagner, 2004). The school culture must communicate the freedom to take risks, to experiment, and to share ideas and feelings. The principal’s leadership style and management skills affect both the culture and climate of the school (LoVette et al., 1999). Since, principals have a great deal of influence on a school’s culture (Mitchell & Tucker, 1992), they should encourage a climate of excellence that enhances instruction and student growth. Other researchers agree that school culture is an important, but often overlooked, component of school improvement (Levine & Lezotte, 1995).

Researchers, Anafara et al. (2003) expressed that a healthy school culture is essential before any school improvement or change reform is introduced to the school. They describe a healthy school culture as “...one in which the technical, managerial, and institutional levels work in harmony” (p. 11). Building positive relationships and empowering others to lead were ways schools were finding success in their quest to increase student achievement. Understanding the

culture of the school along with the roles of teachers enabled head teachers in Harris's study (2002) to select a leadership style that complimented the needs of their school.

Vanderbilt University researchers Porter et al. (2008) determined that a healthy school culture consists of not only the essentials, such as safety and order within the building, but also the caring and receptive nature of teachers toward students. According to the Wallace Foundation (2012), effective principals concentrate on building a school community that is: "upbeat, welcoming, solution-oriented, no-blame, professional environment" (p. 6).

Domains of Empowerment

Conger and Kanungo (1988) first created a five-stage process of empowerment. This process allowed the research team to integrate the many theories of empowerment with the approaches that they determined empowered others. *Stage one* of the process recognized that the factors leading to a psychological state of empowerment were based on various factors such as "organization, supervision, rewards, and the nature of the job" (1988, p. 475). The conditions of stage one determined the need for using management strategies and techniques in *stage two*. The researchers determined that the most frequently used motivational strategies and techniques used by management were "engaging workers in team participation, goal setting, using a feedback system, modeling, providing rewards for competence and providing job enrichment options" (1988, p. 475). *Stage three* in the process used four factors to provide information concerning self-efficacy. This information was determined using "enactive attainment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal" (1988, p. 475). The empowering experience of the worker was determined from these factors and by understanding how to strengthen these factors. In *stage four*, Conger and Kanungo (1988) believed that having an understanding of the factors and having a belief in personal efficacy would lead to an increase in positive behavior. The

positive behavior and feelings are honed and used to complete tasks in *stage five*.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) developed the *five-stage empowerment process* to serve as a framework for use in further studies. They concluded that the framework should be tested and used in a study involving leadership and empowerment practices. The team focused their efforts on the positive effects of empowerment; however, they also believed that the possibility exists that empowerment might encounter negative behaviors (1988).

In 1990, Thomas and Velthouse developed a quantitative study using a survey method that defined intrinsic task motivation using the four situational assessments of empowerment: impact, competence, meaningfulness, and choice. They defined impact as “making a difference” (1990, p. 672) in the completion of a job duty. Thomas and Velthouse found that if workers felt like they were making an impact on their work, they were more apt to feel empowered. Equally so, a worker’s level of empowerment increased if they felt highly skillful or competent in their job. Workers also had a great sense of empowerment if they cared about what job task they performed. Choice is the fourth assessment which was later developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) who observed that workers who had a greater degree of choice or self-determination also had increased “flexibility, creativity, initiative, resiliency, and self-regulation” (p. 673).

Domains that Affect Empowerment

Spreitzer (1995) conducted a quantitative research study to determine what domains are linked to empowerment in a work setting. Her research became the foundation of many studies because she was able to validate a tool that could measure the psychological effects of the behaviors. Spreitzer used earlier research conducted by Kanter (1983); Locke, Frederick, Lee, and Bobko (1984); Deci, Connell, and Ryan (1989); Gecas (1989); Ozer and Bandura (1990); and Ashforth (1990). Together their research established the individual domains of meaning,

competence, self-determination, and impact (Ashforth, 1989) as the domains for assessing empowerment. Spreitzer's research used these established domains to gauge the psychological effects of self-esteem, locus of control, information, and rewards.

Spreitzer's study (1995) consisted of two samples. The first sample of 393 mid-level managers from a Fortune 500 industrial company validated the survey instrument. The second sample, 128 lower level employees, cross-validated the results of the survey instrument. The study found that the participants had a feeling of moderate empowerment in relation to the conditions used.

Continuing her research, Spreitzer (1996) conducted another quantitative study that involved using the same domains to measure the social aspects of empowerment in the workplace. However, in this study Spreitzer used the following six different conditions that were categorized as "social structural characteristics" (1996, p. 486): role ambiguity, span of control, unit size, sociopolitical support, access to resources, access to information, and work climate. The researcher surveyed 395 middle managers in a Fortune 500 corporation and found that all of the conditions had a positive effect on empowerment except for the indicator of role ambiguity (Spreitzer, 1996)). The study contended that precise goals, tasks, and roles of responsibility are important to empowerment. Spreitzer concluded that authority can develop uncertainty in workers and can result in disempowerment. The authority is also less likely to micromanage as the result of delegating empowerment to workers and managers. A strong finding of this study was "empowered employees see themselves as integrated into the key political channels for getting work done in organizations" (1996, p. 498).

In 1997, Spreitzer joined with DeJanasz, and Quinn to study psychological empowerment as it relates to leadership for change (Spreitzer, DeJanasz, & Quinn, 1997). Once again, the

original four domains—meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact—were used to measure the effectiveness of four new conditions. The four conditions measured were: innovation, upward influence, inspiration, and monitoring.

Spreitzer et al.'s quantitative study (1997) used Conger and Kanungo's (1987) and Bass' (1985) research to develop a list of what leaders need to do to create change. The list included: (1) developing innovative ideas, (2) influencing, (3) inspiring subordinates, (4) gaining support for change, (5) exerting influence, and (6) creating enthusiasm (Spreitzer et al., 1997, pp. 512-513). After surveying 393 mid-level supervisors from various departments within a Fortune 500 corporation, the researchers found that there was a relationship between psychological empowerment and the four established domains. They also found that workers who saw their bosses as being innovative, upward influencing, and inspiring also saw them as being empowering. An interesting fact found in the study was that managers might not inspire workers as much as they innovate or influence in a positive manner (Spreitzer et al., 1997). A reason for this may be due to a result of this not being important to the organization or the managers are not putting forth the energy in this area. The 1997 Spreitzer et al. study contributed greatly to the study of empowerment, as it expanded the understanding of psychological empowerment. It also further identified a set of leadership traits and developed a list of change oriented leadership characteristics.

Using Spreitzer's research associated with work teams, Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, and Drasgow (2000) conducted three quantitative studies. Together they created an evaluation tool for measuring the behavior of leaders. After interviewing 195 team members and leaders from three organizations in the first study, the following eight categories of leader behaviors were determined: leading by example, coaching, encouraging, participative decision-making,

informing, showing concern, interacting with the team, and group management (2000). The researchers used these categories, coupled with the research about worker and manager teamwork from Bennis and Nanus (1985) and Manz and Sims (1987), to develop the measurement tool, *Empowering Leadership Questionnaire* (ELQ).

The second study was conducted with 205 employees who took the questionnaire containing questions written in each of the eight categories (Arnold et al., 2000). This study revealed that three of these categories should be combined, leaving five categories of behaviors for effective leadership. The researchers concluded that the following five categories were “important for the effective leadership of empowerment teams: leading by example, coaching, participative decision-making, informing, and showing concern/interacting with the team” (Arnold et al., 2000, p. 260).

After being revamped, the ELQ had five categories and was administered to 374 employees from five organizations for the third study. The researchers cross-validated the ELQ with two other more established instruments, the *Leadership Behavior Description Questionnaire* (LBDQ) (Haplin, 1957) and the *Managerial Practices Survey* (MPS) (Yukl, 1989). Arnold et al. (2000) determined that the content of the ELQ corresponds to conditions in the socio-structural study conducted by Spreitzer (1996). Their study “demonstrated the uniqueness and value of the ELQ in relation to other existing measures of traditional leadership behaviors” (p. 265).

The research team of Dee et al. (2003) used Spreitzer’s survey instrument (1995) to measure the perceived empowerment of elementary school teachers. The researchers of this quantitative study adapted the wording of the survey to reflect a more educational stance, rather than a corporate one. However, they used the same domains: meaning, competence, self-

determination, and impact. While changing the conditions, as other researchers had in the past, and focused on team teaching, curriculum development, school governance/administration, and school community relations. The survey was given to 210 teachers at eight urban elementary schools in a large southwestern United States city. A weakness of the study was the use of a small sample of elementary school teachers.

According to the 2003 report, Dee et al. (2003) found that teamwork directly affected three of the four domains: meaning, self-determination, and impact. The remaining domain, competence, was less impacted by teamwork, as teaching experience was more of a factor. The researchers also discovered that organizational commitment was related to teacher empowerment. The more a teacher is empowered, the more the teacher feels committed to the organization, “reducing levels of teacher burnout and turnover” (2003, p. 272). Overall, the researchers found that teamwork empowered those that had an existing commitment to their place of work.

