HOW DOES PROGRAM LEADERSHIP EFFECT TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
San Diego State University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Child Development

by
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Summer 2012
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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DEDICATION

Several people were instrumental in this undertaking that I took upon myself. I want to thank these people for being patient and supporting me each step to the finish line. First, I want to thank, Brandon Gould, my loving fiancée, who never questioned me when I decided to get my master’s the same year as getting married, and encouraged me to continue the journey, even when I thought I could not, and thank you for understanding every time I said I could not go do something because I had to go study. Next, I want to thank Dr. Sarah Garrity, my committee chair, for her advice and sensitive critique of every step of the way, especially the in the correlations section of this investigation. Thank you for having a listening ear from time to time, there are no words to describe the comfort you brought in some of the hardest days. I would like to thank the members of my committee. Starting with Dr. Shulammit Ritblatt for sharing her expertise in the field, and creating a program that nurtured me in to a completely different person today. Also, Dr. Nina Potter for her support and giving so generously of her time and answering every panicked e-mail. I need to thank Pearl family who understood why it was necessary I bring my computer to work every day of the last two weeks of this process and for their unconditional love and support through this process. Most importantly, I am always indebted to the four CCLC directors who took a chance on a grad student in this study, who welcomed me into their centers, shared their staff, and gave so freely of their time.
ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

How Does Program Leadership Effect Teacher Job Satisfaction 
and Organizational Climate 
by 
Emily Constance Huck 
Master of Science in Child Development 
San Diego State University, 2012

This study will investigate how program leadership affects teacher job satisfaction & organizational climate in a for profit childcare program. Data will be collected from 4 childcare development centers using both qualitative and quantitative methodology. Through a mixed methods design, survey and informal focus group 120 teachers will be asked to fill out two questionnaires. First The Work Attitudes survey measuring work attitudes from the Blue Print for Action Handbook and second The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey. The Childhood Work Environment Survey provided by the McCormack Center or Early Childhood Leadership written by Dr. Paula Jorde Bloom, Ph.D. is designed to find out how employees feel about an early childhood center as a place to work. The question provides opportunity for participants to express feelings and opinions concerning various center policies and practices. It includes questions regarding general work conditions, staff relations, supervisor support, pay and promotion opportunities and the physical setting. Measuring Work Attitudes survey from the Blue Print for Action Handbook provided by the McCormack Center or Early Childhood Leadership written by Dr. Paula Jorde Bloom, Ph.D. is designed to find out how employees feel about different facets of their job. The purpose of these surveys is to help the researcher become more aware of the aspects of teachers jobs that most contribute to job satisfaction as well as what teachers would like to see improved. Directors and assistant directors will be surveyed through the Program Administrative Scale (PAS) provided by the McCormack Center or Early Childhood Leadership written by The McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership scholars, Teri Talan and Paula Jorde Bloom, measuring the overall quality of administrative practices of early care and education programs. The PAS assesses quality in ten areas: human resources development, personnel cost and allocation, center operations, child assessment, fiscal management, program planning and evaluation, family partnerships, marketing and public relations, technology, and staff qualifications qualitative data will consist of interviews conducted with four -child care center director’s using the Program Administrative Scale (PAS) by Teri Talan and Paula Jorde Bloom.
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PREFACE

To develop the reader’s understanding of the experiences of working as a lead teacher in a for profit early childhood child care center, I offer the following description as an illustration of the diverse responsibilities that I faced as the lead teacher of 2 and 3-year-old children (2009-2011) in a for profit early childhood child care center on a typical day.

8:00 AM: I would arrive at work at around 8.00 am. This was usually the time when many parents arrived, and for the next hour, I would be answering the queries that they had or engaging in general conversation about their child and the goings on of the week. During this time, I would also talk with my assistant teacher and ensure the details of the day so we both had a clear direction of where the day was headed, even though at anytime the day could take a drastic change. Around 8:30 breakfast would arrive at my classroom door and the process of getting breakfast ready and out for 12 children would begin. I would be busy washing hands, finding a seat, and serving everyone, and finishing up any conversations with parents about schedule changes for their child’s day or catching up on the previous day. Once the parents had left, I would then retreat into the office to check and make sure all the necessary materials were ready for the day’s curriculum, while my assistant teacher ran breakfast. As 12 children begin to finish breakfast, we clean up dishes, wash hands, get everyone to the potty, wash hands again, get sunscreen on everyone, sweet the floors, get the dishes back in the hall, bring breakfast back in because a family was running late and just walked in the door and their child needs breakfast, provide activities for children who are already done with breakfast while hoping the classroom did not become too destroyed because in 20 minutes we need to begin circle time to stay on schedule, clean up the last of the dishes and begin the day.

9:00 A.M: Get 12 children to the carpet and begin circle time, help negotiate who sits where because inevitably someone will cry because they are not sitting by their best friend. Help get someone’s shoe back on that came off in the potty, and begin circle time. Read stories, do the calendar, sing songs, discuss burning questions of the morning, explain the schedule for the day and keep our fingers crossed that we are still on schedule and ready for centers at 9:20 a.m. Children begin center time; lead teacher facilitates emergent learning
and art activities. 9:45 a.m. start potties again, double check to make sure all children have sunscreen, jackets and begin clean up to transition outside.

10:00 A.M. Outside time. Each classroom is joined by two other classrooms of children in their similar age group along with four other teachers. On a good day, there are 6 teachers on the yard at all times to be with 36 children. Teachers cross compare the number of children and begin to figure out how to get breaks done efficiently so any extra minutes can be spent prepping. Prepping can mean a variety of things; as a lead teacher I need to change my evidence of learning board monthly, send a parent e-mail, call a parent because someone bumped their head, prep any materials that may need prepping and go find red paint, because I have none in my classroom and there is none in the resources cupboard. By 11:15 hopefully all teacher breaks are done, and it is time to clean up the yard, gather the children, and head inside to transition into lunch.

11:15 A.M.: Help children put away jackets, wash hands, check to see if lunch is at the door, prep lunch, set the table, help negotiate seats again because someone still can’t sit by their best friend, clean up spilled milk, hand out lunch, clean up spilled milk, put cots out for children to sleep on, begin to transition the classroom for nap, quiet music, dimmed lights, go find an extra blanket because someone forgot theirs, clean up dishes, wipe down tables, clean up spilled milk, sweep floors, get dishes back in the hallway, wash hands and faces, do potties again, change children’s clothes who are wet or dirty form outside time, help children ease into their cots and if you are still on schedule the first teacher is out the door and headed to lunch by 12:15, wait someone has to go potty, first teacher out the door by 12:30. Each teacher has an hour lunch break. During nap or rest time each teacher has 12 children alone for an hour. On a good day everyone is sleeping, on a more challenging day that is not the case and teachers must get creative.

2 P.M.: The first child in any given classroom is beginning to wake, quietly assist them to the potty, offer them a quiet activity on their bed while other children are allowed to finish their nap. By 2:30 p.m. the second teacher is back in the classroom and all children are then legally allowed to get off their beds and beginning their afternoon.

3:00 P.M.: 12 children have been to the potty, clothes and beds have been cleaned up from any accidents, snack is out on the table and children are helping themselves if they are hungry. By 3 usually parents have started to trickle in, I would greet them, talk with them,
and respond to any concerns. At times, issues can be extremely delicate as parents disclosed information that involved child-rearing practices, marital issues, domestic violence, or confidential issues for which I did not always feel competent to offer professional advice nor as a lead teacher is it recommended. It was important that during these times, I was a good listener and, if necessary, I researched where families could obtain outside professional support. All the while 12 children are playing, settling disputes, and growing as individuals. By 3:45, check for potty breaks, re apply sunscreen, get jackets if needed, clean up the classroom, and head outside for afternoon outside time by 4 P.M.

4:00 P.M. : Afternoon outside time is the same as morning although the stress level is heightened, as all teachers still need to get breaks done in a timely manner. However, because it is afternoon, many more parents are present in the building and need or want to talk with their child’s teacher. Therefore many time breaks take longer and or are skipped due to lack of staff at the end of the day. If it was a good day with not to many hic-ups I would be scheduled to be off by 5 p.m. and if I were really lucky would clock out at 5, because overtime is NEVER allowed, and would be out the door by 5:30 after wrapping up any loose ends.

This description provides some background to understanding the role of the lead teacher, as well as why, research on leadership practices affect teacher satisfaction in childcare is important.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This research explores how program leadership and practices affect teacher satisfaction and organizational climate in a for profit childcare center. It is important to research and identify the importance of teacher satisfaction in early childhood education in an effort to keep teacher retention high and young children’s experiences in childcare rich. Childcare is a partnership alongside parental care and is promoting children’s social and cognitive development (Berger, 1995; Berk, 1991; Ochiltree, 1994). Childcare services enable parents, especially women, to enter the workforce knowing their children are safe. Those children are safe, happy, and more likely to be having richer experiences when their teachers are satisfied and feel valued (Cummings, Iannotti, & Zahn-Waxler, 1985). Furthermore, research shows that child care centers with high turnover have higher rates of children that tend to exhibit more aggressive behavior with peers, are more withdrawn, and spend more time unoccupied. Likewise centers with higher teacher retention rates have children who are safe, happy, and more likely to be having richer experiences (Cummings et al., 1985).

The researcher will explore relationships between organizational climate, job satisfaction, and leadership at four Creative Children Learning Centers (CCLC), two in California and two Oregon. Fran Durekas, the Bay Area, founded Creative Children Learning Centers in 1992. Fran had the opportunity to buy the company she was working for and strengthen what she felt were weaknesses in the company. Over the years Fran has strengthened the company and is providing corporate childcare in twenty states across the United States of America. Within those twenty states there are 108 on-site or near-site centers providing childcare, back up care, and corporate discounts to approximately 150 corporations in the United States.

Across all fields job dissatisfaction affects employee behavior and retention (Bloom, 2010). While it has not been proven that job satisfaction in fact produces greater productivity, there is ample evidence that suggests that people with more positive feelings about their work
tend to be more productive (Weakliem & Frenkel, 2006). Job satisfaction is defined as the discrepancy between existing conditions and ideal conditions (Bloom, 2010). It is an organization’s leader, and the leader’s practices, that have a strong finger on the pulse of an organization’s climate, which affects teacher’s satisfaction. The role of leaders is to increase job satisfaction by providing strategies for increasing job satisfaction, which include encouraging more stable environments for staff as well as children and their families, mentoring and maintaining relationships within their community, and strengthening their organizational climate (P. Vickers, personal communication, April 18, 2002). When job satisfaction is high, the discrepancy between existing conditions and ideal conditions is small (Bloom, 2010). When assessing job satisfaction or work attitudes, there are two areas to consider. First do the individual’s work perspective and their personal evaluation of conditions exist on the job and the degree to which those conditions meet the individual’s needs and expectations? This type of personal evaluation done by an employee is commonly referred to as job satisfaction. Secondly, when looking at job satisfaction there are collective perceptions or beliefs of all employees working in a particular center, which is referred to as organizational climate. Both job satisfaction and organizational climate are influenced by the organization’s structure and the interactions between individuals who work in the environment. Job satisfaction looks at goodness of fit between an individual and the organization. Evidence points to the connection between job satisfaction and organizational climate (Bloom, 2010) as both are influenced not only by the differences in organizational structure but also by the meaning attached to interactions between people within those settings.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Researchers have detailed the consequence of having unsatisfied teachers, with a common consequence being that when teachers are unsatisfied at their jobs they form intent to leave the job (Saari & Judge, 2004). The consequence of having unsatisfied teachers in early childhood organization is greater because young children and their families are involved. Bloom (2005) explains that when teachers have a greater sense of satisfaction they may have an increased commitment to the field. High turnover rates plague the field of early childhood education, with current rates higher than ever in the nation (Bloom, 1996;
Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). It is important to look at the world an early childhood teacher works and lives in daily to have a further grasp on what is driving teacher turnover in early childhood education. What is happening within the classroom, hallways, and playground that make a teacher say they can no longer operate in the early childhood system?

Being an early childhood teacher is a job like no other, with many competing demands, and Kelly and Berthelson (1995) noted the following as major sources of stress for early childhood teachers: the need to care for children and meet their needs, attend meetings, time commitments, time pressures, dealing with non-teaching tasks, and maintaining early childhood philosophy and practice. In programs where the quality of a teachers work life is central, teacher satisfaction increases and their commitment to the field as well as their center is higher (Bloom, 2010).

Directors are the agents of change within their centers. For some directors being an agent of change does not come naturally. Directors to must put in the time with their teachers educating their staff on improving their quality of work life. However this does not mean that directors should be the only person changing and deciding on changes within the community but rather creating a climate that is autonomy supportive. Directors need to be able to create the space for autonomy and decision making encouraging interpersonal relationships among staff, who in turn become active in the change process itself (Bloom, 2010).

Bloom (2010) established six leadership practices that enhance and maintain a healthy organizational climate: the demonstration of personal commitment to the organizations’ goals, the encouragement of innovation and risk taking, the clarification of peoples’ roles and responsibilities, the encouragement of participation in decisions, setting high standards, and conducting team meetings that build a mutual trust. The primary goal of this study is to better understand the relationships between leadership styles and teacher satisfaction. Having positive leader-employee relationships can lead to stronger communities in early childhood centers. The quality of the relationship between the leader of an early childhood childcare center and the teachers working within the center affects an employee’s self-esteem and job satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to explore teacher beliefs and attitudes and to shed light on how organizational climate, administrative practices, and program leadership affect teacher job satisfaction.
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bronfenbrenner’s (2004) bioecological theory of human development provides the framework for examining how knowledge, activities, and communities emerge together as part of the process of the workplace learning. Within this theory human interactions and meanings form part of the workplace context or organizational climate as the systems interconnect and nest within the larger system they are part of. A person’s physical biology is the foundation environment of where their professional growth and job satisfaction begins. The dealing’s between their own biology, their immediate community environment, and the social landscape shapes their professional growth and job satisfaction. To understand an early childhood teacher, you have to consider not only the individual teacher and their biology but also the relationships and the environments that influence who that the professional is.

In Bloom’s (2005) model of the early childhood work setting as a system, a teachers work life is nestled within the subsystem of structure and processes that constitute the early childhood work setting, organizational (Wagner & French, 2010). Bloom (2005) first explained that these subsystems are nested within the overall work climate, which in turn, is embedded in the larger political, social and cultural contexts that influence the field of early childhood education. A teacher’s drive to professional growth and satisfaction is molded by the entangled interactions between themselves and the subsystems of an early childhood childcare center presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Child Care System.
Bloom (1991) offered a broad idea of childcare centers when looking at social systems theory by demonstrating how a childcare center is part of an open social system. By viewing childcare centers as systems, we are better able to understand the dynamics of organizational life in child care centers and the interconnections between isolated incidents. A system can be defined as a set of interrelated and interdependent parts. A system has a network of social relationships with its own distinctive culture. A childcare center fits this definition by looking at the idea of different classrooms or even different groups of children within classrooms (Bloom, 1991). Within the setting of a childcare center there are six components of the system: environment, people, structure, processes, culture, and outcomes.