Building on the reported 2003 research concerning teamwork and empowerment, Henkin, Park, and Singleton (2007) attempted to measure seven teamwork skills possessed by teachers. The skills, which included communication, team orientation, team leadership, monitoring, feedback, backup behavior, and coordination, were measured using an existing instrument devised by Rosenstein in 1994. They also modified Spreitzer’s survey tool to determine team empowerment using the four domains of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. The purpose of the study was to investigate the correlation between teamwork skills and team empowerment. The research team found that the number of years of teaching experience and years in the same school were of importance to teamwork and empowerment. Level of teamwork skills also affected team empowerment. Essentially, the higher the skill level a teacher

had resulted in a higher perception of team empowerment. The teamwork model that the research team used proved to be a significant way to measure team empowerment (Henkin et al., 2007).

Summary

Using the domains established by various researchers, Spreitzer (1995) made the connection to use these domains to measure the perceived empowerment of corporation workers and managers in numerous indicator areas. A further conclusion reported by the research team of Dee et al. (2003), is the existence of a relationship between empowerment of the corporate workplace and the empowerment of the education workplace. Understanding that domains can measure the level of empowerment of educators, Henkin et al. (2007) used different conditions in their study. Based on this review of the literature, one can conclude that the research related to empowerment establishes the basis for connecting empowerment with corporate and educational professionals.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Deci & Ryan (1985), Congor & Kanungo (1988), and Thomas & Velthouse (1990) first established the four domains by which empowerment can be conceptualized: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. To further their research, Spreitzer, (1995, 1996,) and Spreitzer et al. (1997) selected various conditions for determining workers' perceived levels of empowerment. Dee et. al.(2002) and Henkin et al. (2007) later found that Spreitzer's method for measuring empowerment of workers within corporations could also be used to measure teacher perception of empowerment within education.

Research Questions

This quantitative study used descriptive statistics to describe a sample and determine the variability and relationships within the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). The three main research questions for this descriptive study were:

1. How do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture?
2. What are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact?
3. How do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment?

Research Methodology

In 2013, the division office of a Mid Atlantic school division was contacted requesting approval to contact high schools to recruit participants for the research. A letter approving

conducting the study in the school division was received in August 2013 (see Appendix A). The researcher was also granted Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval in September 2013 from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University to conduct the study (see Appendix B). An IRB is charged with protecting the rights and welfare of people involved in research.

Sample

This study used an online survey to measure high school teachers perceptions of the level at which they are empowered by their principals. The study sample consisted of approximately 300 teachers identified as full- or part-time teachers for the 2013-14 school year at three high schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division.

Instrumentation

The *High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment Survey* was developed by Dr. Gretchen Spreitzer (1995). Permission to use and modify the survey to include the wording "...at the high school," was granted to the researcher via e-mail by Spreitzer (see Appendix C). The two-part survey was administered online. Part 1 of the survey included items concerning the conditions of empowerment, the independent variables of the study. The respondents were asked to rate their perception of the degree to which their principal exhibits behaviors in the areas of principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture. Part 2 of the survey included items pertaining to the dependent variables of empowerment. Teachers were asked questions about their perception of empowerment based on the four established domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. The survey is included in Appendix D.

The researcher determined that a 5-point Likert scale would be used for the quantitative study. In 1932, Rensis Likert developed a scale to be used in surveys and questionnaires. The

Likert scale was developed to standardize the measure of social research. Lehman, O'Rourke, Hatcher, and Stepanski (2005) indicated that Likert-type scales are also referred to as summated rating scales. Participants are often asked to indicate to what degree they are in concurrence with the statement or question they are being asked. According to Vogt (2007), researchers should develop their 5-point Likert scale, associating the number 1 with strongly agree, 2 with agree, 3 with don't know, 4 with disagree, and 5 with strongly disagree. However, for the purposes of this study, 1 was associated with strongly agree, 2 with agree, 3 with disagree, 4 with strongly disagree, and 5 with "don't know enough to answer this" (Lehman et al., 2005).

The researcher used a two-step process to validate Part 1 of the survey by first soliciting the assistance of three high school teachers and one high school administrator. They were each given the definitions of the following conditions of empowerment terms: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture. After reading the definitions, the four participants were each given a different color set of 46 index cards that included various examples of behaviors of principals. They were asked to read the statement, "My principal_____", and add the principal behavior that was written on the card into the blank. After doing this, they were directed to match principal behavior with the most appropriate condition of empowerment. Once finished, the researcher tallied the principal behaviors that three or more participants matched with each condition of empowerment. The researcher also determined which principal behaviors were selected by two or more participants and added these to each corresponding condition of empowerment.

The second step in validating Part 1 of the survey was completed by an additional group of three high school teachers and one high school administrator. This group was given the list of principal behaviors generated by the first group and asked to rank each of the behaviors within

the four established conditions. They were directed to start ranking the behaviors within each condition, using “1” as the most important behavior. After completing this task, the researcher added each participant’s ranking for each behavior within the condition. The sums were then ranked, smallest to highest, to complete the rank order of behaviors for each condition. When a tie occurred for the sum of the rank order, the researcher used the lowest three rankings for that behavior to determine the overall rank order. Part 2 of the survey was validated in Spreitzer’s 1995 study on psychological empowerment.

Data Collection

The researcher provided principals at the three participating high schools with a letter from the researcher to e-mail to their full- and part-time teachers. The letter explained the terms of the study and asked for voluntary participation in the 50-question survey that would take approximately five minutes to complete. It also stated that all research data would remain confidential and would only be reported as district-level data with no identifying information regarding participants, schools, or principals. See Appendix E for the consent agreement included on the screen preceding the online survey. Once the principals e-mailed the letter to their staff, the school district’s Professional Learning Office sent a follow-up e-mail 24 hours later. This e-mail provided a link to the *SurveyMonkey*[®] survey. The e-mail also contained the terms of the consent agreement, emphasizing the confidentiality of the data and the approximate time needed for completing the survey. A series of reminder e-mails were sent once the link was provided to the teachers. The researcher’s first reminder e-mail to the teachers at the three high schools was sent by the school district’s Professional Development Office. The e-mail thanked teachers that had already completed the survey and asked the remaining teachers to participate using the survey link provided. The Professional Development Office sent the final reminder e-mail 14

days after the initial participation request was made. Once again, the e-mail contained the direct link to the *SurveyMonkey*[®] survey for their convenience (see Appendix F for the initial and reminder e-mails that include the link to the online survey). After three weeks, the *researcher* closed the *SurveyMonkey*[®] link.

Evans and Mathur (2005) indicated the numerous benefits of online surveys in their research study. They described how speed and timeliness of online surveys contributes to the ease in collecting data. The convenience of online surveys allows respondents to access a survey by clicking on a URL link sent in an e-mail and to complete the survey at their own pace and at a time conducive to their schedule. Online surveys can also be designed to require respondents to answer a question before moving on to the next question; Evans and Mathur (2005) contend that this is an important factor in acquiring accurate data. As these researchers also suggest, the cost of creating an online survey is relatively low; this survey instrument was limited to the purchase of a \$17.99 *SurveyMonkey*[®] monthly user fee. Researchers Boyer, Olson, and Jackson (2001) also agree that using online surveys “helped improve data quality, but at a slightly increased data-gathering cost (p. 7). Follow-up with participants is also easy, according to Evans and Mathur (2005), because it requires merely sending additional e-mails with the link to the survey.

The *SurveyMonkey*[®] program allowed the researcher to access the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet feature to view the data. The data were downloaded from *SurveyMonkey*[®] into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and stored securely on a flash drive. An analysis was conducted using *JMP*[®], a data analysis software program.

Analysis

The analyses used in this study included a test for scale reliability, descriptive statistics for individual items for the conditions and domains of empowerment, pair-wise correlation

studies, and multiple regressions. The researcher assessed scale reliability using *JMP*[®] software to analyze the Part 1 multiple-item rating scale to determine the α reliability coefficient, better known as Cronbach's α . According to Lehman et al. (2005), Cronbach's α is used to determine "the internal consistency of responses to the scale" (p.138).

Descriptive statistics for the individual items of the two parts of the scale were calculated using *JMP*[®]. Multiple regression, also used in this study, is best used when research has more than one independent variable, or predictor, and one dependent variable (Mertler & Vannetta, 2005). A regression analysis determines the best combination of predictors by evaluating how each predictor affects the dependent variable. One could determine the best combination of independent variables (in this study, X=principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school climate) to explain the most variance in the dependent variables (in this study, Y= meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact).

Summary

This study investigated high school teachers' perception of empowerment in three high schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division. The full- and part-time teachers (N=300) at these three schools were asked to respond to the online survey questions. For Part 1 of the online survey, administered using *SurveyMonkey*[®], participants rated their perception of the degree to which their principal exhibited behaviors in the areas of principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture. For Part 2 of the survey, participants responded to a number of questions pertaining to the dependent variables of empowerment. Using Spreitzer's 1995-validated survey instrument, teachers responded to questions about their perception of empowerment based on the four established domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

Study findings described in this chapter are organized according to the four conditions and domains of empowerment. The chapter includes the three research questions as well as a description of the survey return rate. Survey data are reported for each of the four independent variables (the conditions of empowerment) and for each of the four dependent variables (the domains of empowerment). Descriptive statistics are reported for each item in the survey along with summary descriptive data and the results of reliability analyses. Results of multiple regression analyses are also reported.

Research Questions

The following research questions framed the analysis of the teachers' responses to the survey:

1. How do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four school conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture?
2. What are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact?
3. How do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment?

Return Rate

The *High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment Survey* was given to all full- and part-time teachers in three high schools within a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division.

The survey was closed three weeks after the initial invitation was e-mailed to teachers at the participating schools. Of the possible 358 full and part-time teachers within the participating high schools, 226 responded to the survey, resulting in a response rate of 63%. Of the 226 responses, 202 surveys (56%) were fully completed. An agreement was made with the Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division that absolutely no identifying demographical information would be sought from the respondents. The *SurveyMonkey*[®] tracking feature was turned off to ensure the anonymity of respondents. The identity of any particular school within the division was also secured by using this feature.

Instrument Characteristics

Survey responses consisted of *Strongly Agree*, *Agree*, *Disagree*, *Strongly Disagree*, and *I don't know enough to answer this question*. The survey answers were converted to a Likert scale upon exporting it from *SurveyMonkey*[®] into Microsoft Excel. A score of 1 was given for *Strongly Agree*; 2 for *Agree*; 3 for *Disagree*; and 4 for *Strongly Disagree*. The response, *I don't know enough to answer this*, was considered a non-response and, therefore, combined with the missing response data.

Validity

As indicated in Chapter 3, a two-step process was used to validate Part 1 of the survey—Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Conditions. First, the researcher solicited the assistance of three high school teachers and one high school administrator who were not a part of the study sample. Second, questions in Part 1 were administered to an additional group of three high school teachers and one high school administrator. Part 2 of the survey—Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Domains—was validated in Spreitzer's 1995 study on psychological empowerment (see Parts 1 and 2 in Appendix D). Permission to use and modify

the survey to include the wording “at the high school,” was granted to the researcher by Dr. Gretchen Spreitzer (see Appendix C).

This process resulted in a total of 50 items in the survey. Table 1 displays the distribution of the items among the scales.

Table 1

Number of Items in Survey Scales

Scales	Number of Items
<i>Part 1 Empowerment Conditions</i>	38
Principal Training	6
Principal Leadership	13
Teacher Leadership	9
School Culture	10
<i>Part 2: Empowerment Domains</i>	12
Meaning	3
Competence	3
Self-Determination	3
Impact	3

Reliability

As originally explained in Chapter 3, Lehman et al. (2005) stated Cronbach’s α is used to determine “the internal consistency of responses to the scale (p.138). Additionally, Trochim (2001) indicated, “Cronbach’s alpha tends to be a high estimate of reliability” (p.304). Pedhazur and Schmelkin (1991) believe an alpha score of 0.50 may be acceptable in some studies, but not in all studies. They further stated, “...the higher the reliability the better” and “...it is for the user to determine what amount of error he or she is willing to tolerate, given the circumstances of the study” (pp. 109-110).

Part 1 Empowerment Conditions Scales

To test for reliability of Part 1 of the survey, a Cronbach’s α was computed using responses for each condition. The Cronbach’s α for the conditions ranged from 0.85 to 0.92

indicating strong reliability for all conditions. The results for the individual conditions were: principal training (0.85), principal leadership (0.92), teacher leadership (0.90), and school culture (0.90) as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2

Scale Reliability for Conditions of Empowerment

Conditions	No. of Items	X	SD	Cronbach's α
Principal Training	6	2.02	0.99	0.85
Principal Leadership	13	2.05	1.01	0.93
Teacher Leadership	9	2.06	1.02	0.90
School Culture	10	1.89	0.98	0.90

Part 2 Empowerment Domain Scales

To test for reliability of Part 2 of the survey, a Cronbach's α was computed using responses for each domain. The Cronbach's α for the conditions ranged from 0.73 to 0.92 indicating good reliability for all conditions. However, the Cronbach's α for meaning (0.83), self-determination (0.89), and impact (0.92) are more robust for a 3-item scale compared to the reliability of competence (0.73). These results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3

Scale Reliability for Domains of Empowerment

Conditions	No. of Items	X	SD	Cronbach's α
Meaning	3	1.40	0.51	0.83
Competence	3	1.45	0.53	0.73
Self-Determination	3	1.93	0.80	0.89
Impact	3	2.61	1.01	0.92

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were calculated for the survey responses for the four conditions (principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture) and the four

domains (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact) of empowerment. The results are described in this section.

Part 1 Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Conditions

Principal's Training Condition

A summary of responses on the six items of the first condition, principal training, is displayed in Table 4. Means for the questions ranged from a high agreement of 1.64 (*My principal is visible in the building*) to a low agreement of 2.61 (*My principal manages school finance*), with an overall mean of 2.02. Standard deviations ranged from 1.62 (*My principal is visible in the building*) to 2.61 (*My principal manages school finance*) with an overall standard deviation of 0.33. Overall, 83% of the respondents agreed with the principal behaviors associated with the principal training condition and 17% did not agree. The question, *my principal manages school finance*, had the most variance (1.50) in responses; however, it also had the highest number of missing responses (68). Respondents averaged an overall mean of 2.02 in the principal training condition indicating overall agreement with their principals' behaviors for this condition. The overall standard deviation for this condition was 0.33.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Principal Training Condition of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses				Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)				
PT1	Provides instructional leadership	8 (3.83)	36 (17.23)	95 (45.46)	70 (33.49)	17	209	1.99	0.93
PT2	Has good organizational skills	7 (3.42)	32 (15.61)	97 (47.32)	69 (33.66)	21	205	2.00	0.97
PT3	Manages school finance ⁰	3 (1.90)	21 (13.29)	81 (51.27)	53 (33.54)	68	158	2.61 ⁰	1.50
PT4	Is visible in the building ⁺	1 (0.48)	22 (10.53)	86 (41.15)	100 (47.85)	17	209	1.64 ⁺	0.69
PT5	Manages the school building	4 (1.97)	23 (11.33)	88 (43.35)	88 (43.35)	23	203	1.80	0.89
PT6	Has good planning skills	7 (3.50)	39 (19.50)	92 (46.00)	62 (31.00)	26	200	2.06	0.96
	Total Scale Mean Scores							2.02	0.99
	Total Scale SD								0.33

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Principals Leadership Condition

A summary of responses on the 13 items of the second condition, principal leadership, is displayed in Table 5. The means of the principal leadership condition ranged from a high agreement of 1.74 (*My principal clearly communicates the vision and mission of the school*) to a lower agreement of 2.37 (*My principal provides leadership in curriculum development*). Standard deviations of the condition ranged from 0.76 (*My principal clearly communicates the vision and mission of the school*) to 1.30 (*My principal takes risks when it could be beneficial to students or school*). The overall mean for this condition was 2.05 and the overall standard deviation principal leadership was 1.01.

Within the principal leadership condition, 78% of the respondents were in agreement with the principal behaviors corresponding with the condition and 22% did not agree. The principal behaviors within the principal leadership condition that have the highest means and standard deviations due to a high number of non-responses and/or *I don't know enough to answer* were, *My principal causes faculty and staff to volunteer for extra responsibilities* ($\mu=2.30$, $SD=1.16$, and missing=38), *My principal takes risks when it could be a benefit to students or school* ($\mu=2.15$, $SD=1.30$, and missing=45), and *My principal provides leadership in curriculum development* ($\mu=2.37$, $SD= 1.21$, and missing= 44).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Principal Leadership Condition of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses				Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)				
PL1	Sets a good example for faculty and staff	8 (3.83)	31 (15.12)	84 (40.98)	82 (40.00)	21	205	1.86	0.88
PL2	Asks for input from faculty and staff	9 (4.39)	32 (18.54)	81 (39.51)	77 (37.56)	21	205	1.93	0.90
PL3	Causes faculty and staff to volunteer for extra responsibility	10 (5.32)	35 (18.62)	94 (50.00)	49 (26.06)	38	188	2.30	1.16
PL4	Is inspiring to others	13 (6.40)	43 (21.18)	86 (42.37)	61 (30.05)	23	203	2.10	0.96
PL5	Advocates for teachers	10 (5.08)	32 (16.24)	79 (40.10)	76 (38.58)	29	197	2.01	1.06
PL6	Clearly communicates the vision and mission of the school ⁺	3 (1.47)	24 (11.77)	90 (44.12)	87 (42.65)	22	204	1.74 ⁺	0.76
PL7	Understands people	11 (5.50)	36 (17.91)	84 (41.79)	71(35.32)	25	201	1.99	0.95
PL8	Is respected by faculty and staff	10 (4.98)	43 (21.18)	86 (42.37)	61(30.05)	23	203	2.10	0.96
PL9	Takes risks when it could be beneficial to students or school	6 (3.32)	28 (15.47)	66 (36.46)	81(44.75)	45	181	2.15	1.30
PL10	Demonstrates warmth and caring	7 (3.57)	37 (18.50)	88 (44.00)	68(34.00)	26	200	1.99	0.93
PL11	Delegates responsibility	2 (1.04)	21 (10.88)	103 (53.37)	67(34.72)	33	193	1.97	1.00
PL12	Provides leadership in curriculum development ⁰	7 (3.85)	43 (23.63)	82 (45.06)	50(27.47)	44	182	2.37 ⁰	1.21
PL13	Develops loyalty in faculty and staff	15 (7.58)	41 (20.71)	75 (37.88)	67(33.84)	28	198	2.12	1.06
Total Scale Mean Scores								2.05	1.01
Total Scale SD									0.17