When looking at an early childhood childcare center it is crucial to understand the environment and how it impacts the system. The environment consists of, but is not limited to, local community and neighborhoods, sponsoring agencies, legislative bodies, and business communities. Nadler and Tushman (1980) indicate that the societal forces of the environment influence how an organization operates. For example a sponsoring agency may indicate how much paper work must be completely daily, monthly, and yearly by teachers. This impact to the system has effect on teacher’s job satisfaction. Depending on the variety of environmental components a system could be heavily impacted by a variety of people, communities, and rule makers that never set foot inside the center.

People within a system are commonly referred to as the psychosocial subsystem. People are the basic material of any social system. People refer to individuals, sex, age, culture, family history, education level, and personality traits (Bloom, 1991). It is understood that two teachers can have the role of head teacher within a center, what is not clear is how each will handle and given situation within their days. Teachers each have different personalities, backgrounds, education levels and personal beliefs and opinions. Likewise no two directors could act the same in the same situation, meaning that individuals shape their roles with their own styles and behavior. However, when groups come together they begin to think as a group. Certain individuals seek out others with like-minded beliefs and ideas, while those that differ tend to stay away from each other (Bloom, 1991). Each group will have distinctive patterns and relations that structure the composition of the group contained by the system.
Structure refers to size, program composition, policies regarding children and their families as well as teachers and staff, and laws. The structure in essence is the skeleton, it is, the framework that holds a center together, and has an impact on job satisfaction. The legal aspect is the control of how business is run, written policies and procedures affect children and families along with teachers, these policies help to define roles, goals, and division of labor. The physical structure includes space layout, materials, and equipment. The most important aspect of structure is the philosophical structure, including the centers goals and objectives as well as curriculum (Bloom, 1991).

Processes can be explained simply by how things get done at a center. For example, a policy may be stated in the employee handbook, how is that policy then carried out within the center. They are two different concepts one is written while the other includes interactions between at a minimum two people. Other significant types of processes are, leadership style, how problems get solved or not, communication both formal and informal, as well as philosophy and objectives. All are a component of the subsystem structure.

Culture, for the purposes of a social system theory, describes the way a center feels. In groups of people interacting norms become more prevalent. Norms, for example, could be in regards to the type of behavior deemed acceptable and clothing that is thought to be appropriate. Norms are like codes, or implicit agreements among a group of people creating a culture among the community within the center. Centers have history, history that may create traditions. Traditions are also included in a staff’s culture, for example centers that celebrate the week of the young child, Dr. Seuss’s birthday, or summer solstice- these celebrations or traditions define centers uniqueness and make up the culture.

Outcomes are also a component of social systems. In regards to teachers and job satisfaction, outcomes look at absenteeism and turnover, the staff’s level of competence, their level of job satisfaction, commitment to the center, and sense of personal and professional fulfillment. The outcomes of a center can be a way to look at a center’s organizational effectiveness. However, Bloom (1991) indicated that organizational effectiveness is a multi-dimensional concept and cannot be the sole basis for determining effectiveness.

Building on Bronfenbrenner’s model and reflecting Bloom’s conceptualization of a child care center as a system, Deci and Ryan’s self-determination theory (1985, 2008) provides an insightful framework for further exploration in the way an individual and
systematic factors influence teachers’ motivation and satisfaction as a professional. According to self-determination theory, the extent to which an environment is autonomy supportive, controlling or motivating will influence the degree of intrinsic motivation and individual feels towards a given activity (Deci & Ryan, 2008). For example, what is a teacher’s intrinsic motivation for lesson plans, parent communication, classroom upkeep, outdoor space enrichments, evidence of learning, and peer relationships?

Bloom (2005) noted that organizational commitment is strongly related to motivation. Bloom’s research is directed at the idea that teachers who believe they play and important role in a worthwhile organization feel motivated to exhibit higher levels of professional duties and take further advantage of professional development opportunities. Within self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2008), teachers whose needs for competence and relatedness are satisfied have higher levels of intrinsic interest in their work. When levels of interest in work are heightened teachers become more interested in professional development opportunities. There is still not a direct link between motivation and organizational commitment; however, there is substantial evidence to link professional commitment and turnover (Stremmel, 1991), work satisfaction (Stremmel, 1991), work climate (Bloom, 1996), and overall program quality (Bloom, 1989, 1996; Lower & Cassidy, 2007). The dimensions of work climates such as decision-making, supervisor support, and collegiality are all positively linked with program quality (Bloom, 1996). Bloom’s statement is consistent with self-determination theory in regards to the importance of autonomy supportive early childhood classrooms (Wagner & French, 2010).

**Leadership in Early Childhood Education**

Neugebauer (1990) studied leadership and administration in early childhood, and found that a director’s style of leadership has a lasting effect on a total teaching approach of the center. In particular, Neugebauer proposed that the director’s decision-making style was related to the quality of interpersonal relations within the center. When decisions were made within a team environment, staff was more motivated, dedicated, trusting, and clear on center objectives than were staff that worked in center where less attention was given to the quality of interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the best type of a leader within an early childhood program was found to be a democratic motivator, which is much like an integrated
leader in Bloom’s model. This type of leader trusts their staff’s decision-making and creativity, rather than taking a strong supervisory role. In 2000, Neugebauer noted that, “The director must set the course in order to lay out a vision that all staff can use as a road map to guide their day-to-day efforts ... Not only does the director set the course, but she must also keep her finger on the pulse of the organization” (p. 99).

By understanding the type of leaders an organization has hired and how they are being perceived by their staff, best practices and lessons learned from the present study can be shared with the greater community of CCLC and other early childhood organizations and add to the discourse of effective leadership, administrative practices, greater teacher satisfaction, and improved organizational climates, all which have been shown to improve teacher retention rates (Lower & Cassidy, 2007).

Early childhood work environments need to nurture adults, just as they would the children in them, and instituting practices that promote quality of work life and organizational climate is worthwhile in the end for teachers, children, and families. Many employers consider it unnecessary or not worth the companies investment for directors to seek higher qualifications because higher degrees are viewed as professional gate keeping requiring increased wages, thus increasing the costs in operating a center (Bowman, 1997). However, research indicates current issues in the quality of early childhood care involve the shortage of highly qualified directors and leaders (Borge, Hartman & Storm, 1996; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). Therefore, it is with more formal training that those directors could have a better understanding of the type of leader needed for their center to create higher levels of teacher satisfaction. Research indicates that when teachers work for a director who does not provide support, show consideration, or engages in hostile behaviors there is a negative impact on the employee’s self-esteem and job satisfaction (Bloom, 2010). If companies invested in more formal training for their directors, teacher retention could be at a higher rate. Directors would have the training to understand how to meet not only organizational needs but individual needs as well.

To have a full view of teacher satisfaction, Bloom (2010), explores and defines the five facets of job satisfaction as well as ten dimensions of organizational climate, as well as at the role of leadership. The five facets of job satisfaction Bloom explores are, co-worker relations, supervisor relations, the nature of the work itself, working conditions, and pay &
promotion opportunities. The ten dimensions of organizational climate Bloom focuses on are collegiality, professional growth, supervisor support, clarity, rewards system, decision-making, goal consensus, task orientation, physical setting, and innovativeness. This conceptualization will provide the framework for the researcher’s study. Bloom’s research on leadership indicates that leaders should be facilitators in change and not dictators. Leaders should be empowering people to create a new expectation in their work climate rather than demanding a change. Directors are facilitators of change that requires leadership and management functions, for example, vision building, promoting commitment and creativity, and overcoming resistance.

STAFFING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In the United States, staff employed in childcare centers are usually referred to as preschool teachers or caregivers. Within childcare centers, staff roles are generally designated as directors, lead teachers and assistant teacher’s. The director can be a contact director whose responsibilities include the direct teaching of children, as well as overall management and administration of the center. The director may be a non-contact director who is responsible for total center management without specific teaching responsibilities. However, on a daily basis, the director is likely to engage in teaching when staff is relieved for meal breaks, meetings, or other activities. The lead teacher’s role entails providing the daily activities for the young children within a specific age group. The assistant’s duties consist of supporting the lead teachers in caring and educating the children, as well as undertaking routine housekeeping tasks within the child care center.

Across the United States, states vary in their requirements on the educational experience needed to hold the position of lead teacher. A lead teacher in California is required to have a minimum of 12 units in early childhood education in order to have the title and responsibility of lead teacher. In Oregon the requirements are less than California. In Oregon a person’s education can be as minimal as 20 semester hours or 30-quarter hours. These course requirements do not ensure that teachers will have the necessary skills and experience and aptitude to manage a classroom and organize a classroom of up to 24 children and their families. Both states identify the importance of wanting teachers with a bachelor’s
degree but state it is not a requirement. In the United States, less than 40% of lead teachers of three and four year olds in center based early childhood programs have a four-year college degree (Wagner & French, 2010).

**Research Questions**

This study explored the relationship between teacher satisfaction and organizational practices, leaders, and organizational climates. The following research questions were addressed:

1. How are teacher’s perceptions of organizational climate related to teacher job satisfaction in a for profit child-care center?
2. What is the relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style, work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare

**Overview of Methodology**

In order to gain information regarding how program leadership and practice’s affect teacher satisfaction and organizational climate in a for profit early childhood childcare center an explanatory mixed methods approach was implemented (Creswell, 2008). The first phase of this study allowed the researcher to obtain quantitative results from up to 120 teachers at four Creative Children Learning Centers, two in California and two in Oregon.

Further analysis of the data took place in the second phase of this study through qualitative data collection in the form of five open ended questions at the end of the survey for the teachers to add or expand on any area they felt needed more explanation or wanted to add something they felt the researcher did not ask about. The open-ended questions will provide an in-depth exploration of teacher’s thoughts and feelings about their directors (Creswell, 2008) and focus on the specific characteristics of the teacher-director dynamic relationship.

**Significance of the Study**

The cost to a corporation can be high in terms of the employee’s stress, reduction in their daily productivity, frequently calling in sick and, worse case, turnover. A goal of the research is to better understand the teachers’ perception of leadership style. When looking at the rate of turnover in relation to administrative practices it is important to look at the perspective of the teacher and if they feel their director is a considerate leader. Research done
by Singh (1998) noted that leaders who show concern for people had employees who were more productive, had higher performance rates, and were more likely to retain teachers for longer periods of time. Robbins (1998) explains that structured leaders show less concern for people, which leads to high rates of grievances, absenteeism and turnover.

Teachers in early childhood classroom serve so many roles at one time; they are stressed, tired, and overwhelmed (Robbins, 1998). It is the leadership practices and the organizational climates of a building that can help teachers feel more secure, confident, and less stressed in their classrooms. Research has discovered that teachers are most stressed about the numerous demands on their time and the interruptions to their planned time (Robbins, 1998). The early childhood childcare system is much different than that of the elementary school systems. There are few gate keepers to protect teachers from unnecessary interruptions (Kelly & Berthelson, 1995). Common stressors for teachers are work overload, time restraints, problems with child behavior, working conditions, relationships with colleagues, lack of resources, and the physical demands of teaching; it is in part up to the director and the organization to set in place strong leadership and practices to support the teachers in the classroom (Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). In keeping with the research on the nature of the early childhood workforce and the importance of quality care in the early years, a primary goal of this study is to provide information to CCLC that will help them to improve leadership, job satisfaction, and organizational climate through the use of tools designed to provide program analysis to highlight areas that need improvement.

**LIMITATIONS**

A potential limitation to this study could be that the design does not allow for generalizability. Given the possibility of a small sample size by including volunteer participants gathered from four CCLC centers, it is possible to assume that the results are not generalizable to other for profit early childhood childcare centers. However, the researcher is confident the data collected from this study can potentially inform and provide valuable insight to directors on the effects program practices, organizational climate and teacher satisfaction. Additionally, the framework used in this study can be repeated at other for profit early childhood childcare centers. A second limitation to the internal validity in the researcher study could be the self-report nature of the survey, as the researcher cannot be
sure how truthful and reflective the teachers were in their answers. In addition, teachers were chosen by their job title rather than by true random assignment from a list of volunteers, further impacting generalizability. The researcher is relying solely on volunteer teachers, who will hopefully be honest and truthful in their response if they choose to respond. Due to the nature of the study participants could choose not to participate. Since there are several threats, these might compound to threaten internal validity.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The literature summarizes research on program leadership, organizational climate, teacher satisfaction and how they are connected. When assessing job satisfaction or work attitudes, there are two areas to consider. First, do the individual’s work perspective and their personal evaluation of conditions exist on the job and the degree to which those conditions meet the individual’s needs and expectations? This type of personal evaluation done by an employee is commonly referred to as job satisfaction. The first section of this chapter will provide an overview on the history of job satisfaction, define job satisfaction, and explore the five facets of job satisfaction.

Secondly, when looking at job satisfaction there are collective perceptions or beliefs of all employees working in a particular center, which is referred to as organizational climate. Both job satisfaction and organizational climate are influenced by the organization’s structure and the interactions between individuals who work in the environment. The second section of this chapter will explore organizational climate.

The third aspect of the research is the role of leadership in an early childhood center. Many who step into the position of leadership in early childhood are not necessarily fully prepared. Many have taken courses that offer a small overview of leadership while completing their ECE courses. However this is not sufficient to prepare adults to manage a community with mature problems in regards to children and their families, along with a staff (Rodd, 1998). One of the biggest obstacles for leaders in early childhood is the idea that their interpersonal and communication skills are fundamental to their leadership style and effectiveness (Lucas, Greany, Rodd, & Wicks, 2002). The director in an early childhood center plays a pivotal role in assessing the climate on a daily basis using their interpersonal skills while walking the hallways and checking in with teachers and families. When leaders, directors, understand that it is not necessarily their responsibility to make everyone happy, but rather to be the model in a collective responsibility of a satisfying workplace attunement and trust is built between staff and directors, then they are able to focus on organizational
needs. That attunement to their staff creates a stronger organizational climate and higher job satisfaction (Bloom, 2010).

**JOB SATISFACTION**

Job satisfaction is one of the most widely researched topics in psychology. As early as 1935, Hoppock applied survey methods and attitude scales to examine teachers’ job satisfaction. Hoppock believed that if the presence of a variable in the work environment led to satisfaction, then its absence would lead to dissatisfaction. His work typifies what has historically been called the traditional approach. Herzberg (1966) questioned the ideas of Hoppock and explored a two-factor theory and suggested that the cause for satisfaction and dissatisfaction are extremely separate. Herzberg’s research suggested that there are three motivating factors including achievement, recognition, and intrinsic nature of the job that are associated with physiological growth and lead to job satisfaction. Furthermore, Holzberg stated that hygiene factors such as pay, security, and physical working conditions are also associated with the context of the job. Holzberg noted that hygiene factors can lead to dissatisfaction but cannot guarantee satisfaction.

Early childhood teachers, like most working individuals, have ideas, attitudes and or viewpoints about their jobs, careers, and the organizations they elect to too work for (Saari & Judge, 2004). One of the most influential areas of influence in an employee’s job satisfaction is the work itself (Saari & Judge, 2004). Research done by Judge and colleagues (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge, Locke, Durham, & Kluger, 1998) discovered that a key personality trait, known as core self-evaluation impacts job satisfaction. These researchers proposed that the work itself and an individual’s personality trait of core self-evaluation could have the most important situational effect on job satisfaction, implying that there is a relationship between disposition or personality traits and job satisfaction (Judge & Bono, 2001; Judge et al., 1998). Organizations cannot control or directly impact a teachers’ personalities, however they should be using responsible methods when hiring teachers for positions that are most appropriate for them (Saari & Judge, 2004). For example when a director interviews a teacher for and Pre-K position and hires them under the assumption they will be a Pre- K teacher, it is the corporation’s responsibility to place the new employee in the age group they most desire and feel passionate about. As an organization has some responsibility in job
satisfaction for the teacher, by ensuring the work it is still interesting and challenging to the individual, which will contribute to higher job satisfaction (Saari & Judge, 2004).

The topic of job satisfaction has immediate relevance to our lives; so much of Americans lives are spent at work. Understanding how to achieve job satisfaction and/or fulfillment affects an individual’s well-being. Bloom (2010) describes job satisfaction as, “one’s evaluative reaction to the organization-satisfied/not satisfied, good/bad, just/unjust” (p. 17). It is kind of a physiological contract between and employee and their workplace that is influenced by personal needs, values, and expectations (Bowditch & Buono, 1982; Jones & James, 1979). Across the spectrum of research, job satisfaction is connected to organizational commitment. Thus, understanding factors that influence job satisfaction is a crucial part of retaining and attracting committed teachers. (Bloom, 2010)

Through a review of literature and research on job satisfaction five facets have been identified by Bloom (2010) as being most important in early childhood education satisfaction: (1) co-worker relations, (2) supervisor relations, (3) the nature of the work itself, (4) general working conditions, and (5) pay and promotion opportunities (Bloom, 2010). A number of theorists and researchers emphasize the importance of assessing job satisfaction through facets rather than relying on an employee’s single assessment of their job (Kahn, 1981; Lawler, 2000; MacQueen & Ignatovich, 1986; Seashore, 1983; Sergiovanni, 2009; Smith Kendall & Hulin 1975), because the facets modestly impact each other. This demonstrates that individuals have a variety of different feelings about each facet of their job and cannot use a broad statement to get an accurate depiction of job satisfaction (Bloom, 2010). Each of these facets will be explored in greater detail in the following sections.

Co-Worker Relations

In the field of early childhood education, research done by McGinty, Justice, and Rimm Kaufmann (2008) found that teachers’ interpretations of collegial support was significantly related to their attitude toward teaching and their environment. This research also pointed to the fact that the higher the positive interaction, the increased emotional attachment teachers have towards their organization. By definition, a co-worker relation is the extent to which a worker has formed a close relationship with colleagues (Bloom, 2010). Within educational environments it has been found that collegial relationships have been the

**Supervisor Relations**

According to Bloom’s model, the director’s understanding of what supervisor relations appears to look like to their staff is also related to job satisfaction. Supervisor relations as defined by Bloom (2010) as, “Perceived quality and quantity of feedback, encouragement, and helpful support from a supervisor” (p. 18). Brook (2007) found a significant connection between a director’s leadership style as it relates to structure and task orientation and teacher’s overall job satisfaction. Brook noted that when supervisors initiate structure, set goals, assist with problem solving, and provide social and mental support their teachers feel a lower amount of ambiguity and uncertainty and greater satisfaction with their jobs.

**Nature of the Work Itself**

Third on Bloom’s list of job facets is the nature of the work itself. Bloom (2010) defined the nature of the work itself as:

> different aspects of the work experience degree of challenge, variety, autonomy, and control as well as quantity of tasks to be done and the time frame in which to do them. The nature of the work itself also includes perceived importance of the work and the extent to which it provides intrinsic enjoyment and fulfills the need for recognition, creativity, and skill building. (p. 17)

A teacher’s autonomy in their daily experiences at work has strong impact on their job satisfaction when it comes to what they do and when they do it. Autonomy supportive learning within early childhood classrooms is the degree of choice and control a teacher may have in their decision making about curriculum, teaching methods, and scheduling; the level of freedom he or she may have to be creative and challenge themselves as a teacher, the degree of trust and positive informational feedback received from co-workers, directors, parents and children (Wagner & French, 2010). Autonomy supportive directors trust their teachers to some degree to make decisions about their own classrooms while maintaining the philosophy of the center.
Working Conditions

Working in early childhood education is a physically demanding job. Therefore Bloom has listed working conditions fourth in the list of job facets that impact job satisfaction. Working conditions, as defined by Bloom (2010), “Includes both the structure of the work experience (flexibility of hours, teacher child ratio, adequacy of breaks, substitutes, and teaching materials) as well as the context (aesthetic quality of physical environment: overall noise level; adequacy of heat, ventilation and light; and spatial arrangement” (p. 17). These elements have shown to have a strong influence on early childhood worker’s level of satisfaction and ability to perform their jobs in a variety of childcare settings (Center for the Child Care Workforce [CCW], 1998; Kontos & Stremmel, 1988; Prescott, 1981). Emotional exhaustion is closely related with working conditions. If teachers and directors are satisfied with the working conditions the risk for emotional exhaustion is lower. Preventative care for emotional exhaustion can be as simple as regular staff meetings and providing more opportunities for communication (Stremmel, Benson, & Powell, 1993).

Pay and Promotion

Pay and Promotion is the final facets that contribute to job satisfaction. Bloom (2010) stated that this facet concerns the adequacy of pay as well as the perceived equity and fairness of compensation policies, fringe, benefits, and opportunities for advancement. Pay in early childhood education is not just an economic issue but is also an emotional issue. For some in the field it is status and security and for others it is a form of recognition. While pay is an important source of motivation it is often downplayed in a teachers self-report of job satisfaction, extrinsic rewards are important for their symbolic value according to Bloom (2005).

Organizational Climate

Evidence points to the connection between job satisfaction and organizational climate (Bloom, 2010) as both are influenced not only by the differences in organizational structure but also by the meaning attached to interactions between people within those settings. Most do not think methodically about organizational climate, nevertheless organizational climate influences everyone’s behavior, how employees feel about expressing their feelings and
opinions, how deeply the employees form interpersonal relations, and the extent to which roles and responsibilities are performed adequately. Many organizational practices and leadership style contribute to the summary perception employees may have of their work environment.

Leadership styles of directors vary from center to center. However it is a director’s leadership style that sets the tone of the organizational climate in a center. When early childhood educators are under the guidance of a leader who does not provide support, show consideration, or engages in hostile work behaviors can be stressful for employees (Brook, 2007). However when working for a considerate leader, one who provides concern for people, and facilitates a sense of community that leader then has an organizational climate with higher productivity and is more conducive to job satisfaction (Brook, 2007). Bloom’s (2010) framework looks at three types of leaders: the task oriented style, emphasizing organizational needs; the people oriented style, focusing on people and their individual needs; and the integrated style, stressing appropriate emphasis on both the centers needs and the individual worker’s needs. Leadership style has a direct effect not only on employees but also the children and families within the center. Job dissatisfaction and transition issues caused by turnover can lead to poor quality care and may have a negative impact on children’s growth and development.

When a person walks into a center to interview for a position they can instantly sense the different characteristics of a center. For example, is it formal, is it more casual, and is the director lively and upbeat, or more formal and to the book? What is the energy level of the center like? Is there a feeling of discontent and tension, perhaps gloominess? All of the mentioned characteristics refer to a distinct and unique atmosphere that characterizes each setting as an organizational climate. (Anderson, 1982). Organizational climate is defined as the collective perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and values of individuals in a work setting. It is a composite of personalities that come together and the leadership that guides them (James & Jones, 1974; Tagiuri 1978). When talking about perceptions it is important to acknowledge that the organizational climate of a workplace is based on employee’s subjective interpretations of events and behaviors in the setting. Those perceptions in some cases may not align with the reality of what is happening in the climate, or in the directors perception,
nonetheless it is important for directors to be able to understand why their employees see the climate the way they see it.

How a teacher sees their reality can be different depending on their role in an organization and how they feel they are valued and the context of each situation. Halpin and Croft (1963) explained the role of a leader when they wrote, “[H]ow a leader really behaves is less important than how members of his group perceive he behaves; it is their perception of his behavior that will determine the behavior of the group members, and will hence define the organizational climate” (pp. 9-10).

There is a connection between organizational climate and job satisfaction. The research is still unable to conclude which comes first however, the climate or the job satisfaction (Coughlan & Cooke, 1974; Halpin & Croft, 1963).

Bloom (2010) conceptualized ten dimensions of organizational climate; collegiality, professional growth, supervisor support, clarity, rewards system, decision making, goal consensus, task orientation, physical setting, and innovativeness. Within these ten categories there is some overlap and none can be considered exclusive. Bloom (2010) developed these ten categories with her knowledge and practical sense of how early childhood centers differ and are the same under the umbrella of group behavior in an organizational setting.

**Collegiality**

Collegiality by definition is how friendly staff are, how supportive and trusting of one another they are (Bloom, 2010). The key element to the idea of collegiality is the idea of being a part of a community. A community with high collegiality includes teachers, directors, and parents, who care about and supports each other. In schools where the feeling of community is high, in turn, so are respect and supportive relationships among teachers, children, families, and administration. (Battish, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Schaps, 2009). McGinty et al. (2008) looked deeper into whether preschool teacher’s beliefs of a positive sense of community had any impact on their teaching quality. They found that the size of the school predicted teacher’s perceptions of collegiality. It is that perception that impacted the teacher quality towards teaching.
Professional Growth

The National Association of Young Children (NAYEC) continues to stress the importance of continual training for early childhood providers and caregivers. Within the field of early childhood there is not a set standard about the minimum hours of professional development per year that should take place (Zaslow & Martinez-Beck, 2006). When defining professional development phrases like; facilitated learning, college credit and non-credit, structured teaching, acquiring more professional knowledge, skills, and application of knowledge are repeated throughout the literature. In centers with high organizational climate, creative ways are found to reimburse teachers expenses for training, workshops, or further education (Talan, 2007).

Bloom, 2005 indicated that a center striving for high organizational climates provides in service to teachers specifically directed at the various levels of the individuals in the center. Directors should be considering the career levels of individuals and creating professional growth opportunities towards them.

Supervisor Support

Supervisor support was clearly defined by Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordon (2009) as the frequency of feedback on performance, the evaluation of procedures for improving work, and fairness and appraisal. Within early childhood centers, research points out that the level of which a supervisor is supportive has a direct impact on a teachers’ level of commitment (Bloom, 2010). When directors take on the role of an instructional leader, guide their staff and provide honest and clear feedback, see supervision and performance appraisal as a key component of the job, they have positive organizational climates (Bloom, 2010).

Clarity

In the environment of early childhood there is very little black and white and a lot of grey in regards to clarity of job duties and descriptions. Clarity refers to the order of exact description of organizational duties, functions and how they are implemented. It is highly unlikely to walk into an early childhood classroom and find a lead teacher who has obtained graduate level education working alongside an assistant teacher who has very few college
credits. However, it is highly likely that if you did walk into that specific classroom you would find them both performing the same tasks of cleaning up milk, engaging with children, working on curriculum, and talking to parents. Bloom (2010) indicated that the lack of clarity in the scope of an early childhood classroom roles and responsibilities creates tension among teachers and teaching partnerships. In early childhood there needs to be not only clarity in title and pay, but also in the actual work performed.

**Reward System**

Across the field of early childhood, teachers and administrators continue to indicate that their pay and job is undervalued by society (CCW, 2007). Within an organization the distribution of pay and benefits is an indicator of the reward system in place. In early childhood specifically, wages provide a way for teachers to cross compare their value in a center, as well as to centers looking to hire new teachers. A teacher may be paid $x amount at their current center, but if another center is offering higher pay, teachers may momentarily feel more valued somewhere else. Early childhood providers and advocates must continue the fight for fairness in pay and value in the field (Whitebook & Eichberg, 2002).

**Decision Making**

Decisions in an early childhood center may include, and are not limited to: supervision and professional development, instructional practices, scheduling, enrollment, fiscal policies, center goals, and school – community relationships. Decision-making as defined by Bloom (2010) is the distribution of power among the teaching staff and administration about various aspects of the center. Johnson and Pajares (1996) investigated the aspects that contribute to a positive and effective shared decision-making process. They found when decision-making is shared, teacher beliefs and attitudes about their role and that of the administer is re-defined.

**Goal Consensus**

Bloom (2010) simply defined goal consensus as the reflection of a common vision held by all staff. Goal consensus is in part two things; one, a common awareness of the philosophy of the center and two, the ability to compromise with each other and accept difference among each other.
Task Orientation

As described by Bloom (2010), task orientation within a center has an emphasis on good planning efficiency and getting the job done. Within a center with positive organizational climate, staff is not distracted from the impacted aspects of their job with busy work. Most importantly, Bloom (2010) noted that, in centers with high task orientation, procrastination is the exception rather than a rule. Centers who are riddled with schedules and the need for teachers to be on a schedule at all times lose the imagination of teachers and provide very little opportunity for teachers to think outside the box. Not being allowed to think for themselves leads teachers to feel less empowered (Wien, 1995).

Physical Setting

Environmental factors in an early childhood center can include, but are not limited to light, furniture, temperature, keys & locks, height of changing tables, number of chairs and tables, noise, ventilation and general layout of space. There is evidence that in the field of early child the physical setting of a center has an impact on a teacher’s ability to carry out their responsibilities in their classroom (Greenman, 2005). The physical setting not only impacts the organizational climate but can also reflect the organization on a whole.

Innovativeness

Innovativeness in a center is reflected in the opportunities where teachers are afforded the chance to creatively problem solve. Innovativeness is directly related to the leadership style of the director of a center, directors who have empowered teachers to problem solve and trust their decisions have a high level of innovativeness in their centers (Bloom, 2010).