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Teacher Leadership Condition

A summary of responses on the nine items of the third condition, teacher leadership, is displayed in Table 6. The means of the questions within the teacher leadership condition ranged from a high agreement of 1.91 (*My principal allows teachers to make decisions*) to 2.29 (*My principal involves teachers in the development of school rules and regulations*). The standard deviations of the teacher leadership condition ranged from 0.91 (*My principal provides for beneficial staff development activities*) to 1.19 (*My principal involves teachers in the development of school rules and regulations*), with an average standard deviation of 1.02.

For the teacher leadership condition, 80% of the respondents reported in agreement with the principal behaviors linked to the conditions and 20% were not in agreement. The principal behaviors within the teacher leadership condition that have the highest means and standard deviations due to a high number of non-responses and/or *I don't know enough to answer were*: *My principal involves teachers in the development of the school rules and regulations* ($\mu=2.29$, $SD= 1.19$, and Missing= 42) and *My principal monitors student performance* ($\mu=2.16$, $SD= 1.17$, and Missing= 44). Even with 44 missing responses within the principal behavior, *My principal monitors student performance*, 88% of the respondents were still in agreement.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Teacher Leadership Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses				Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)				
TL1	Trusts teachers to make mature judgments	9 (4.55)	30(15.15)	85(42.93)	74(37.37)	28	198	1.98	1.00
TL2	Provides needed resources for teachers	5 (2.54)	33(16.75)	94 (47.72)	65 (33.00)	29	197	2.01	0.97
TL3	Creates opportunities for teachers to maximize their potential	7 (3.65)	33(17.19)	82 (42.71)	70 (37.46)	34	192	2.06	1.08
TL4	Involves teachers in the making of school rules and regulations ⁰	8 (4.35)	37(20.11)	85 (46.20)	54 (29.35)	42	184	2.29 ⁰	1.19
TL5	Stimulates teachers to use their intellect and creativeness	6 (3.11)	37(19.17)	84 (43.52)	66 (34.20)	33	193	2.08	1.05
TL6	Allows teachers to make decisions ⁺	7 (3.52)	27(13.57)	90 (45.23)	75 (37.69)	27	199	1.91 ⁺	0.92
TL7	Provides for beneficial staff development activities	5 (2.53)	38(19.19)	99 (50.00)	56 (28.28)	28	198	2.05	0.91
TL8	Provides time for teachers to work collaboratively	4 (2.02)	35(17.68)	89 (44.95)	70 (35.35)	28	198	1.96	0.93
TL9	Monitors student performance	2 (1.10)	20(10.99)	103(56.59)	57 (31.32)	44	182	2.16	1.17
Total Scale Mean Scores								2.06	1.02
Total Scale SD									0.11

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

School Culture Condition

A summary of responses on the 10 items of the fourth condition, school culture, is displayed in Table 7. The means of the questions within the school culture condition ranged from a high agreement of 1.62 for two items (*My principal makes sure that the school is open to diversity and is welcoming to all*) to 2.27 (*My principal maintains productive relationships with the community*), with an average means of 1.89. The standard deviations for the condition ranged from 0.73 (*My principal makes sure that the school is open to diversity and is welcoming to all*) to 1.35 (*My principal maintains productive relationships with parents*), with an average standard deviation of 0.98.

Respondents were 88% in agreement with the principal behaviors within the school culture condition, and 12% were not in agreement. Compared to the other conditions, the school culture condition had the highest percentage of respondents in agreement. However, two of the behaviors, *My principal maintains productive relationships with parents* and *My principal maintains productive relationships with the community*, had the overall highest missing and/or *I don't know enough to answer* responses (52 and 53, respectively). The lowest mean (1.62) and lowest standard deviation (0.73) was related to the principal behavior, *My principal makes sure that the school is open to diversity and is welcoming to all*. This is due to 93% of the respondents agreeing with the principal behavior, which is the highest individual principal behavior within the condition.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the School culture Condition of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses							
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)	Missing	N	X	SD
SC1	Provides a pleasant, safe, and orderly climate for learning	6 (2.97)	17 (8.42)	88 (43.56)	91 (45.05)	24	202	1.73	0.81
SC2	Makes sure everyone feels safe and comfortable everywhere on school property	4 (1.99)	15 (7.46)	95 (47.26)	87 (43.28)	25	201	1.73	0.80
SC3	Makes sure that the school is open to diversity and is welcoming to all ⁺	2 (0.99)	12 (5.94)	89 (44.06)	99 (49.01)	24	202	1.62 ⁺	0.73
SC4	Works with faculty and staff in collegial and non-threatening ways	9 (4.52)	28 (14.07)	88 (44.22)	74 (37.19)	27	199	1.94	0.95
SC5	Promotes anti-bullying, conflict resolution, and peer mediation programs	0 (0.00)	18 (9.28)	92 (47.42)	84 (43.30)	32	194	1.82	0.96
SC6	Makes sure the building arrangement reflects the student, their needs, and their educational accomplishments	1 (0.50)	15 (7.73)	101 (52.06)	77 (39.69)	32	194	1.85	0.95
SC7	Maintains productive relationships with parents	1 (0.58)	20 (11.49)	74 (42.53)	79 (45.40)	52	174	2.16	1.35
SC8	Maintains productive relationships with students	1 (0.53)	22 (11.58)	88 (46.32)	79 (41.58)	36	190	1.94	1.06
SC9	Maintains productive relationships with the community ⁰	0 (0.00)	23 (13.30)	89 (51.45)	61 (35.26)	53	173	2.27 ⁰	1.31
SC10	Monitors student performance	3 (1.52)	25 (12.63)	89 (44.95)	81 (40.91)	28	198	1.83	0.88
	Total Scale Mean Scores							1.89	0.98
	Total Scale SD								0.20

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Part 2 Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Domains

Statistics for individual items of the four domains of empowerment were also calculated. Results are reported in this section.

Meaning Domain

A summary of responses on the three items of the first domain, meaning, is displayed in Table 8. The means of the ratings within the meaning domain ranged from a high agreement of 1.30 (*The work I do at the high school is important to me*) to 1.52 (*My high school job tasks are personally meaningful to me*), with an average mean of 1.40. The standard deviations for the meaning domain ranged from 0.51 (*The work I do at the high school is important to me*) to 0.69 (*My high school job tasks are personally meaningful to me*), with an average standard deviation of 0.51. Overall, 95% of the respondents were in agreement with the questions they were asked about themselves within the meaning domain. Only 5% did not agree. Respondents disagreed more (8%) with the statement, *My high school job tasks are personally meaningful to me*, as compared with the disagreement (3%) of the statement, *The work I do at the high school is important to me*.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Meaning Domain of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses					Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)					
MEAN1	The work I do at the high school is meaningful to me	1 (0.49)	5 (2.46)	66(32.51%)	131 (64.53)	23	203	1.39	0.56	
MEAN2	The work I do at the high school is important to me ⁺	0 (0.00)	5 (2.46)	50(24.63%)	148 (72.91)	23	203	1.30 ⁺	0.51	
MEAN3	My high school job tasks are personally meaningful to me ⁰	0 (0.00)	17 (8.42)	68(33.66%)	117 (57.92)	24	202	1.52 ⁰	0.69	
Total Scale Mean Scores								1.40	0.51	
Total Scale SD									0.11	