Leadership

Bloom (2005) states time and time again that a director has the enormous responsibility of ensuring a great place to work.

Supporting teachers’ job satisfaction and improving the overall organizational climate of centers should not be considered a frill. It is every bit as important as decisions about group size, curriculum, and teacher-child ratio. Early childhood directors who maintain a dual focus on the classroom and the organizational climate of their program will reap the benefits of a great place to work and an educationally rewarding environment for the children and families they serve. (p. 103)
Research from Schein (2004) further explained the dynamic interaction for directors between the organizational needs and the individual needs within a childcare center. Schein (2004) believed that the interaction between the two is out of obligation; he refers to it as reciprocation, which means that organizations hire staff to achieve success and the organization’s goals. For an organization to be able to meet their goals, the individual’s hired must let go of some of their personal autonomy and independence and adhere to the leadership practices in order to get their personal needs fulfilled.

Directors have the task each day of bringing the pieces of the puzzle together at their center. They essentially are greeted each day with a puzzle of staff and organizational goals (Bloom, 2010). Each piece of the puzzle is a staff member and linking those puzzle pieces is the challenge put in front of each director. How directors meet the individual goals of people as well as for their center, Bloom (2010) indicates that leadership is about order and coordination while finding a way to allow for individuals to have professional autonomy and individual expression, and still get the job done.

Yukl (2002) developed a useful way of understanding the idea that different leadership style can help directors balance organizational needs as well as individual, while still maintaining a thriving center. The three following leadership styles; task oriented style, people oriented style, and integrated style are a conceptualization of their work.

Task oriented style leaders (Yukl, 2002) are very clear that the centers needs should come first. Directors of this type are very by the book and stress the importance of staff following the appropriate procedures. Directors under this leadership style tend to apply the same rules and procedure to all staff members. This type of leadership tends to promote a high level of work being done; many staff working under this type of leader report they felt their individual needs were not being met.

People oriented leaders (Yukl, 2002) focus on people and the individual professional needs more than the organization’s needs. This type of leader believes that happy employees are productive employees. This type of leader understands the importance of allowing individuals the opportunity actualize their own needs and be more self-directed. While it would appear that many would enjoy this type of leader, the research indicates that staff working under this type of leader feel a lack of order and coordination.
Integrated leadership style (Yukl, 2002), stresses the high level of concern for both individuals and the organization: directors who can do both integrate high productivity from their staff and high morale by having focused teamwork. These types of directors have explicit roles and expectations for their staff; however, they consider that all people have individual needs. This type of leadership style is situational, meaning directors cannot be fence sitters, they must steer the course in each situation and be competent to assess the need in each individual situation. Research indicates this type of leader will manage to achieve center goals and successfully achieve high morale among staff.

The lack of training and education for directors in early childhood makes for over worked, tired, and burnt out directors. Directors need the type of training that allows them to have the ability to see the bigger picture, and helps them grow into an integrated leader. Directors need to be able to see the need in each situation, with each individual rather than just the organization or just the individual. Directors need more training so they are not putting out each fire as they come, but rather making changes that create a more quality program along the way.

**RETENTION**

High turnover rates plague the field of early childhood education with current rates higher than ever in the nation (Bloom, 1996; Whitebook & Sakai, 2003). High turnover presents a number of problems for the children in early childhood programs by interfering with consistency and effectiveness in the classroom. *The Cost, Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers* report (Helburn, 1995) noted that centers with low turnover had significantly higher quality ratings than those with more than 10% turnover per year. Deery-Schmitt and Todd (1996) concluded that job satisfaction is negatively correlated with job stress and turnover. That is, teachers who are unhappy are more likely to leave their jobs. Even when unsatisfied teachers stay in the classroom, it may have negative effects for students in that unhappy teachers have been found to transfer that negative emotion to their students (Cummings et al., 1985). Teacher satisfaction is a key element in providing high quality care to children. By understanding factors that influence teacher satisfaction, organizations will be able to retain teachers for longer periods of time and children will have richer experiences while in their care.
Replacing a teacher typically takes directors almost three weeks and in some cases a month or longer (Wiley, King, & Garner, 2010). This period of time is highly disruptive to a center as a staff and center scramble to cover a vacancy within their community. There are direct and indirect costs when filling a position, advertising, time spent orienting a new staff member, over time paid to employees staying to cover responsibilities of the vacant teacher. What is most important is to remember that all turnovers affect the stability of adult–child relationships within a classroom and that change may have a negative impact on children’s development (Bloom, 2010).

In order to minimize turnover in childcare centers leaders, directors, need the skills of an integrated leader, those types of leaders have the skills to meet the individual needs of their teachers and still meet their organizations goals. Bloom (2010) noted that it is not for directors to find the best way but rather many mixtures of components that lead them to the most desirable outcomes.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION

In order to better understand relationships between directors, lead teachers, and assistant teachers, specifically how those relationships affect job satisfaction and organizational climate a quasi-experimental study was used. This chapter will begin by explaining the research design. Next, the research sites and selection of participants, as well as how the data will be collected and analyzed will be presented. The chapter will conclude with potential limitations.

The following research questions guide this investigation:

1. How are teacher’s perceptions of organizational climate related to teacher job satisfaction in a for profit child-care center?

2. What is the relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style and work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare?

To answer the research questions, the researcher used a sequential explanatory mixed methods design (Creswell, 2008) to explore and analyze data regarding how the perception of program leadership affects teacher job satisfactions & organizational climate. Quantitative survey data was used to measure leadership styles, teacher satisfaction, and organizational climate. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data and explore the relationships between variables. The survey concluded with a prompt for the teacher to continue to participate by answering six open ended questions regarding their director and their director’s leadership as well as their personal perceptions and beliefs about their job, and this represents the qualitative portion of the study.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants were 48 teachers employed at four CCLC’s located in Oregon and California. There are no screening or selection criteria associated with this study. This study will use non-probability sampling, defined by Creswell (2008) as taking place when individuals are “selected because they are available, convenient, and represent some
characteristic the investigator seeks to study” (p. 153). CCLC centers were chosen because they are representative of the group of individuals the researcher is specifically looking at, which is early childhood educators employed by the CCLC Corporation.

Research Site

Data collection took place in four CCLC centers, two of which are located in Southern California and two of which are located in Oregon. The California State San Marcos Creative Children Learning Center provides childcare and preschool education to children from six weeks to five years old. This CCLC is a child development center that first service students and faculty from California State University San Marcos, however, if there are spaces available community members may also have their children attend. One hundred and forty four children are enrolled in their program. The La Jolla Children’s Learning Lab provides child-care and education to one hundred children from six weeks of age to five years old. The Oregon State University- Beaver Beginning’s is a child development center that serves 136 children ages six weeks to five years old. The fourth center of participation is Healthy Starts Children's Center at Oregon Health & Science University hospital. This center is a child development center that provides childcare and education to 123 children from six weeks of age to five years old.

Participants

All lead and assistant teachers employed by the four CCLC centers under investigation were asked to participate in this study on a voluntary basis, and there was no education level or years experience required. The only requirement to participate was holding the position of lead teacher or assistant teacher. Of the 120 potential participants, 48 responded, for a response rate of 40%. Of those that responded, 53% had a Bachelor’s degree, 11% held an AA degree, and 20% had some college education. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents were female and 2% were male. Of the respondents, 40% had been working in the field of early childhood education for seven plus years, and 56% of the responses set have been employed by CCLC for one to two years.

The most efficient way to collect data and ensure confidentiality was for the researcher to have the survey administered online and accessed through a URL embedded in
The researcher asked teachers for their consent to participate in a graduate study on teacher perceptions of program leadership, organizational climate and job satisfaction. The researcher sent the link to the survey to directors, directors then embedded the link within their staff scoop, and teachers were then able to elect if they would like to participate.

**DATA COLLECTION**

The researcher used an original survey design drawing upon the Early Childhood Work Environment Survey (Bloom, 2010) and two tools from *Measuring work attitudes in the early childhood setting*, (Bloom, 2010): Assessment Tool #18, Job Satisfaction and My Director. The researcher developed an original survey drawing upon these tools to better reflect the questions the researcher was asking. Bloom (2010) is a leading researcher in organizational climate and job satisfaction in early childhood education, and these tools have been developed to help organizations improve organizational climate, job satisfaction and leadership skills. The Early Childhood Work Environment Survey and the two subscales of Assessment Tool #18 were selected to gather data on a specific community of early childhood educators about their perception of their job satisfaction and the organizational climate they work within. To learn more about the perceived leadership style of each director, the My Director tool was used. The final survey included 42 questions including statements and agreement scales intended to capture teachers’ perceptions of leadership style, job satisfaction and organizational climate.

**Early Childhood Work Environment Survey**

The Childhood Work Environment Survey (Bloom, 2010) is designed to find out how employees feel about an early childhood center as a place to work. This survey is broken up into two subscales: work attitudes and organizational climate. The researcher used these subscales to identify emerging patterns and themes. The work attitudes subscale provides questions for participants to express feelings and opinions concerning various center policies and practices and reflects their job satisfaction including collegiality, supervisor support, physical setting, task orientation, and reward system. The organizational climate subscale
provides questions regarding general work conditions, staff relations, supervisor support, pay and promotion opportunities and the physical setting.

**Assessment Tool # 18**

Two subscales from Assessment Tool #18 were also used to measure job satisfaction: The nature of the work itself and working conditions. These scales are designed to assess how employees feel about different facets of their job. The purpose of the assessment was to help the researcher become more aware of the aspects of teachers jobs that most contribute to job satisfaction as well as what teachers would like to see improved in the work setting.

**My Director**

My Director Survey (Bloom, 2010) is designed to measure how employees feel about their director. It allows for employees to provide feedback on the leadership style of the director, and provides questions for participants to express feelings and opinions on how the director plans, his/her leadership philosophy, conduct in meetings, and how the director motivates staff. The tool also allows employees to state three words to best describe their director in their opinion. This survey was selected to help further demonstrate the teacher’s perception of the leader, while helping the researcher to identify which climates are giving teachers self-worth and dignity, while at the same time making teachers feel part of a community that is bigger than themselves (Bloom, 2010).

**Qualitative Data**

The survey concluded with the following six questions that allowed for the participants to provide qualitative data regarding their director and their director’s leadership as well as their personal perceptions and beliefs about their job.

1. Do you feel supported by your Director? If no, what would you like to see changed? If YES, please explain.
2. What are the highest demands of your job and how do they impact your work?
3. What are the 3 aspects of your job you enjoy the most?
4. What are 3 aspects you would like to see improved?
5. Do you feel your Director is knowledgeable of the school curriculum policies? Explain your answer
6. Do you feel your Director implements disciplinary procedures in a fair and consistent matter? Why or why not?

The researcher’s intention with these questions was to allow the participants to elaborate more fully on the themes within the literature on job satisfaction and organizational climate, and allow the subject to discuss important aspects of the themes of inquiry from their own perspective (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). This method of data collection allows for the representation of the lead teacher and assistant teachers voice by allowing participants to share personal experiences and perceptions.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to explore relationships between variables and answer the research questions. The researcher triangulated the statistical data from the survey with the qualitative data to gain a more fine-grained understanding of the relationships between variables.

Preliminary exploration of the qualitative data began with the researcher reading through the data and taking notes. Yes/no questions were quantified by center to determine levels of satisfaction with organizational climate, job satisfaction, and leadership. The researcher then examined each question, using apriori codes of organizational climate, work attitudes, job satisfaction and leadership to uncover themes both within and across centers.

Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed concurrently and data was triangulated to get a deeper understanding of teacher’s perceptions. Qualitative data was particularly useful in making sense of the quantitative data, as respondents were given the opportunity to expand and tell the researcher in their own words about their experiences related to the constructs under
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter will present the findings of the research from both the qualitative and quantitative data. The chapter will present the findings in relation to the two research questions:

1. How are teacher’s perceptions of organizational climate related to teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare center?

2. What is the relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style, work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare center?

The researcher asked four early childhood centers to participate in the investigation. From the four centers there could be up to 120 participants. Center A had 13 participants, center B had 10 participants, center C had 6 participants and center D had 20 participants. Data will be presented by center, and the investigator will present both the qualitative and quantitative data together. By including both types of data, the researcher will be able to show precise areas where communities are thriving as well as areas where improvements can be made. When appropriate, the researcher will use charts and graphs to make the research clearer and easier to understand.

WORK ENVIRONMENT PROFILE

The early childhood work environment survey was used to assess teachers’ perceptions about the organizational climate and job satisfaction at their center. In accordance with scoring criteria, results from this survey were used to create a work environment profile for each site. This profile is composed of four parts: organizational climate, commitment, work attitudes and level of influence. Commitment, work attitude and level of influence reflect teacher job satisfaction. The number of participants who responded to the questions in each part is indicated by the notation $n =$. This number may vary throughout the work environment profile as not all staff answered every question on the survey. All four parts of the work environment profile will be presented for each center in order to provide
detailed information about two of the variables under investigation: organizational climate and job satisfaction. The relationship between these variables will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Five in response to research question 1: How are teacher’s perceptions of organizational climate related to teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare center?

**Leadership**

In order to gain knowledge about the relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style and work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare, the investigator used my director, (Bloom, 2010) to assess the perceived leadership style of the director at each center. When the researcher had a clear picture of the leadership style, conclusions could then be drawn about the relationship between leadership style and organizational climate, as well as between leadership style and job satisfaction. These relationships will be discussed in Chapter 5 in response to research question 2. Additionally, inferential statistics were used to assess the relationship between leadership style, organizational climate and job satisfaction. Because of the low response rate at two of the centers, Pearson’s correlations were run using data from all 42 respondents across the four centers. Cells contained data from questions that were most representative of the variables under consideration. These correlations will be presented following the description of each center’s work environment profile and assessment of leadership style and will be used to answer the second research question.

**Commitment**

It was important to the researcher to know how committed the teachers were in order to draw conclusions on their job satisfaction in a for profit childcare center. Across all fields job dissatisfaction affects employee behavior and retention (Bloom, 2010). While it has not been proven that job satisfaction in fact produces greater productivity, there is ample evidence that suggests that people with more positive feelings about their work tend to be more productive (Weakliem & Frenkel, 2006). Therefore it was vital for the researcher to know how committed teachers were to their center when looking at job satisfaction.

When looking at the chart, it can be read like a thermometer - the higher the bar the higher the level of commitment to the center. To indicate the number of participants used for...
chart two of center A’s profile is indicated by the notion n =. This number may vary throughout the work profile as the total number of staff who completed surveys properly, incorrectly or not completely. The vertical axis shows the lowest possible score is zero and the highest possible score is 10. Teachers who indicate a high level of commitment feel they are putting a lot of extra effort into their center and take pride in their work.

Work Attitudes

Through quantitative data the researcher was able to gain more knowledge of teachers’ job satisfaction by looking at how teachers felt towards their work and the working conditions, using a subscale from assessment 18-job satisfaction (Bloom 2005). The scale is used to assess how teachers feel about different facets of their job. Each facet could have a high score of 50 and a low score of zero.

Center A

Center A is a child development center that first services students and faculty members from a university; however, if there are spaces available community members may also have their children attend. Center A employs 34 employees.

Organizational Climate

The early childhood work environment survey was used to assess teachers’ perceptions about the organizational climate at their center. According to scoring criteria, each dimension begins with a score of five, and based on participant’s answers to the questions the score increases or decreases by one. These scores are presented in the work environment profile. Alongside the center’s mean is the national norms reported by Bloom (2010). The number of participants who responded to the questions in each profile is indicated by the notion n =. This number may vary throughout the work environment profile as not all staff answered every question on the survey. The vertical axis shows that the lowest possible score for each dimension is 0 and the highest possible score is 10. The bar for each dimension demonstrates the average for each domain from the participants. The work environment profile for Center A is presented in Figure 2.

According to scoring criteria, each dimension begins with a score of five and based on participant’s answers to the questions the score increases or decrease by one.
In reference to collegiality, the center mean was 5.81, which is .45 below the national norm of 6.26. Teachers working in centers with a high score in collegiality feel that they are able to express their feelings and that communication is direct and candid. This type of center has high morale and good community spirit (Bloom, 2010). However, when teachers were asked what they enjoy most about their job, seven out of nine included co-workers, families, and the community they work in, in their response. One teacher stated, “Teaching preschool and seeing children grow and learn, working with a great staff (most of them) having the flexibility in my classroom,” (2, personal communication, March 15, 2012) and another stated, “My students, my parents, and a nice place to work,” (4, personal communication, March 17, 2012) while another said, “My new co-teacher” (1, personal communication, March 20, 2012). Qualitative data indicates high levels of collegiality at Center A, although quantitative data does not reveal a high score on this dimension.

**Professional Growth**

Center A data indicates that their teachers do have the opportunity to continually grow and develop as teachers. The mean for center A is 8.45, well above the national norm of 4.93, indicating that teachers employed at center A feel they have the opportunity to broaden their education and skills while working in their community.
In regards to supervisor support, a high score indicates staff feels the feedback they are receiving from their supervisor is both informative and helpful. A low score in this dimension may indicate that teachers do not feel they are receiving enough feedback or that the feedback may be too harsh. Center A had a mean of 5.54, below the national norm of 6.94. This is an indication that teachers do not perceive the feedback they are receiving as positive, helpful, and enriching. Qualitative data supports this finding. One teacher states when asked what they would like to see improved at their center, “Directors,” (1, personal communication, March 20, 2012) while another stated when asked do you feel support by your director, “I generally feel supported by my director, it’s the assistant director I feel, and most other employees feel, struggle with. She jumps to conclusions quickly and seems to have the mentality of because it said so, and frequently justifies choices with opinions that aren’t relevant to the dilemma at hand” .”(6, personal communication, March 30, 2012). Similarly, another teacher noted that “Sometimes, there needs to be more consistency with regard to implementations of program rules. I am tired of rule bending when it suits their purpose” (7, personal communication, March 11, 2012). However, there were five participants who began their sentence with “Yes” and had a supporting comment, “Yes, but the assistant director is demeaning and asserts her power in negative ways,” ”(44, personal communication, March 15, 2012) and another, “Yes, I feel my director is very open to listening to your needs and problems” (8, personal communication, March 19, 2012). The triangulation of data clearly indicates that some teachers do not feel supported by their director at center A.

In the dimension of clarity, center A had a mean of 3.91, below the national norm of 6.01. This score indicates that teachers do not feel that the communication is clear; people are confused about policies and procedures and that conflicting demands are placed on workers. When teachers at center A were asked about disciplinary actions by their director in the qualitative portion of the survey, the data indicates that rules are said but not followed through on, creating lack of clarity, “Not really, it seems as though the entire staff gets the same talks (i.e.: cell phones, clothing, etc.) during meetings yet there doesn’t seem to be
much follow through with the staff members who are the ones having the issues” (5, personal communication, March 10, 2012). By the center score and teacher input it is clear that teachers at center A would like more clarity in their center.

**Reward System**

In the dimension of reward system, centers, which score high are centers that handle pay and promotion fairly and the majority of teachers employed at these centers feel they, are paid fairly compared to other centers. A low score in this dimension indicates that teachers in this center feel they are not being paid what they are worth and that raises are based something other than their job performance. Center A had a low mean, 4.0, below the national norm of 5.92. When teachers were asked what they would like to see improved in the qualitative portion of the survey, pay was listed six times within the eleven participants; pay, pay and more pay, and again Higher pay. Teachers at center A indicated through their quantitative and qualitative answers that they do not feel valued in their community based on their pay and promotion system.

**Decision Making**

In the dimension of decision-making, centers that score high are considered centers that consider staff input in school wide policies and decisions that directly affect them. Centers that score low are considered to be centers that expect conformity and would rather not hear individual’s opinions and feelings. Center A had a mean of 4.45, below the national norm of 6.17. This data implies teachers at this center do not perceive that their director values their opinion.

**Goal Consensus**

The dimension of goal consensus references to the degree to which staff are in alignment with school philosophy. A high score represents a community where staff can see other points of view and be able to compromise, while a low rating in this dimension indicates a lack of agreement of the key elements within a philosophy at a center. Center A had a mean of 4.45, below the national norm of 6.89. This would indicate that overall the community is not in agreement on the school philosophy.
**Task Orientation**

The dimension of task orientation is defined as workers feeling they have enough time to accomplish tasks while still enjoying their job. A high score in this dimension indicates the center places proper emphasis on results and outcomes, that teachers work hard, but still have time to relax. A low score indicates that time is wasted and that things get put off. Center A, has a score of 7.09, which is above the national norm of 6.77. However, when teachers were asked what the highest demands of their jobs were teachers spoke about the tasks they encounter on a daily basis, “Providing adequate feedback to parents on a daily basis,” (2, personal communication, March 15, 2012) another states, “All the paperwork we have to provide for NAЕYC and their requirements for our center,” (10, personal communication, March 20, 2012) and another, “My highest demand, that impacts my work would be curriculum. I haven’t been given prep time in over four months. So I am working on curriculum while children are under my supervision” (4, personal communication, March 15, 2012). The data implies teachers feel the pressure of not having enough time. Six out of ten participants spoke about time needed or lack of time to do their job adequately.

**Physical Setting**

The dimension of physical setting explores how a center is arranged, whether it organized, whether there is sufficient supplies, and if there is the proper equipment to get the job done. Centers with a low score in this dimension may be drab, to hot or too cold, or need some major repairs. Centers A had a mean of 5.45 in this dimension. Therefore teachers feel they do not have the supplies they need to get their job done, this is below the national norm of 6.73, and could lead to un-satisfied teachers. This data was supported in the qualitative data in teachers’ response to the question: *what would be your ideal job in early childhood?* One teacher responded, “A center with a decently designed floor plan with ample space for the children for naptime and playtime,” (2, personal communication, March 15, 2012) and another indicated the need for a change in the physical setting: “Playground space (grass open 3 months out of the year, hardly and covered spaces, cramped,” (4, personal communication, March 15, 2012) another teacher spoke about the playground: “Playground, no climbing structure for toddlers (apparently we can’t get certified)” (1, personal
communication, March 20, 2012). Teachers at center A have a strong need for their physical setting to be improved in order to do their jobs more efficiently.

**Innovativeness**

The final dimension of the work environment profile is innovativeness. This dimension examines the degree to which staff is encouraged to be creative and innovative in their work. If a center scores high in this dimension, teachers are encouraged to problem solve and are supported in implementing needed changes. Early childhood programs that score low in this dimension are characterized by an approach that allows many problems to go unaddressed. Center A achieved their highest score of all the dimensions in innovativeness, scoring 8.45. This score indicates that teachers at center A feel they are able to problem solve and make changes as necessary within their classroom and community and feel a strong sense of autonomy.

**JOB SATISFACTION**

Two subscales of the work attitudes questionnaire, commitment and job satisfaction, were used to better understand the level of job satisfaction among participants. Findings from these tools are presented below.

**Commitment**

Results for this data will be presented in Figure 3 of the centers profile.

The commitment level at center A is above the baseline of 5, with a mean of 6.72, below the national norm of 7.26. Teachers at center A are committed to their center and most likely put extra effort into their work. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction, center A could achieve a higher mean in commitment perhaps by making changes within their organizational climate. Of the ten dimensions of organizational climate, seven of the ten dimensions scored below the national norm. Four of the dimensions scored below the baseline of five. This could be an indicator as to why the commitment level at center A is below the national norm and substantially below the high score of ten.

Through quantitative data the researcher was able to gain more knowledge of teachers’ job satisfaction by looking at how teachers felt towards their work and the working
Figure 3. Staff overall commitment to the organization (n=10).

Work Attitudes

conditions, using a subscale from assessment 18-job satisfaction (Bloom 2005). The scale is used to assess how teachers feel about different facets of their job. Each facet could have a high score of 50 and a low score of zero. In each category center A scored barely over half. In regards to how teachers felt towards their work they scored a mean of 31.45, in regards to their working conditions teachers scored a mean of 31.40. Results for this data are presented in Figure 4.

Working in early childhood education is a physically demanding job. Therefore, it is important to evaluate the working conditions perceived by the teacher as a measure of job satisfaction. Working conditions, as defined by Bloom (2010), “Includes both the structure of the work experience (flexibility of hours, teacher child ratio, adequacy of breaks, substitutes, and teaching materials) as well as the context (aesthetic quality of physical environment: overall noise level; adequacy of heat, ventilation and light; and spatial arrangement” (p. 17). Teachers at center A mentioned in earlier data of the physical setting dimension of organizational climate specific aspects of their physical environment they would like to see improved, playground equipment and the need for more space. In regards to the work itself, teachers indicated in earlier data the pressure they felt to get the work done in the time they had, or the lack of time. When considering the relationship between organizational climate
and job satisfaction, this could be an indicator as to why the mean on the work attitudes scale was also lower than 50, 31.45. Overall it appears that teachers are finding a way to get their basic needs met; however need more from their organization in regards to their needs and expectations. Teachers were asked about common organizational decisions and actions. They were asked how much influence teachers currently would have and then again how much they would like to have. On a likert type scale teachers rated their perceived decision making on a scale from, very little influence, some influence, and considerable influence. Center A had a 19.00 mean in the category of currently have, out of a possible score of 50. This indicates that teachers are less than satisfied in the control they have over the decisions made a their center. When teachers were asked to rank how much influence they would like to have the mean was 43.50, only 6.5 below the possible score of 50. The data implies that the teachers at center A would like significantly more influence in the decision making of areas at their center. This implies teachers would like the opportunity to be more heavily involved in decisions such as ordering supplies, hiring and training new teachers, program goals, and their daily schedules. In fact it is the exact opposite, for teachers at center A, they feel the need to be involved in all facets. Results for this are presented in Figure 5.
Leadership Style

In order to gain knowledge about the relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style and work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare, the investigator used assessment tool four, leadership style, (Bloom, 2010) to assess the perceived leadership style of the director at center A. Within an early childhood center the leadership style of a director is one of the most critical aspects of organizational effectiveness. The success of a center is based in large part on the director’s ability to balance both individual needs and organizational needs. The investigator used part one of Bloom’s (2005) Assessment Four to assess the three different types of leadership styles: task oriented which emphasizes organizational needs; the people oriented which emphasizes focusing on people and their individual needs; and the integrated style which emphasizes a balance on both organizational and individual staff needs. Research indicates (Bloom, 2005) that the most effective leadership style is integrated. Integrated leaders have the ability to adjust in each situation in order to meet both the situations needs as well as the organizations.
A tally system was used to score the leadership assessment tool number four, (Bloom, 2005). The researcher tallied the responses by noting with a mark each time a teacher marked a specific response. Teachers were directed through the survey to place a check in front of each statement that most accurately described their director’s leadership style in specific situations. Teachers were directed to check one response in each grouping.

Results indicate the director at center A is a task-oriented leader. This type of leadership tends to promote a high level of work being done (Bloom, 2005). Center A director received 45 tallies within the category of task oriented leadership style, 17 tallies within the category of people oriented leadership style, and 17 tallies within integrated leadership style. Of the 15 teachers who participated in this portion of the survey, 11 checked, The primary goal of my director is to keep the center running efficiently. Eight teachers checked, With respect to leadership philosophy, my director tends to emphasize both what we do and what we need as people. Research indicates when staff work for a leader who is task oriented, they report they felt their individual’s needs were not being met (Bloom, 2005).

Research indicates that achieving high job satisfaction for employees is a high priority for most directors (Bloom, 2005). Bloom (2005) would describe job satisfaction as “teachers’ personal assessment of the degree to which their jobs meet their personal needs, values, and expectations” (p. 99). Earlier data indicated that in the area of professional growth, supervisor relations, task orientation, and innovativeness, teachers at center A are having their needs, values and expectations met. However, in pay & promotion, clarity, and decision-making, earlier data showed teachers were not having their needs met. When looking at the concept of satisfaction the investigator looked at the discrepancy between ideal conditions and the perceived ideal work environment.

**QUALITATIVE DATA**

The purpose of the qualitative questions was to allow participants to elaborate more fully on the themes within the literature on job satisfaction and organizational climate and allow for further discussion of important aspects of the themes of inquiry from their own perspective (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). This method of data collection allowed for the
representation of the lead teacher and assistant teachers voice by allowing them to share personal experiences and perceptions.

Question one in the qualitative portion of the survey was: describe the characteristics of your ideal job? Through content analysis it appears Center A’s re-occurring themes were collegiality and wanting to have developmentally appropriate activities and equipment for the children in their classroom. In regards to community, teachers described the ideal community as caring, consistent, considerate, one that celebrates differences, and is safe, flexible, challenging, well planned, and welcoming with compatible co-workers. In regards to the desire for more developmentally appropriate activities, three teachers were specific in their needs, wants, and desire for their center, as illustrated by the following quotes, “Being able to teach children through play. Being able to create my own curriculum and having the flexibility to make changes as necessary,” (1, personal communication, March 20, 2012) another stated, “Working to allow children to develop fully in their development. Not in just some areas but all. Physical development especially in toddlers is little to none based on the centers resources to provide “X” with appropriate ways to develop in this area” (8, personal communication, March 19, 2012). Another teacher stated, “Lower class size so there is more individual attention” (4, personal communication, March 15, 2012).