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Competence Domain

A summary of responses on the three items of the second domain, competence, is displayed in Table 9. The means of the questions within the competence domain ranged from a high agreement of 1.35 (*I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities at the high school*) to 1.56 (*I have mastered the skills necessary for my job at the high school*), with an average means of 1.45. The standard deviations for the competence domain ranged from 0.54 (*I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities at the high school*) to 0.72 (*I am confident about my ability to do my job at the high school*), with an average standard deviation of 0.65. The competence domain results were similar to the meaning domain results. Within the competence domain, 94% of the respondents agreed with the statements asked of them, with 6% disagreeing. Respondents disagreed more (8%) with the statement, I am confident about my ability to do my job at the high school, as compared with the disagreement (3%) in the statement, I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities at the high school.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Competence Domain of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses							
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)	Missing	N	X	SD
COM1	I am confident about my ability to do my job at the high school	5 (2.46)	12 (5.91)	49 (24.14)	137 (67.49)	23	203	1.43	0.72
COM2	I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities at the high school ⁺	0 (0.00)	6 (2.96)	60 (29.56)	137 (67.49)	23	203	1.35 ⁺	0.54
COM3	I have mastered the skills necessary for my job at the high school ⁰	1 (0.50)	10 (4.98)	82 (40.80)	108 (53.73)	25	201	1.56 ⁰	0.70
Total Scale Mean Scores								1.45	0.65
Total Scale SD									0.22

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Self-determination Domain

A summary of responses on the three items of the third domain, self-determination, is displayed in Table 10. The means of the questions within the self-determination domain ranged from a high agreement of 1.89 (*I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work at the high school*) to 1.96 (*I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job at the high school*), with an average means of 1.93. The standard deviations for the self-determination domain ranged from 0.84 (*I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work at the high school*) to 0.92 (*I have autonomy in how I do my job at the high school*), with an average standard deviation of 0.88. Regarding self-determination, 77% of the respondents were in agreement with the statements within the domain, whereas, 23% of the respondents disagreed. A fairly large group of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the following statements: *I have significant autonomy in how I do my job at the high school* (23%), *I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work at the high school* (23%), and *I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job at the high school* (24%).

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Self-Determination Domain of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses					Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)					
SD1	I have significant autonomy in how I do my job at the high school	8 (4.00)	37 (18.50)	79 (39.50)	76 (38.00)	26	200	1.93	0.92	
SD2	I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work at the high school ⁺	7 (3.45)	40 (19.70)	79 (38.92)	77 (37.93)	23	203	1.89 ⁺	0.84	
SD3	I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job at the high school ⁰	8 (3.98)	40 (19.90)	82 (40.80)	71 (35.32)	25	201	1.96 ⁰	0.89	
Total Scale Mean Scores								1.93	0.88	
Total Scale SD									0.04	

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Impact Domain

A summary of responses on the three items of the fourth domain, impact, is displayed in Table 11. The means of the questions within the impact domain ranged from a high agreement of 2.41 (*My impact at the high school is large*) to 2.73 (*I have a great deal of control over what happens in my high school*), with an average means of 2.61. The range of the standard deviations for the impact domain ranged from 0.97 (*My impact at the high school is large*) to 1.03 (*I have a great deal of control over what happens in my high school* and *I have a significant influence over what happens in my high school*), with an average standard deviation of 1.01. Respondents were 47% in agreement with the statements within the impact domain, and 53% disagreed. Compared to the other domains, the impact domain had the highest percentage of respondents indicating disagreement with items. On two of the statements within this domain more than half of the respondents indicated disagreement for two statements: *I have a great deal of control over what happens in my high school* and *I have significant influence over what happens in my high school* (61% and 58% respectively). The respondents also disagreed that they have an impact (42%) on what they do in their high schools.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Items in the Impact Domain of Empowerment Scale

Item	Question	Responses					Missing	N	X	SD
		4-Strongly Disagree n (%)	3-Disagree n (%)	2-Agree n (%)	1-Strongly Agree n (%)					
IMP1	My impact at the high school is large ⁺	9 (4.66)	71 (36.79)	79 (40.93)	34 (17.62)	33	193	2.41 ⁺	0.97	
IMP 2	I have a great deal of control over what happens in my high school ⁰	23 (12.11)	93 (48.95)	46 (24.21)	28 (14.74)	36	190	2.73 ⁰	1.03	
IMP 3	I have significant influence over what happens in my high school	19 (10.05)	90 (47.62)	53 (28.04)	27 (14.29)	37	189	2.69	1.03	
Total Scale Mean Scores								2.61	1.01	
Total Scale SD									0.17	

⁺ high agreement; ⁰ low agreement

Pair-wise Comparisons of the Scales

Tests of pair-wise differences among empowerment conditions scale scores were conducted by matching each condition with each other condition to determine which scales were rated more positively compared to the other scales. Mean scale scores of the ratings for the four conditions of empowerment were quite similar with the exception of school culture (mean=1.89) which was rated significantly ($p<.00$) more positive than the other three scales; principal training (mean= 2.02), principal leadership (mean=2.05), and teacher leadership (mean=2.06). See Table 12 for the results of the tests.

Table 12

Tests of Pair-wise Differences Among Mean Condition Scale Scores

Paired Differences	Mean 1	Mean 2	t-ratio	P(t)
Principal Leadership and Principal Training	2.04	2.00	1.43	0.15
Teacher Leadership and Principal Training	2.05	2.00	1.48	0.14
School Culture and Principal Training	1.89	2.00	-3.03	0.003
Teacher Leadership and Principal Leadership	2.05	2.04	0.40	0.69
School Culture and Principal Leadership	1.89	2.04	-5.32	<0.0001
School Culture and Teacher Leadership	1.89	2.05	-5.37	<0.0001

Tests of pair-wise differences among empowerment domain scale scores were also conducted. Mean scale score of ratings for most of the domains of empowerment were significantly different. Ratings of impact (mean=2.61) were significantly ($p<.00$) less positive than the other domains: self-determination (mean=1.92), meaning (mean=1.40) and competence (1.45). Mean scale scores for self-determination were significantly ($p<.00$) less positive than meaning and competence, and they were more positive than impact. Meaning and competence were significantly ($p<.00$) more positive than self-determination and impact. Only the pair-wise test of meaning and competence was not significant. See Table 13 for the results of the tests.

Table 13

Tests of Pair-wise Differences Among Mean Domain Scale Scores

Paired Differences	Mean 1	Mean 2	t-ratio	P(t)
Competence with Meaning	1.45	1.40	1.24	0.22
Self-determination with Meaning	1.92	1.40	9.31	<.0001
Impact with Meaning	2.61	1.40	17.66	<.0001
Self-determination with Competence	1.92	1.45	7.96	<.0001
Impact with Competence	2.61	1.45	16.14	<.0001
Impact with Self-Determination	2.61	1.92	9.28	<.0001

Multiple Regression

In order to test for predictive or causal relations between the independent variables and the domains of empowerment, multiple regression analyses were conducted. According to Allison (1999), “Multiple regression is a statistical method for studying the relationship between a single dependent variable and one or more independent variable” (p. 1). Allison further states that, “For causal analysis, it separates the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable so that you can examine the unique contributions of each variable” (p. 3).

Meaning Domain

A multiple regression was conducted using the four conditions of empowerment (principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture) to determine if they contributed significantly to the meaning domain. The adjusted R^2 (0.10, $p > .05$) was not significant. See Table 14 for a summary of the analysis.

Table 14

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Empowerment Conditions Predicting Meaning Domain (N=203)

Variable (Scales)	β	SE B	t Ratio	P value
Principal Training	0.04	0.08	0.43	0.67
Principal Leadership	0.19	0.11	1.63	0.10
Teacher Leadership	-0.02	0.09	-0.26	0.79
School Culture	0.05	0.09	0.58	0.56
R ² adj.	0.10			

Competence Domain

A multiple regression analysis was computed using the four conditions of empowerment to determine if they contributed significantly to the competence domain. Results indicated that the principal training condition contributed significantly to the competence domain ($\beta = .21$, $p < .02$). Teacher leadership approached significance but in a negative direction ($\beta = -.20$, $p < .06$) indicating a weak inverse relationship between competence and teacher leadership that approached significance. See Table 15 for a summary of the analysis.

Table 15

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Empowerment Conditions Predicting the Competence Domain (N=203)

Variable (Scales)	β	SE B	t Ratio	P values
Principal Training	0.21	0.09	2.38	0.02
Principal Leadership	0.01	0.12	0.16	0.87
Teacher Leadership	-0.20	0.10	-1.92	0.06
School Culture	0.07	0.10	0.68	0.49
R ² adj	0.03			

Self-determination Domain

As can be seen in Table 16, only school culture contributed significantly to the self-determination domain ($\beta = .29, p < .05$). Overall, the adjusted R^2 was 0.14.

Table 16

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Empowerment Conditions Predicting Self-Determination Domain (N=203)

Variable (Scales)	β	SE B	t Ratio	P values
Principal Training	-.16	0.13	-1.25	0.21
Principal Leadership	.17	0.17	0.97	0.34
Teacher Leadership	.13	0.14	0.91	0.36
School Culture	.29	0.14	1.99	0.05*
R^2 adj	.14			

*Significant at the .05 level

Impact Domain

As can be seen in Table 17, only teacher leadership contributed significantly to the impact domain ($\beta = .44, p < .01$). Overall, the adjusted R^2 was .21.

Table 17

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis for Empowerment Conditions Predicting Impact (N=202)

Variable (Scales)	β	SE B	t Ratio	P values
Principal Training	0.01	0.14	.04	0.97
Principal Leadership	0.24	0.20	1.23	0.220
Teacher Leadership	0.44	0.16	2.65	0.01*
School Culture	-0.12	0.16	-0.76	0.45
R^2 adj	0.21			

* $p < .05$

Summary of Findings

The participating teachers rated school culture significantly more positively than, the other three conditions. Regarding the empowerment domains, they rated competence and

meaning, significantly more positively than the other two domains. In the regression analyses, none of the condition scales predicted the meaning domain. However, principal training predicted the competence domain; school culture predicted the self-determination domain; and teacher leadership predicted the impact domain.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding the degree to which principals have empowered them. Data were gathered and analyzed from a survey conducted with teachers from three high schools in a Mid-Atlantic suburban/rural school division. The findings are discussed using the four conditions (*principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture*) and four domains (*meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact*) of empowerment identified in the literature review. Limitations of the study are also presented. Lastly, recommendations for practice and research are discussed.

Discussion of the Findings

Conditions of Empowerment

The first research question was, *How do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture?* The analysis of survey responses indicated that 89% of the teachers rated their principals on school culture conditions higher ($\mu = 1.89$) than the others conditions. School culture was rated significantly higher than the other three conditions, which were not significantly different from each other.

LoVette et.al.(1999) found that the building of trust between teachers and principals was critical in creating a culture of empowerment. Their work confirmed that principal leadership style and management skills affected school culture. Principals need an understanding of the school's culture before they can create any type of change (Anafara et.al., 2003). Harris's study (2002) emphasized the importance of identifying the culture of the school and of building strong

relationships to empower others to lead. Relationships that are built on traditions, celebrations and sense of community are essential (Wagner, 2002). Effective principals concentrate on building a school community (Wallace Foundation, 2012) that is safe, orderly, and has teachers that are caring and receptive to students (Porter et al., 2008).

Domains of Empowerment

The second research question was, *What are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact?* The analysis of survey responses indicated that teachers rated themselves significantly higher in the meaning ($\mu = 1.40$, $p < .05$) and competence ($\mu = 1.45$, $p < .05$) domains. They rated the meaning domain higher than the self-determination domain ($\mu = 1.93$, $p < .05$) and higher than the impact domain ($\mu = 2.61$, $p < .05$). Additionally, competence was rated higher than self-determination and impact. This supports Spreitzer's (1996) findings that meaning was important to workers as they needed to feel like they were an integral part of the establishment. When managers were not trained as to how to inspire workers, the workers did not feel as if they played an important role in the organization (Spreitzer 1997). Also, Dee et.al (2003) concluded that teachers felt more committed to an organization when they were empowered by their principals.

Relationship Between the Conditions and Domains of Empowerment

The third research question was, *How do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment?* None of the four conditions of empowerment related significantly to the meaning domain. The principal training condition was the only domain significantly related (β wt. = 0.21) to the competence domain. The condition of school culture was significantly

related (β wt.= 0.29) to the self-determination domain. Additionally, the teacher leadership condition was significantly related (β wt. = 0.44) to the impact domain only.

Spiri (2001) suggested that many principals emphasize the need to be trained in communicating ideas and philosophies to teachers. The principals also noted that they understood the need to be supported and guided through the training. The Wallace Foundation (2012) indicated that principal training is important in planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring schools. They found that processes are essential in building meaning and competence within teachers. The Surranna and Moss (2000) study determined that principal training was important to understanding school culture and necessary for knowing and understanding what has or has not worked within the school.

LoVette et al. (1999) agreed that school culture promotes self-determination within teachers, as they needed to work together with principals in building the trust that was critical in creating a culture in which teachers were empowered. However, these researchers also found that principal leadership and management skills learned in principal training affect the school culture of the school. The Harris' (2002) study determined that by understanding the school culture and the roles of teachers, head teachers (principals) were able to select a principal leadership style that met the needs of their schools.

Surranna and Moss (2000) agreed that teachers need to exhibit teacher leadership characteristics in order to have an impact on their schools. They further agreed that teachers play a major role in what actually impacts a school and the way a school plans for academic success. Spreitzer (1996) concluded that authority can develop uncertainty in workers and can result in disempowerment. Henkin et al. (2007) agreed that a higher competence level a teacher had resulted in a higher perception of empowerment.

The multiple regression analyses yielded several significant regression weights for predicting the domains of empowerment. As shown in Figure 2, none of the conditions were found to be predictors of the meaning domain. Principal training was found to be a significant predictor of the competence domain (Beta=0.21; $p=0.02$), while teacher leadership was a slightly weaker predictor of the competence domain (Beta=-0.20; $p=0.06$) as indicated by the broken line in Figure 2. School culture was found to be the only predictor of the self-determination domain (Beta=.29; $p=0.05$) and it fell slightly below the criterion of $p<.05$ and was, therefore, represented with a broken line in Figure 2. For the impact domain, only one condition, teacher leadership, was found to be a predictor (Beta=0.44; $p=0.01$). The only condition that had no significant predictive value for any of the domains was principal leadership.

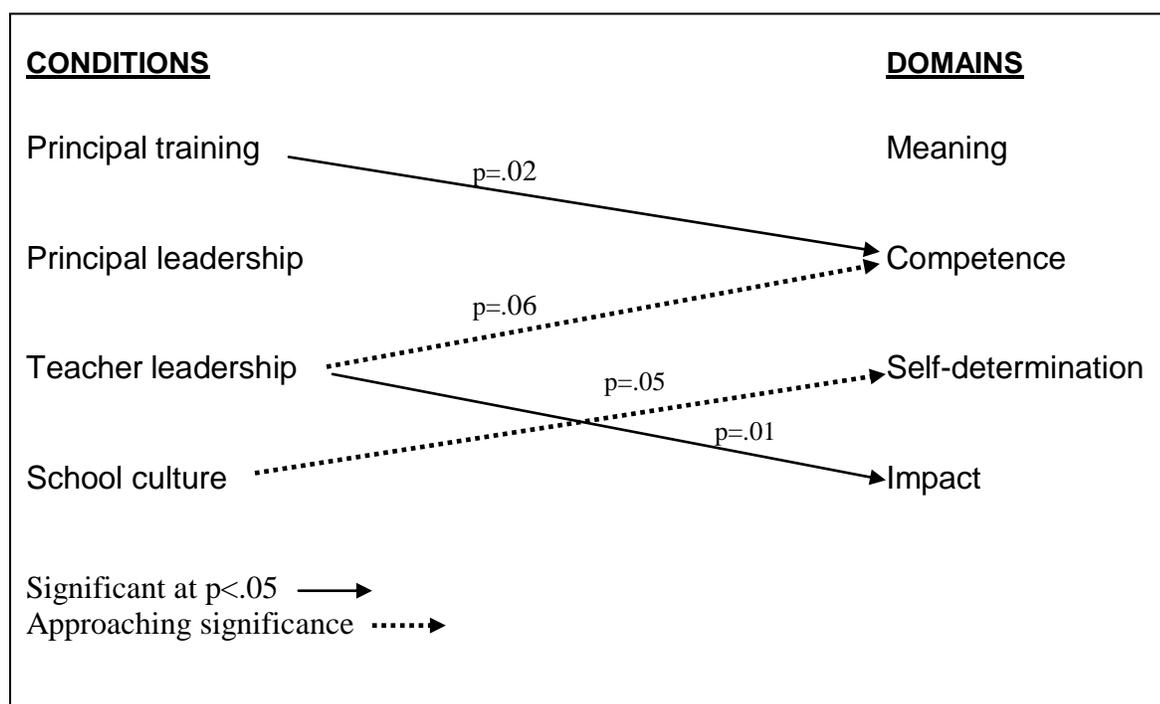


Figure 2. Predictive Relationships of Empowerment Conditions to Empowerment

Other Findings

The data show that there are some principal behavior questions that respondents chose not to answer, resulting in a high missing response rate. A commonality among these questions, is that they inquire about principal behaviors that may not be readily observed by high school teachers within their day-to-day work activities. The principal behavior that yielded the highest number of missing responses (68) in the principal training condition was, *My principal manages school finance*. Within the principal leadership condition, there was a high rate of missing responses within the questions, *My principal takes risks which it could be beneficial to students or the school* and *My principal provides leadership in curriculum development* (45 and 44 respectively). *My principal monitors student performance* (44) and *My principal involves teachers in the making of school rules and regulations* (42) each had a high rate of missing responses within the teacher leadership condition. Additionally, the school culture condition questions with a high missing response rate were: *My principal maintains productive relationships with the community* (53) and *My principal maintains productive relationships with parents* (52). Although high school teachers understand that these principal behaviors exist, they may not have actually observed them on a daily basis, if at all.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the research study included:

1. Only one school division was used.
2. Only three high schools within the school division were available to use.
3. Part-time teachers, as well as full-time teachers, within the available schools could participate.