Question two in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what are the highest demands of your job and how do they affect your work? Content analysis identified that teachers at Center A have a need for more time in their schedule. Five out of ten teachers spoke about needing more time or the lack of time in their daily schedules to get the tasks of their work done. The following quotes exemplify this need, “I have been given the opportunity to be the program specialist. Taking on extra responsibility in the office has been really difficult when it comes to dealing with problems among co-workers. My classroom is disrupted to help with office work,” (4, personal communication, March 15, 2012) a second teachers states, “The time schedule implemented for infant/toddler rooms makes for hectic days. Children are not receiving individual attention they deserve throughout the day, due to schedule demands” (6, personal communication, March 30, 2012) and a third, “My highest demand that impacts my work would be curriculum. I haven’t been given prep time in over 4 months. So I am working on my curriculum while children are under my supervision, making
it frequently impossible to give them my full attention during playtime for developmental learning” (5, personal communication, March 10, 2012).

Question three in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what are the three aspects of your job you enjoy the most? Through content analysis of the response set of center A, all 11 teachers mentioned the children in their class, and five of the 11 teachers spoke about the people they work with as illustrated by the following, “Teaching preschool and seeing children learn and grow, working with a great staff (most of them),” (1, personal communication, March 20, 2012) and another, “The children, relationships with most of the other employees” (2, personal communication, March 15, 2012). It is interesting to note that in both quotes teachers indicated a lack of harmony among staff by stating within their quotes that they get along with most staff.

Question four in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what three aspects would you like to see improved? Six of 11 teachers indicated a change in their pay. Five of 11 teachers indicated they would like to see a change in the physical setting of their building. When teachers described a change in the physical setting they stated, “Play ground space, grass open three months out of the year, hardly any covered spaces, cramped,” (10, personal communication, March 20, 2012) and another states, “Updates to the building,” (6, personal communication, March 30, 2012) and another stated both, “Higher pay for staff, higher cleanliness standards and better building maintenance” (4, personal communication, March 15, 2012).

Question five in the qualitative portion of the survey was: do you feel your director is knowledgeable of the school curriculum and policies? Of the response set, ten out of ten teachers indicated they feel their director is knowledgeable about school curriculum and policies. Three teachers shared in explicit detail that their yes implied, “Yes, she is often used to help out other centers around the west coast. She is talented at what she does and it shows by how much other centers count on her input,” (6, personal communication, March 30, 2012) and another, “Yeah. Very aware of policies and curriculum, though curriculum needs to be changed,” (1, personal communication, March 20, 2012) and a third, “Yea, the problem occurs when the directors rules differ from each other. There are many staff complaints about how the rules are not consistent” (6, personal communication, March 30, 2012).
Question six in the qualitative portion of the survey asked, do you feel your director implements disciplinary procedures in a fair and consistent matter? Of the response set, four teachers indicated yes, two indicated no, and three indicated the question did not apply to them. Teachers who indicated yes stated that, “Yes, however I do feel that some people have had more chances then they should have. However I do know that when disciplinary action is necessary she takes the time to explain, discuss and then takes action,” (11, personal communication, April 2, 2012) and another replied, “Yes and no, I feel that while it is convenient for those who don’t deserve disciplinary action when in a situation, the people who should not be working at the center, are still there” (12, personal communication, March 16, 2012). Teachers who indicated no, “Not really it seems the entire staff gets the same talks during staff meetings, yet there doesn’t seem to be much follow through with staff members who are the ones having the issues” (15, personal communication, April 5, 2012).

Question seven of the qualitative portion of the survey asked: do you feel supported by your director? Of the response set there were four definite yes, three sometimes, and two who redirected the question to respond about the assistant director. Teachers who indicated yes, said used descriptive words such as, always, caring, and open. Teachers who stated sometimes, were very specific as to why, “Sometimes, there needs to be more consistency with regard to implementation of program rules. I am tired of rule bending when it suits their purpose” (11, personal communication, April 2, 2012). Another stated, “Yes and no, afraid to try new things. Everything is set in stone. No freedom to work with children based on individual needs. Things are done as a whole. Need to be more child specific” (13, personal communication, April 6, 2012). The teachers who spoke about the assistant director stated that:

I generally feel supported by the director. She listens to concerns completely before giving her thoughts and directions. It’s from the assistant director I feel like, and most feel other employees struggle with. She jumps to conclusions quickly and seems to often have the mentality of “because I said so.” It often feels as though directors support each other more than their employees. (2, personal communication, March 15, 2012)

**CENTER B**

Center B is a child development center that first services a clients’ employees, however, if there are spaces available community members may also have their children
attend. Center B Site Director did not share with the investigator how many employees were employed at this center.

**Organizational Climate**

The organizational climate for center B is presented in Figure 6.

![Organizational Climate Chart](image)

**Figure 6. Organizational climate (n=7). Dark grey is center b light grey is national norm.**

**Collegiality**

Teachers’ at center B feel their needs in regards to collegiality are being met. Center B had a mean score of 7.12 above the national norm of 6.26; this type of score indicates that they feel teachers are kind, supportive and friendly. Teachers also feel safe to share their feelings and express opinions. One teacher indicated that one of the aspects she enjoyed most about working at center B is the *great staff*. Overall it appears teacher’s needs are being met in regards to collegiality.

**Professional Growth**

Center B had a mean of 8.37 above the national norm of 4.93, indicating teachers feel they are offered professional growth opportunities within their work environment. Teachers
at center B feel they do have the chance to take off time for conferences and workshops and will receive financial support to do so. A mean of 8.37 indicates teachers are having their needs met.

**Supervisor Support**

In regards to supervisor support center B had a mean score of 7.87 above the national norm of 6.94, indicating teachers feel that they are supported by their director and have a good relationship. In the qualitative portion of the survey teachers stated, “Yes she is willing to listen to out complaints and always tries to solve the problem; She acknowledges her co-workers and I always feel appreciated” (22, personal communication, April 4, 2012) and another, “Yes, my director is great. When I need her advice, she is available to listen to my concerns and give effective feedback and suggestions” (24, personal communication, April 10, 2012). Teachers at center B feel their supervisor is meeting their needs by indicating they feel they are receiving feedback and constructive criticism.

**Clarity**

Refers to the way in which policies and procedures as well as responsibilities are dealt with throughout a community. When centers score high in this dimension it indicates that teachers feel that the policies & procedures are clear. Center B had a mean of 6.62, above five and above the national norm of 6.01. This indicates that the clarity within the community is not clear. Throughout the qualitative data center B stated the need for more clarity: “There is not a lot of discipline and it feels like the discipline is not consistent,” (22, personal communication, April 4, 2012) another indicates the need for clarity, “She does not do teacher appraisals consistently and when they are done they do not feel constructive” (26, personal communication, April 8, 2012). Teachers at center B indicate that their needs are not being met within the dimension of clarity.

**Reward System**

Is the dimension where teachers can indicate if the feel their pay and benefits are fair. If a center scores high in this dimension teachers feel a good sense of job security and they feel that promotions in pay are handled fairly. Center B had a mean of 4.75, below the baseline of five, and below the national norm of 5.92. Teachers at center B, like most
teachers who completed the survey indicate that they would like better pay, pay was consistently stated as an improvement that teachers at center B would like to see.

**Decision Making**

When looking at decision making in a center, it is the degree in which autonomy is appreciated and respected. Are teachers encouraged to problem solve and make decisions about their days. Teachers at center B had a mean of 6.62, again a mean barely above the baseline score of five, and above the national norm of 6.17. Earlier research explains teachers need to feel they are apart of the decision making in their center. Being apart of the decision-making has a positive effect in teacher’s beliefs and attitudes at work (Johnson & Pajares, 1996). With a mean barely above the baseline, the data indicates that teachers do not feel they are apart of the decision making at their center.

**Goal Consensus**

Explores how aligned teachers are in two things; one, a common awareness of the philosophy of the center and two, the ability to compromise with each other and accept differences among each other. Center B had a mean of 6.62, below the national norm of 6.68, indicating that teachers within the center may not be in alignment with each other or able to compromise throughout their days. When teachers were asked what they would like in their ideal job, one stated that all co-workers got along, indicating that harmony throughout the community is important.

**Task Orientation**

Measures the degree in which task orientation is observed, is there good planning, is the job getting done efficiently. Center B had a mean of 5.87, .87 over the baseline, and below the national norm of 6.77. A mean this low indicates that time is wasted, things get put off and people procrastinate. Throughout the qualitative data teachers indicated the need for more efficient way of things being done, “completely planned activities,” (32, personal communication, April 11, 2012) and another, “More training,” (26, personal communication, April 8, 2012) and another,” That supplies and materials are always on hand or available when requested” (20, personal communication, April 3, 2012). Overall in the dimension of task orientation teachers feel their needs are not being met.
Physical Setting
This dimension looks at the way staff feel towards the way a center is organized, are the sufficient supplies, do staff feel they have what they need to do their job well. Center B had a mean of 6.25, below the national norm of 6.73, indicating a low score; therefore teachers feel they do not have all they need to do their job well. Teachers indicated they needed items like, a computer in each room and supplies ordered and available when needed; Teachers at center B are looking for more from their physical setting than they are receiving currently.

Innovativeness
Is the final dimension and indicates whether a center encourages staff to be creative and innovative. Center B had a mean score of 8.37, above the national norm of 6.63. A high mean like this indicates that teachers feel they are encouraged to try out new concepts in problem solving and are supported in their decisions. A teacher at center B states, “She asks what can be improved, she works around what I can and cannot do” (32, personal communication, April 11, 2012) demonstrating a trust between director and teacher.

JOB SATISFACTION
Another aspect of organizational climate that was measured by the survey was commitment. The ten questions scored on this scale include five positively worded statements and five negatively worded statements; to assess teacher’s loyalty and degree of commitment to their job.

Commitment
Results are presented in Figure 7.
Teachers at center B had a mean of 6.62, below the national norm of 7.26. Meaning they are barely above committed. Teachers at center B feel that they are working hard and putting a lot of extra effort into their work. The data indicates that teachers at center B most likely have a desire to remain working at their center. When teachers were asked what aspects they enjoyed most about their job, teachers stated, “Receiving a hug and a smile each day,” (20, personal communication, April 3, 2012) and another, “great staff, great families,
Figure 7. Staffs overall commitment to the organization (n=7).

routine,” (28, personal communication, April 28, 2012) both quotes demonstrate that the teachers feel comfortable at their center and enjoy their children and families, however it is important to note that while the teachers stated they were happy at their center, the data shows that they scored well below ten and below the national norm. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction, center B could achieve a higher mean in commitment perhaps by making changes within their organizational climate. Of the ten dimensions of organizational climate, four of the ten dimensions scored below the national norm. One of the dimensions scored below the baseline of five. This could be an indicator as to why the commitment level at center B is below the national norm and substantially below the high score of ten.

Work Attitudes

In each category center B scored barely over half. In regards to how teachers felt towards their work they scored a mean of 36.66, in regards to their working conditions teachers scored a mean of 33.16. Results for this data are presented in Figure 8.

Working conditions and the work itself are key components to a teacher’s job satisfaction. For the teachers at center B there are elements within their work and working conditions that indicate through the data that the teachers at center B are looking for more fulfillment in their work and from the conditions of their working environment. It is the work
itself for most teachers that provides fulfillment, working with the children and the families. When teachers are not finding satisfaction at their job it is more likely for them to leave, which impacts the community on a whole.

One being not like the ideal and five being the ideal, center B had a 26.88 mean in the category of currently have, out of a possible score of 50. Center B scored barely above half of the total possible score, showing that the environment may not have the autonomy of decision-making that the teachers need. The data implies that the teachers at center B would like more influence in the decision making of areas at their center. Teachers are still 13.75 below the possible total score of 50, which implies some areas may not be as important as others. Which is in alignment with the concept that one facet does not influence the other. Teachers may think it is important to have influence on their daily schedule but may not feel it is as important to have influence in determining program goals and philosophies. Results for this data are presented in Figure 9.

**Leadership**

Results indicate the director at center B is a task-oriented leader. By definition Task oriented style leaders (Yukl, 2002) are very clear that the centers needs should come first.
Directors of this type are very by the book and stress the importance of staff following the appropriate procedures. Directors under this leadership style tend to apply the same rules and procedure to all staff members. Center B director received 19 tallies within the category of task oriented leadership style, 18 tallies within the category of people oriented leadership style, and 17 tallies within integrated leadership style. Of the seven teachers who participated in this portion of the survey, six checked, *The primary goal of my director is to help staff find fulfillment.* This type of leadership style was also supported by six teachers who checked, *With respect to leadership philosophy, my director tends to emphasize both what we do and what we need as people.* The type of leadership tends to promote a high level of work being done; many staff working under this type of leader would report they felt their individual needs were not being met (Bloom, 2010).

**QUALITATIVE**

Question one in the qualitative portion of the survey asked teachers to describe the characteristics of their ideal job. The response set spoke about community, materials, and cleanliness. Three teachers mentioned the people, the director, that there would be no lazy people, and a friendly environment, two teachers stated the need for cleanliness: *clean, every classroom should be clean,* and two teachers spoke about the needs for adequate materials. This type of data indicates teachers at center B desire a community that is clean, friendly, homey and filled with the materials to do their job.
Question two in the qualitative portion of the survey was: What are the highest demands of your job and how do they affect your work? Similar to the results from Center A, the overall theme from the four teachers who responded to this question was time. Teachers indicated they were tired, physically exhausted, and have too many tasks in too little of time. One teacher stated, “A lot of paperwork. Not really any down time to collect yourself between the NAEYC portfolios and then assessments and little projects for upcoming events, there is a lot to do…lots of paperwork” (26, personal communication, April 8, 2012). The data indicated that teachers at center B are physically tired.

Question three in the qualitative portion of the survey was: What are the three aspects of your job you enjoy the most? Three of four teachers explicitly stated the children in their class as an aspect of their job they enjoyed most as well as the families they encounter each day. The data indicates the community at Center B is rich with relationships, which is supported in the organizational climate as well.

Question four in the qualitative portion of the survey was: What three aspects would you like to see improved? The emerging theme in center B’s response set was a need for clarity. Three of four teachers indicated within their response that they needed more clarity as indicated by their responses: more positive feedback, communication, more training. Center B teachers also indicated they would like more time to prep and have further spaced out deadlines.

Question five in the qualitative portion of the survey was: do you feel your director is knowledgeable of the school curriculum and policies? The response set had four yes replies. Each yes was followed by a positive statement, as exemplified by this quote “Yes, she has been a teacher, assistant director, and knows all the responsibilities well from experience” (32, personal communication, April 11, 2012). Teachers at center B indicated they feel their director has knowledge about the polices and curriculum within their community.

Question six in the qualitative portion of the survey asked: do you feel your director implements disciplinary procedures in a fair and consistent matter? The response set had three yes responses and one no response. The no response set stated the need for more consistency in regards to discipline, however the yes responses, felt their director was fair, “Yes, she is reasonable because she asks your view point” (20, personal communication,
April 3, 2012). “No, there is not a lot of discipline and it feels like discipline is not consistent” (32, personal communication, April 11, 2012).

Question seven of the qualitative portion of the survey asked: do you feel supported by your director? The response set was seven; five teachers said yes, and elaborated more fully by stating, “Yes, she is open to new ideas and allows for her staff to come in whenever and talk with her. She also cares about individual staff members outside of work,” (22, personal communication, April 4, 2012) and another “Yea, my director is great. When I need her advice, she is available to listen to my concerns and give effective feedback and suggestions” (20, personal communication, April 3, 2012). These quotes demonstrate that the majority of the teachers who responded feel supported by their director. One of the seven teachers indicated no, six indicated yes. The no response feels a lack of consistency within the community, “No she does not do teacher appraisals consistently and when they are done they do not feel constructive” (30, personal communication, April 10, 2012).

**CENTER C**

Center C provides childcare and education to children from six weeks of age to five years old. Center C is a child development center that first services a clients employees, however, if there are spaces available community members may also have their children attend. Center C employs 31 employees.

**Organizational Climate**

Results for this data are presented in Figure 10 within center C’s profile.

**Collegiality**

In reference to collegiality, the center score was 6.0, just below the national norm of 6.26. Centers with a high score in collegiality feel that they are able to express their feelings and communication is direct and candid. This type of center has high morale and good community spirit (Bloom, 2010). Center C, quantitative data does not indicate that teachers feel they are in a community they can trust. However the qualitative data does. When teachers were asked what they enjoy most about their job, 3 teachers participated in this question and all three spoke about the community they work in, “Working with children, learning form peers, autonym,” (21, personal communication, March 16, 2012) and another,
The families, my boss, seeing the school grow” (23, personal communication, March 20, 2012) and another, “The company I work for, the people I work with and the freedom I have with how to do my job” (27, personal communication, April 6, 2012). These three quotes indicate good community spirit.

**Professional Growth**

According to NAEYC it is important for teachers to be able to continue to educate themselves. Center C data shows that their teachers do have the opportunity to continually grow and develop as teachers with a mean of 7.4, heads above the national norm of 4.93. It is vital for directors to be participating in their teacher’s growth and helping them grow into higher positions, the data for center C reflects that teachers are feeling that their director is helping them become further developed teachers.

**Supervisor Support**

In regards to supervisor support, a high score indicates staff feels the feedback they are receiving is both informative and helpful. A low score in this dimension may indicate that teachers do not feel they are receiving enough feedback or that the feedback may be too harsh. Center C scored a 6.57 in this dimension, slightly below the national norm. This is an indication that teachers perceive the feedback they are receiving is not positive, helpful, and
enriching. When teachers were asked, do you feel supported by your director? Qualitative data supported the finding that teachers do feel supported 100%. One teacher states, “Yes, she is the most supportive person of me here, she supports my decisions and my growth,” (23, personal communication, March 20, 2012) while another stated, “Yes, she is there for me when I have a problem and supports my decisions and feelings” (31, personal communication, March 11, 2012). The triangulation of data clearly indicates that teachers feel supported by their director at center C.

**Clarity**

In the dimension of clarity, center C, scored a 5.9, below the national norm of 6.01. This score indicates that teachers do not feel that the communication is clear; people are confused about policies and procedures and that conflicting demands are placed on workers. There was no qualitative data to support this finding.

**Reward System**

Reward system was almost in direct alignment with the national norm, center C had a mean of 5.8 and the national norm is 5.92. In the dimension of reward system, centers, which score high, are centers that handle pay and promotion fairly and the majority of teachers employed at these centers feel they are paid fairly compared to other centers. A low score in this dimension may indicate that teachers in this center feel they are not being paid what they are worth and that raises are based something other than their job performance. When teachers were asked what they would like to see improved in the qualitative portion of the survey, pay was listed once out of the three participants, parking, my pay, and retention. However for this community of teachers, they indicate by their qualitative answers that they do not feel valued in their community based on their pay and promotion system.

**Decision Making**

In the dimension of decision-making, centers that score high are considered centers that consider staff input in school wide policies and decisions that directly affect them. Centers who score low are considered to be centers that expect conformity and would rather not hear individual’s opinions and feelings. Center C received a score of 6.4, barely one point over the baseline, five, and .23 above the national norm of 6.17. This data implies teachers at
this center do perceive that their director values their opinion. There was no qualitative data to support this finding.

**Goal Consensus**

The dimension of goal consensus references to the degree of which staff are in alignment with school philosophy, a high score represents a school who can see other points of views and be able to compromise, a low rating in this dimension would indicate a lack of agreement of the key elements within a philosophy at a center. Center C scored a 6.57, barely above a five, the baseline, and below the national norm of 6.89. This would indicate that overall the community is not in agreement on the school philosophy. This type of element is developed from the leader. Leadership styles have a direct impact on their employees as well as the children and families they are encountering.

**Task Orientation**

The dimension of task orientation can be defined as workers feeling they have enough time to accomplish tasks while still enjoying their job. A high score in this dimension would indicate the center places proper emphasis on results and outcomes, that teachers work hard, but still have time to relax. A low score would indicate that time is wasted and that things get put off. Center C, scored a 6.28, which is above five, and below the national norm of 6.77. However when teachers had the opportunity to speak about their time, it did not sound as if time was being wasted, but rather they felt the pressure of not having enough time; “Planning time, focused attention on curriculum, focused attention on NAEYC,” (25, personal communication, April 13, 2012) another states “There is no planning time” (29, personal communication, April 3, 2012). Teachers at center C clearly feel as if there is not enough minutes in their day, that task orientation within the center is not meeting their needs.

**Physical Setting**

The dimension of physical setting explores how a center is arranged, whether it is organized, whether there are sufficient supplies, if there the proper equipment to get the job done. Centers with a low score in this dimension may be drab, to hot or to cold, or need some major repairs. Centers C scored a 7.28 in this dimension, above the national norm of 6.73.
Meaning teachers feel they have the supplies they need to get their job done, there is adequate parking, the temperature is good, and teachers are getting their needs met.

**Innovativeness**

The final dimension is innovativeness. This dimension looks at the degree in which staff is encouraged to be creative and innovative in their work. If a center scores high in this dimension, it is believed that teachers are encouraged to problem solve and supported in implementing needed changes. Programs who score low in this dimension are characterized by an approach that allows many problems to go unaddressed. Center C achieved their highest score of all the dimensions in innovativeness, scoring a 9.0. Teachers at center B indicate that they do feel they are able to problem solve and make changes as necessary within their classroom and community. Teachers at center C feel a strong sense of autonomy.

**Commitment**

Results for this data will be presented in Figure 11 of the centers profile.

![Figure 11. Staffs overall commitment to the organization (n=6).](image)

Teachers at center C have a mean 7.71; therefore they are above average on their commitment to their center. Teachers indicated their commitment through qualitative data, however of the four centers investigated by the researcher center C had the highest mean of commitment. Of the ten dimensions of organizational climate, four of the ten dimensions
scored above the national norm. All of the dimensions scored above the baseline of five. This could be an indicator as to why the commitment level at center C is above the national norm.

**Work Attitudes**

In each category center C scored over half. In regards to how teachers felt towards their work they scored a mean of 33.33, in regards to their working conditions teachers scored a mean of 31.75. Results for this data will be presented in Figure 12.

![Figure 12. Nature of the work itself and working conditions (n=6).](image)

Being that one of the most influential areas of a teacher’s job is the work itself (Saari & Judge, 2004) it is fortunate that center C scored over half in this dimension of job satisfaction. For a fulltime teacher spending a minimum of 40 hours a week at their center it is crucial for teachers to feel their working conditions are meeting their needs. At center C teachers score a mean of 33.33 in their work, and 31.75 in their working conditions, and over half, but still 16.67 below the total score of 50. Meaning, teacher’s needs are being met, but not to their fullest potential in their minds.

Teachers were asked about common organizational decisions and actions. They were asked how much influence teachers currently would have and then again how much they would like to have. On a likert type scale teachers rated their perceived decision making on a scale from, very little influence, some influence, and considerable influence. Center C had a mean 29.99 in the category of currently have, out of a possible score of 50. Center C scored over half of the total score, showing that the environment may have some characteristics of autonomy and decision making that the leadership style they are working under strives for.
Integrated leaders strive for teachers to exercise control and be self-directed. However when teachers were asked to rank how much influence they would like to have the mean was 35.71. The data implies that the teachers at center C would like more influence in the decision making of areas at their center. Results for this data will be presented in Figure 13.

![Figure 13. Level of influence (n=6).](image)

**Leadership**

Results indicate the director at center C is an integrated leader. By definition an integrated leadership style (Yukl, 2002), stresses the high level of concern for both individuals and the organization. Directors who can do both integrate high productivity from their staff and high morale by having focused teamwork. Center C director received 14 tallies within the category of people oriented leadership style, 15 tallies within the category of task oriented leadership style, and 17 tallies within integrated leadership style. Of the six teachers who participated in this portion of the survey, three checked, *The primary goal of my director is to keep the center running efficiently*. This type of leadership style was also supported by three teachers who checked, *The primary goal of my director is to meet the primary needs of parents and children while providing healthy work climate for staff*. This data shows the director of center C is an integrated leader, the tie shows some teachers feel their director is meeting individuals needs and the community. This type of leadership style, integrated leadership can be situational, meaning directors cannot be fence sitters, they must steer the course in each situation and be competent to assess the need in each individual situation.
QUALITATIVE

The qualitative response set for center C was three. Due to the small participation on this portion of the survey, the researcher will report what each teacher stated for each question in order to demonstrate fully how teachers at center C feel.

Question one in the qualitative portion of the survey was describe the characteristics of your ideal job? The three teachers at center C indicated different desires, child focused, Director, and Clean building with materials needed to run the classroom.

Question two in the qualitative portion of the survey was what are the highest demands of your job and how do they affect your work? Like center A, and B teachers at center C also indicated, no planning time. The other two responses were more people specific, The staff—They are draining, being a manager is tough sometimes and Dealing with parents can be stressful.

Question three in the qualitative portion of the survey was what are the three aspects of your job you enjoy the most? As mentioned by center A and B, Working with children, learning from peers, autonomy, the other two response’s were more focused on collegiality, The families, my boss, seeing the school grow and The company I work for, the people I work with and the freedom I have to do my job.

Question four in the qualitative portion of the survey was what three aspects would you like to see improved? As mentioned by previous teachers in previous data the teachers at center C would also like, planning time, focused attention on curriculum, focused attention on NAEYC. The two other responses were related to specific needs by the individual, parking, my pay, and more retention, and, curriculum in some rooms, cleanliness in some rooms, and teachers taking pride in their work.

Question five in the qualitative portion of the survey was, do you feel your director is knowledgeable of the school curriculum and policies? Each teacher began their response with yes, “Yes- she opened the school and believes in what we do,” (21, personal communication, March 16, 2012) and another, “Yes, she is very involved in helping teachers run curriculum and making sure they understand the policies” (31, personal communication, March 11th , 2012).

Question six in the qualitative portion of the survey asked, do you feel your director implements disciplinary procedures in a fair and consistent matter? In this response set there
were two yes and one somewhat, *Yes, she writes people up when necessary and takes training opportunities when she can.*

Question seven of the qualitative portion of the survey asked, do you feel supported by your director? There were three yes in response to this question, *Yes, she is the most supportive person of me here; she supports my decisions and my growth* and, *Yes, she is there for me when I have a problem, and supports my decisions and feelings.*

**CENTER D**

Center D provides childcare and preschool education to children from six weeks to five years old. Center D first services students and faculty from a university, however, if there are spaces available community members may also have their children attend. The site director indicates that there are currently 34 employees working at center D.

**Organizational Climate**

Results for this data are presented in Figure 14.

![Figure 14. Organizational climate (n=16) Dark grey is center d, light grey is national norm.](image)

**Collegiality**

In reference to collegiality, the center mean was 6.61 compared to the national norm of 6.26. Teachers in centers with a high score in collegiality feel that they are able to express
their feelings and that communication is direct and candid. This type of center has high morale and good community spirit (Bloom, 2010). Center D, did score above five by 1.61. However, when teachers were asked through the qualitative questions what they enjoy most about their job, five out of 11 included co-workers in their response.

**Professional Growth**

According to NAEYC, it is important for teachers to be able to continue to educate themselves. Center D had a mean of 7.16; the national norm is only 4.93. Data shows that teachers do have the opportunity to continually grow and develop as teachers, as reflected in the score of professional development. It is vital for directors to be participating in their teachers growth and helping them grow into higher positions, the data fore center D reflects that teachers are feeling that their director is helping them become further developed teachers.

**Supervisor Support**

In regards to supervisor support, a high score indicates staff feels the feedback they are receiving is both informative and helpful. A low score in this dimension may indicate that teachers do not feel they are receiving enough feedback or that the feedback may be too harsh. Center D scored a 7.73 in this dimension, above the national norm of 6.94. This is an indication that teachers perceive the feedback they are receiving as positive, helpful, and enriching. Qualitative data supports this finding. One teacher states, “Yes, I do. My director is very supportive in all that we do. She always has something good to say to us” (42, personal communication, March 10, 2012), while another stated, “Yes, I do. She always makes time for me whenever I have a question” (32, personal communication, March 10, 2012). Similarly another teacher noted that “Yes, director is easy to approach with issues and listens well and offers support” (36, personal communication, March 12, 2012). The triangulation of data clearly indicates that teachers feel supported by their director at center D.

**Clarity**

Within the organizational climate scale, clarity was the only dimension that received a score below five, with a score of 4.77. This mean is also below the national norm of 6.01.
This score indicates that teachers do not feel that the communication is clear; people are confused about policies and procedures, and that conflicting demands are placed on workers. When teachers at center D were asked in the qualitative portion of the survey what they would like to see improved, one teacher stated clarity before pay, “Staff communication and pay” (40, personal communication, March 12, 2012). To further explain clarity, teachers described some problem areas in their daily experiences with clarity by stating, “A more truthful individual who doesn’t tell one person one thing and tell another the opposite” (44, personal communication, March 15, 2012) and another states, “I would like to see more universal policies and procedures” (46, personal communication, March 17, 2012). Both the center score and teachers’ input clearly point to the fact that teachers at center D would like more clarity in their center.