4. The data from the three available high schools could not be disaggregated by principal or school due to constraints imposed by the division.
5. A self-reporting instrument was used.

Recommendations for Practice

The survey data supported a number of recommendations for practice. The first recommendation involves using collaborative leadership. Principals should create opportunities for teachers to be actively involved in the governance of the school. Teacher involvement with the school improvement, leadership, anti-bullying, and principal advisory teams would promote teacher leadership. Shared-decision making should also be fostered by the principal in order to build teacher leaders.

Principals should continue to develop programs that create a healthy and safe environment as a means of cultivating a positive school culture. The foundation of the school culture should also be built to value the work of teachers. Principals should nurture the school culture of the building to promote self-determination and trust among teachers, as well as diversity within the school. The principal leader needs a school culture that trusts teachers to provide the best possible instruction for students.

In order to provide teachers with a continued knowledge base, principals should provide professional development regularly. The professional development should connect to the *School Improvement Plan* so teachers are aware of the connections that are needed for student achievement. Principals also should provide professional development opportunities in instructional practices and methodologies.

Principals must realize that teachers need to feel like they have an impact not only on what they do in the classroom every day, but also with what they contribute to the entire school.

Principals should delegate job tasks and responsibilities related to the academic success of students in order to promote self-worth among teachers. In doing so, principals will also promote a feeling of value among teachers.

Recommendations for Further Studies

Although this study was conducted in only three high schools in one school division, it provided valuable evidence regarding the principal behaviors that best empower teachers and suggests the following recommendations for further studies. The following recommendations would further our understanding of teacher empowerment.

Recommendation: Replicate the study with a larger random sample.

Recommendation: Replicate the study with an elementary school and a middle school.

Recommendation: Conduct further studies using *trust* and *school improvement practices* as conditions of empowerment and correlate them with the established four domains of empowerment.

Recommendation: Conduct further studies to compare the perceptions of high school teachers in two or more school divisions in the same state regarding the degree to which principals have empowered them.

Recommendation: Conduct further studies to compare the perceptions of high school teachers in two or more school divisions in different states regarding the degree to which principals have empowered them.

Recommendation: Continue to gather data to refine and validate the instrument.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A School Division Approval

Appendix B IRB Approval

Appendix C Approval for Use of Spreitzer Instrument

Appendix D Survey

Appendix E Consent Agreement

Appendix F Invitations to Participate

Appendix A School Division Approval

Dear Mrs. Jacobs,

I appreciate you meeting with me on August 8th. The clarifications you made regarding your research were helpful and your willingness to work with your Virginia Tech committee to agree to online survey methods address the committee's concerns with principal and teacher confidentiality. I am pleased to share the standing Research Review Committee approved your proposal with the guidelines I am articulating in this letter.

You are approved to have your survey sent to the staffs of three of our high schools. As we discussed, participation in any research is always voluntary. I encourage you to work with your dissertation committee on how you might expand or modify your study should you need to increase your response rate. As a friendly reminder, I will need a copy of your IRB approval letter from Virginia Tech prior to moving forward with the dissemination of your survey.

My office will disseminate the initial consent form and surveys to all high school teachers at the three schools through our Professional Learning account. Prior to this broad dissemination, I will send your forms and introductory email to the principals of these schools with information they may use to alert their teachers this survey is forthcoming. Once the survey is emailed to teachers, I will forward an email reminder at an interval specified by you. This may be one or two weeks later, depending upon your response rate.

As you craft your initial email and subsequent consent form and survey for teachers, please include that:

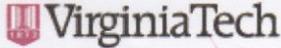
1. Participation is voluntary;
2. No demographic information will be collected;
3. Data collected represents district data and will not be disaggregated by school.

Results of your study are to remain anonymous and a copy of your findings submitted to my office within 45 days of completion.

I look forward to supporting you with your survey in the next few weeks. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any assistance as we move forward.

Sincerely,

Appendix B IRB Approval



Office of Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech
300 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4606 Fax 540/231-0959
email irb@vt.edu
website <http://www.irb.vt.edu>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 5, 2013
TO: Tricia Susan Jacobs, Walt Mallory
FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FWA00000572, expires April 25, 2018)
PROTOCOL TITLE: High School Teacher Perceptions of Empowerment
IRB NUMBER: 13-753

Effective September 4, 2013, the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, David M Moore, approved the New Application request for the above-mentioned research protocol.

This approval provides permission to begin the human subject activities outlined in the IRB-approved protocol and supporting documents.

Plans to deviate from the approved protocol and/or supporting documents must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment request and approved by the IRB prior to the implementation of any changes, regardless of how minor, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. Report within 5 business days to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at:

<http://www.irb.vt.edu/pages/responsibilities.htm>

(Please review responsibilities before the commencement of your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Approved As: **Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.110 category(ies) 2**
Protocol Approval Date: **September 4, 2013**
Protocol Expiration Date: **N/A**
Continuing Review Due Date*: **N/A**

*Date a Continuing Review application is due to the IRB office if human subject activities covered under this protocol, including data analysis, are to continue beyond the Protocol Expiration Date.

FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS:

Per federal regulations, 45 CFR 46.103(f), the IRB is required to compare all federally funded grant proposals/work statements to the IRB protocol(s) which cover the human research activities included in the proposal / work statement before funds are released. Note that this requirement does not apply to Exempt and Interim IRB protocols, or grants for which VT is not the primary awardee.

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this IRB protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this IRB protocol, if required.

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An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Appendix C Approval for Use of Spreitzer Instrument

Re: Request

FROM:Tricia Jacobs
TO:Spreitzer, Gretchen

Thursday, April 5, 2012 3:18 PM

Dr. Spreitzer-

Thank you so much for permission to use the instrument. I look forward to sharing with you, as your work is truly the catalyst for my study.

With appreciation-
Tricia S. Jacobs

++++++

From: "Spreitzer, Gretchen"
To: 'Tricia Jacobs'
Sent: Thursday, April 5, 2012 1:39 PM
Subject: RE: request

Hello Tricia,

So glad to hear from you and learn of your work in this area. I am also just beginning some research on teacher empowerment (and student empowerment) so am excited to learn from you. You are welcome to use the instrument and adapt it for your needs. I would love if you would share your findings with me so that I can learn from you. Much thanks.

Professor Gretchen M. Spreitzer
Ross School of Business
Ann Arbor, MI 48109

++++++

From: Tricia Jacobs
Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2012 12:56 PM
To: Spreitzer, Gretchen
Subject: request

Dr. Spreitzer~

The purpose of this email is to request permission to use your Empowerment Measurement tool (1995) in a study that I am conducting for my PhD in Educational Policy and Leadership at Virginia Tech. The title of my quantitative study is, High School Teacher Perceptions of

Empowerment. I wish to adapt your measurement tool much like Drs. Dee, Henkin, and Duemer did in their 2002 study with elementary school teachers. For instance, using the existing statements within the domains: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact ~ I would insert the wording, "at the high school".

More specifically, I plan to measure high school teachers' perspectives concerning their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four empowerment domains. This quantitative study will answer the questions: How do high school teachers perceive their level of empowerment by their principals based on the four school conditions of empowerment: principal training, principal leadership, teacher leadership, and school culture?; What are high school teachers' perceptions of the degree to which they are empowered based on their understanding of the domains of empowerment: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact?; and How do the conditions of empowerment relate to the domains of empowerment?

My hope is that you will grant permission, allowing me to adapt your existing statements for domains so that I might couple it with my statements within each condition. As a high school administrator, I see a real need for measuring empowerment at the high school level. My dissertation committee felt that I should find a way to incorporate my industry background into the study~ and I found your work to be most interesting and helpful to accomplish this request.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have about my study. Also, if you feel that my findings may be of some benefit to you~ I would be more than happy to share them with you.

Awaiting your response~
Tricia S. Jacobs

Appendix D Survey

Survey for High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment

Directions: Please insert the numbered principal behavior into the statement, “*My principal* _____.”, and determine the extent to which you agree with the statement. Using the following choices, determine which one best describes your perception of your Principal.

1= Strongly Agree

2= Agree

3= Disagree

4= Strongly Disagree

5= I don't know enough to answer this.

Part 1: Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Conditions (38 Questions)

Principal Training

PT1: Provides instructional leadership.

PT2: Has good organizational skills.

PT 3: Manages school finance.

PT 4: Is visible in the school building.

PT 5: Manages the school building.

PT 6: Has good planning skills.

Principal Leadership

PL 1: Sets a good example for faculty and staff.

PL 2: Asks for input from faculty and staff.

PL 3: Causes faculty and staff to volunteer for extra responsibility.

PL 4: Is inspiring to others.

PL 5: Advocates for teachers.

PL 6: Clearly communicates the vision and mission of the school.

PL 7: Understands people.

PL 8: Is respected by faculty and staff.

PL 9: Takes a risk when it could benefit students or school.

PL 10: Demonstrates personal warmth and caring.

PL 11: Delegates responsibility.

PL 12: Provides leadership in curriculum development.

PL 13: Develops loyalty in faculty and staff.

Teacher Leadership

TL 1: Trusts teachers to make mature judgments.

TL 2: Provides needed resources for teachers.

TL 3: Creates opportunities for teachers to maximize their potential.

TL 4: Involves teachers in the development of school rules and regulations.

TL 5: Stimulates teachers to use their intellect and creativeness.

TL 6: Allows teachers to make decisions.

TL 7: Provides for beneficial staff development activities.

TL 8: Provides time for teachers to work collaboratively.

TL 9: Monitors student performance.

School Culture

SC 1: Provides a pleasant, safe, and orderly climate for learning.

SC 2: Makes sure everyone feels safe and comfortable everywhere on school property

SC 3: Makes sure that the school is open to diversity and is welcoming to all.

SC 4: Works with faculty and staff in collegial, non-threatening ways.

SC 4: Promotes anti-bullying, conflict resolution, and peer mediation programs.

SC 5: Makes sure the building and its arrangement reflect the students, their needs, and their educational accomplishments.

SC 6: Maintains productive relationships with parents.

SC 7: Maintains productive relationships with students.

SC 9: Maintains productive relationships with the community.

SC 10: Celebrates and recognizes other's accomplishments.

Part 2: Teacher Perception of Empowerment Based on Domains

Directions: Using the following choices, determine which one best describes your perception of your sense of empowerment. (12 QUESTIONS)

1= Strongly Agree

2= Agree

3= Disagree

4= Strongly Disagree

5= I don't know enough to answer this.

Meaning

MEAN 1: The work I do at the high school is meaningful to me.

MEAN 2: The work I do at the high school is important to me.

MEAN 3: My high school job tasks are personally meaningful to me.

Competence

COM 1: I am confident about my ability to do my job at the high school.

COM 2: I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities at the high school.

COM 3: I have mastered the skills necessary for my job at the high school.

Self-Determination

SD 1: I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job at the high school.

SD 2: I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work at the high school.

SD 3: I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job at the high school.

Impact

IMP 1: My impact on what happens at the high school is large.

IMP 2: I have a great deal of control over what happens in my high school.

IMP 3: I have significant influence over what happens in my high school.

Appendix E Consent Agreement

Consent Agreement to be a Research Subject

Please read the following Consent Agreement and click on the “Agree” button to agree to the terms and proceed to the 50 question survey.

Participation

Participation in this research study is voluntary. You will have the right to withdraw at any time or refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy. Participants will not gain access to the survey until they have agreed to the terms of the study by selecting the agreement button below.

Confidentiality

All information provided in the study will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information asked concerning participants, school, and/or principal. All data will be kept on a flash drive by the researcher and placed in a secure location. The data will be destroyed after the study has been completed.

Procedures

You will be asked to complete an electronic survey. The survey consists of 50 questions and will take approximately 5- 8 minutes total.

Risks/Discomforts

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, you may feel emotional discomfort when answering questions about personal beliefs.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to subjects. However, it is hoped that your participation will help researchers learn more about the perceptions of high school teachers regarding the degree to which principals have empowered them.

Compensation

Participants will receive no compensation for their participation.

IF YOU AGREE TO THE ABOVE TERMS, PLEASE CLICK ON “AGREE” TO PROCEED TO THE ACTUAL SURVEY.

- **Agree. I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**

Appendix F Invitations to Participate

**Look for an email on October 1st
providing an opportunity to participate in a research study!
September 2013**

Dear Full-time and Part-time High School Teachers,

A research study is being conducted by Tricia S. Jacobs who is a doctoral candidate at *Virginia Tech*. Her study seeks to determine High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment by building upon existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of empowerment.

Mrs. Jacobs is currently asking for volunteers to participate in the study by completing a 50 question electronic survey.

- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time while taking the electronic survey or refuse to participate entirely without jeopardy.
- The survey begins with a *Consent Agreement* and continues with 50 questions that will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.
- Participants will not gain access to the electronic survey until they have agreed to the *Consent Agreement* terms of the study by selecting the agreement button online at the beginning of the survey.
 - Example:
 - Agree **I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**
- All information provided in the study will remain confidential and will only be reported as group/county data with no identifying information asked concerning participants, school, and/or principal.

On Tuesday October 1, you will receive an email from your school division's Office of Professional Learning reminding you of the opportunity to participate in the study. The *SurveyMonkey* link will be provided at that time.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Tricia S. Jacobs by email: tstjacobs@yahoo.com. Your voluntary participation would be greatly appreciated by the researcher and SCPS employee, Tricia Jacobs.

~ Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Opportunity to participate in a research study!

The *SurveyMonkey* link is:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

October 1, 2013

Dear Full-time and Part-time High School Teachers,

My name is Tricia S. Jacobs and you recently received an email indicating that I am seeking your participation in a research study. I am that employee, and I am conducting a research study as a doctoral candidate at *Virginia Tech*. My study seeks to determine High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment by building upon existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of empowerment.

At this time, I am asking that you please consider participating in my study by completing a 50 question electronic survey. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The *SurveyMonkey* link is: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time.
- The survey begins with a *Consent Agreement*.
 - Example:
 - Agree **I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**
- All information provided in the study will remain confidential and will only be reported as group/county data with no identifying information asked concerning participants, school, and/or principal.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me by email: tstjacobs@yahoo.com. I would truly appreciate your voluntary participation in my research study concerning *Empowerment*.

Sincerely
Tricia S. Jacobs
VT Doctoral Candidate

REMINDER:

Please consider participating in the High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment study by completing a 50 question electronic survey.

The *SurveyMonkey* link is:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

October 8, 2013

Dear Full-time and Part-time High School Teachers,

This is a gentle reminder that you received an email on October 1 indicating that I am seeking your participation in a research study. I wanted to thank you if you have already completed the survey using *SurveyMonkey* for my research study.

As you may remember, I am conducting a research study as a doctoral candidate at *Virginia Tech*. My study seeks to determine High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment by building upon existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of empowerment.

At this time, if you haven't done so already, I am asking that you please consider participating in my study by completing a 50 question electronic survey. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The *SurveyMonkey* link is: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time.
- The survey begins with a *Consent Agreement*.
 - Example:
 - Agree **I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**
- All information provided in the study will remain confidential and will only be reported as group/county data with no identifying information asked concerning participants, school, and/or principal.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me by email: tstjacobs@yahoo.com. I would truly appreciate your voluntary participation in my research study concerning *Empowerment*.

Sincerely,
Tricia S. Jacobs
VT Doctoral Candidate

REMINDER:

Please consider participating in the High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment study by completing a 50 question electronic survey.

The *SurveyMonkey* link is:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

October 14, 2013

Dear Full-time and Part-time High School Teachers,

This is a gentle reminder that you received an email on October 1 and 8 indicating that I am seeking your participation in a research study. I wanted to thank you if you have already completed the survey using *SurveyMonkey* for my research study.

As you may remember, I am conducting a research study as a doctoral candidate at *Virginia Tech*. My study seeks to determine High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment by building upon existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of empowerment.

At this time, if you haven't done so already, I am asking that you please consider participating in my study by completing a 50 question electronic survey. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The *SurveyMonkey* link is: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time.
- The survey begins with a *Consent Agreement*.
 - Example:
 - Agree **I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**
- All information provided in the study will remain confidential and will only be reported as group/county data with no identifying information asked concerning participants, school, and/or principal.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me by email: tstjacobs@yahoo.com. I would truly appreciate your voluntary participation in my research study concerning *Empowerment*.

Sincerely,
Tricia S. Jacobs
VT Doctoral Candidate

FINAL REMINDER
REMINDER: FINAL DAYS OF THE STUDY

Please consider participating in the High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment study by completing a 50 question electronic survey.

The SurveyMonkey link is:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

October 21, 2013

This is a gentle **REMINDER** seeking your participation in the **FINAL DAYS** of the research study. I want to thank you if you have already completed the survey using the provided *SurveyMonkey* link for my research study.

As you may remember, I am conducting a research study as a doctoral candidate at *Virginia Tech*. My study seeks to determine High School Teacher Perception of Empowerment by building upon existing methods used by researchers in education and industry to measure the effectiveness of empowerment.

At this time, if you haven't done so already, I am asking that you please consider participating in my study by completing a 50 question electronic survey. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The SurveyMonkey link is: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/tjacobs_VTsurvey

- Participation in this research study is voluntary.
- Participants will have the right to withdraw at any time.
- The survey begins with a *Consent Agreement*.
 - Example:
 - Agree **I understand the terms of the research study and desire to participate.**
- All information provided in the study **will remain confidential** and **will only be reported as group/county data**, with **no identifying information asked or retained** concerning participants, specific schools, and/or specific principals.

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact me by email: tstjacobs@yahoo.com. I would truly appreciate your voluntary participation in my research study concerning *Empowerment*.

Sincerely,
 Tricia S. Jacobs
VT Doctoral Candidate