**Reward System**

Reward system was the second dimension, scoring a 5.16, below the national norm of 5.92. In the dimension of reward system, centers, which score high are centers that handle pay and promotion fairly and the majority of teachers employed at these centers feel they, are paid fairly compared to other centers. A low score in this dimension indicates that teachers in this center feel they are not being paid what they are worth and that raises are based something other than their job performance. When teachers were asked what they would like to see improved in the qualitative portion of the survey, pay was consistently referred to pay and health benefits, and again Pay! Pay! Pay! Center D received a score of 5.16 on the pay and promotion scale. However for this community of teachers, they indicate by their qualitative answers that they do not feel valued in their community based on their pay and promotion system five out of 11 teachers mentioned pay as an improvement they would like to see in their center.

**Decision Making**

In the dimension of decision-making, centers that score high are considered centers that consider staff input in school wide policies and decisions that directly affect them. Centers who score low are considered to be centers that expect conformity and would rather
not hear individual’s opinions and feelings. Center D received a score of 6.3, slightly above the national norm of 6.27, and barely one point over the baseline of five.

**Goal Consensus**

The dimension of goal consensus references the degree to which teachers are in alignment with school philosophy and can work together towards the same goals in regards to their center, children, and families. A high score represents a school that can compromise; a low rating in this dimension would indicate a lack of agreement of the key elements within a philosophy at a center. Center D scored a 5.77, below the national norm of 6.89 indicating that overall the community is not in agreement on the school philosophy.

**Task Orientation**

The dimension of task orientation is defined as workers feeling they have enough time to accomplish tasks while still enjoying their job. A high score in this dimension indicates the center places proper emphasis on results and outcomes and that teachers work hard, but still have time to relax. A low score indicates that time is wasted and that things get put off. Center D scored a 6.94 on this dimension, above the national norm of 6.77. However, when teachers had the opportunity to speak about their time, it did not appear as if time was being wasted, but rather that teachers felt the pressure of not having enough time: “Prep time, prep time, prep time” (48, personal communication, March 20, 2012), a second teacher further explains prep time, “My only high demand and stressor in this line of work is not having scheduled daily or weekly prep time to accomplish all that is expected of me as a head teacher” (41, personal communication, March 5, 2012), another teacher clearly states she is constantly working, “There are too many requirements to fulfill (EOL boards, care program, smile box’s, lesson plans) and not enough time” (44, personal communication, March 15, 2012). Teachers at center D clearly feel as if there are not enough minutes in their day and that task orientation within the center is not meeting their needs.

**Physical Setting**

The dimension of physical setting explores how a center is arranged, for example whether it is organized, whether there are sufficient supplies, if there the proper equipment to get the job done? Centers with a low score in this dimension may be drab, too
hot or too cold, or need some major repairs. Centers D scored over seven, 7.31 in this
dimension, meaning teachers feel they have the supplies they need to get their job done, there
is adequate parking, the temperature is good, and teachers are getting their needs met in this
dimension. Center D was above the national norm of 6.73.

**Innovativeness**

The final dimension of the work environment profile is innovativeness. This
dimension looks at the degree in which staff is encouraged to be creative and innovative in
their work. If a center scores high in this dimension, it is believed that teachers are
encouraged to problem solve and supported in implementing needed changes. Programs who
score low in this dimension are characterized by an approach that allows many problems to
go unaddressed. Center D achieved their highest score of all the dimensions in
innovativeness, scoring a 7.88, above the national norm of 6.63. Teachers at center D
indicate that they do feel they are able to problem solve and make changes as necessary
within their classroom and community. Teachers at center D feel s a strong sense of
autonomy.

**JOB SATISFACTION**

Evidence points to the connection between job satisfaction and organizational climate
(Bloom, 2005, 2010) as both are influenced not only by the differences in organizational
structure but also by the meaning attached to interactions between people within those
settings. Therefore it was vital for the researcher to know how committed teachers were to
their center when looking at job satisfaction.

**Commitment**

Results are presented in Figure 15.

Teachers at center D have a mean of 6.77; therefore they are slightly above
committed to their center. However, the national norm is above center D, 7.26. Teachers
indicated their commitment to the center through various statements found in the qualitative
data, “For the most part this center is my ideal job. Good ratios, very supportive
administration, I work well with my co teacher and we have the freedom to run our class the
way we want it, making sure the needs of our students are met first” (36, personal
communication, March 12, 2012), another states, “I enjoy the community respect of the center, and the friendly staff and management” (35, personal communication, April 13, 2012). The data indicates that teachers at center D most likely have a willingness to exert oneself on behalf of the program and have a desire to remain working at their center. However it is important to note that while the teachers stated they were happy at their center, the data shows that they scored well below ten and below the national norm. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction, Center D could achieve a higher mean in commitment perhaps by making changes within their organizational climate. Of the ten dimensions of organizational climate, three of the ten dimensions scored below the national norm. One of the dimensions scored below the baseline of five. This could be an indicator as to why the commitment level at center D is below the national norm and substantially below the high score of ten.

**Work Attitudes**

In regards to how teachers felt towards their work they scored a mean of 33.25, in regards to their working conditions teachers scored a mean of 31.08. Both means indicate teachers are not finding a great deal of fulfillment in regards to their work or their working conditions. Results for this data will be presented in Figure 16.

Being that one of the most influential areas of a teacher’s job is the work itself (Saari & Judge, 2004), it is unfortunate that center D scored barley over half in each dimension of
job satisfaction. When teachers at center do self-reflection they may become more aware that they are unsatisfied in the work they are doing and it could result in turnover for the center. For a fulltime teacher spending a minimum of 40 hours a week at their center it is crucial for teachers to feel their working conditions meet their needs. At center D teachers ratings indicate that their needs are not being met.

Teachers were asked about common organizational decisions and actions. They were asked how much influence teachers currently have and then again how much they would like to have. On a likert type scale teachers rated their perceived decision making on a scale from, very little influence, some influence, and considerable influence. It is scored from one to five, one being not like the ideal and five being the ideal. Center D had a 21.76 mean in the category of currently have, out of a possible score of 50. Center D scored less than half of the total score, showing that the environment may not have the autonomy of decision making that the leadership style they are working under strives for. People oriented leaders strive for teachers to exercise control and be self-directed. However when teachers were asked to rank how much influence they would like to have the mean was 34.41, a 12.65 standard deviation. The data implies that the teachers at center D would like more influence in the decision making of areas at their center. Teachers are still 15.59 below the possible total score of 50, which implies some areas may not be as important as others. Which is in alignment with the concept that one facet does not influence the other. Teachers may think it is important to

Figure 16. Nature of the work itself and working conditions (n=16).
have influence on their daily schedule but may not feel it is as important to have influence in determining program goals and philosophies. Results for this data are presented in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Level of influence (n=16).

Two additional questions were asked at the end of the survey to gather information about the facets of the job that can create more satisfaction or more dissatisfaction. Teachers were asked open-ended questions to tap into what fulfilled them the most at work and what was the most stressful. Five out of 17 teachers from center D stated the children in their class as both a joy and stressor of the job.

Teachers spoke about the relationships with their co-workers, and building relationships with families as points of fulfillment. “Playing with the children, interacting with co-workers and creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for the children and their parents” (47, personal communication, March 14, 2012), and another states, “Building relationships with co-workers and families, spending time with the children and facilitating healthy growth and development” (34, personal communication, March 19, 2012). Both quotes demonstrate facets of job satisfaction, co-worker relations, the nature of the work itself, and the working conditions. This data shows a positive attitude towards job satisfaction and can be contributed to working for a people oriented leader. People oriented leaders work towards a harmonious community, a community that is comfortable friendly and satisfying.
Leadership

Results indicate the director at center D is a people oriented leader. The tool defines a people oriented leader in the following manner: “achieving harmonious group relations is foremost in a people-oriented leadership style. The director places a strong emphasis on maintaining comfortable, friendly, and satisfying working conditions and allowing staff to exercise control and be self-directed with minimal intrusion of center wide policies” (Bloom, 2005, p. 193). Center D’s director received 58 tallies within the category of people oriented leadership style, 41 tallies within the category of task oriented leadership style, and 30 tallies within integrated leadership style. Of the 15 teachers who participated in this portion of the survey, 15 checked, The primary goal of my director is to help staff find fulfillment, this type of leadership style was also supported by eight teachers who checked, With respect to leadership philosophy, my director tends to emphasize people’s well-being, believing that happy workers are productive workers. Research indicates (Bloom, 2005) that when staff work for a leader who is people oriented they may complain about the lack of order and coordination within the center.

When teachers were asked what is the highest demand of their job and what they would like to see improved, the facets of working conditions, the nature of the work itself, supervisor support, and pay and promotion were clearly supported as areas that teachers would like to see improved. One teacher stated, “Supervision, more back up for teachers, and more prep time” (40, personal communication, March 12, 2012), another teacher stated, “It can be a very physical job that can be tiring without extra time off” (41, personal communication, March 5, 2012), and another, “More time to get my work done, and more staff support” (42, personal communication, March 10, 2012). While working for a people oriented leader can be nice, that type of leader is trying to meet individual needs, it appears that teachers at center D are physically tired from their job and are looking for more support.

QUALITATIVE

Question one in the qualitative portion of the survey was: describe the characteristics of your ideal job? The response set of center D spoke in great detail about the need for community and feeling a part of something. Descriptive words that exemplify this theme included: fun, good work environment, passion, ideas, support, happy and safe. One teacher
clearly summed up center D’s teachers ideal work environment, “For the most part, this center is my ideal job. Good ratios, very supportive administration, I work well with my co teacher, and we have the freedom to run our class the way we want it, making sure the needs of the students are met first” (32, personal communication, March 10, 2012). Analysis of qualitative data from Center D indicated that teachers want to feel a part of a community.

Question two in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what are the highest demands of your job and how do they affect your work? Four of ten teachers noted that time is of high demand, “My only high demand and stressor in this line of work is not having a scheduled or weekly prep time to accomplish all that is expected of me as a head teacher” (40, personal communication, March 12, 2012), and another stated “There are too many requirements” (33, personal communication, March 9, 2012). Along with the need for more time, one teacher noted something that no other center spoke about, “Having cameras in the classroom is very intimidating. They impact my work by worrying if I said something that one might mistake” (37, personal communication, March 13, 2012). Cameras are relatively new to the system of childcare and for this teacher it seemed to make an impact on her daily work.

Question three in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what are the three aspects of your job you enjoy the most? Seven of 11 teachers stated the children in their class first as an aspect of their job they enjoy most. The second most frequent response by two teachers was having autonomy in their classrooms. Quotes exemplifying this theme included “I enjoy being able to plan my own lesson plan” (46, personal communication, March 17, 2012), and, “The freedom to make up my own curriculum, but on the downside we lack supplies” (34, personal communication, March 19, 2012). Based on the data it can be concluded that teachers at center D are committed to the children in their class and take ownership in the curriculum they are planning.

Question four in the qualitative portion of the survey was: what three aspects would you like to see improved? The three themes that emerged in center D response set were pay, more time, and more supervisor support. Five of 11 teachers mentioned pay and benefits as an improvement they would like to see better pay and benefits. Four of 11 teachers mentioned time as an improvement they would like to see time issues with getting boards done. Teachers at Center D similar to those at center A, B, and C need more time in their
day. The third most frequent response at Center D was supervisor support, as exemplified by the following quotes: “More back up for teachers,” (36, personal communication, March 12, 2012) and “staff support” (42, personal communication, March 10, 2012).

Question five in the qualitative portion of the survey was: do you feel your director is knowledgeable of the school curriculum and policies? Of the response set eight of 11 teachers indicated they do feel their director is knowledgeable; two indicated they did not feel their director is knowledgeable and one teacher was on the fence. Teachers who indicated yes felt strongly about this and stated, “Yes, not only is she knowledgeable about our curriculum and policies, but also child development and is very much a people person” (43, personal communication, April 11, 2012), and another stated, “Yes. She is well informed. She is always furthering and expanding her knowledge in regards to our curriculum and policies” (42, personal communication, March 10, 2012). However teachers who indicated no also felt strongly about their response, “I don’t feel the director has any knowledge of the classroom curriculums, but is more focused on policies and procedures” (32, personal communication, March 10, 2012), and another stated, “No, but all directors combined are” (35, personal communication, April 11, 2012).

Question six in the qualitative portion of the survey asked: do you feel your director implements disciplinary procedures in a fair and consistent matter? Seven of 11 teachers indicated they felt their director handled discipline fair and consistently, “Yes, she handles disciplinary concerns with staff in a very professional manner. She never speaks down to anyone or disrespects him or her by speaking about him or her amongst staff. She doesn’t gossip” (48, personal communication, March 20, 2012). However, another stated, “Yes, however, I think she could be more present in the classrooms, so she has a better feel for what is going on and why things happen” (33, personal communication, March 9, 2012).

Question seven of the qualitative portion of the survey asked, do you feel supported by your director? The response set for this question was 12 while all the previous questions were 11. Ten of 12 teachers indicated they do feel supported by their director, one indicated somewhat, and one clearly stated no and why. The one no response felt strongly, “No. A more truthful individual who doesn’t tell one person one thing and tell another the opposite. Can say I made a mistake let’s work this out instead of trying to cover up mistakes. We all make them” (40, personal communication, March 12, 2012). However, there were ten yes
responses indicating that teachers felt supported by their supervisor: “Yes, she is available to her staff, considerate about personal issues, and encourages them to be their best for their children” (34, personal communication, March 19, 2012). Another stated “Yes I do. X is very supportive in all that we do. She always has something good to say to us” (44, personal communication, March 15, 2012).

**Relationship between Leadership Style, Organizational Climate, Work Attitudes and Teacher Job Satisfaction**

The relationship between leadership style, organizational climate, work attitudes, and organizational climate was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Questions from the survey that best represented each of these constructs were used to explore the relationships between variables. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. All relationships, with the exception of leadership (decision making) and job satisfaction (how things get done at the center most of the time) were found to be statistically significant. Results for this data are presented in Table 1.

**Relationships between Organizational Climate and Job Satisfaction and Leadership Style, Work Attitudes, Organizational Climate, and Teacher Satisfaction**

There was one measure for organizational climate, one measure of work attitudes, two measures of job satisfaction and two dimensions of leadership style. Organizational style (r=.61 and r=.55). There was a medium correlation between organizational climate and the two measures of job satisfaction (r=.40 and r=.32). Work attitude had a large correlation with both measures of leadership style (r=.51 and r=.53). There was a one was large and one was medium correlation between work attitudes and two measures of job climate had a large correlation with work attitude (r=.55) and the two measures of leadership satisfaction (r=.62 and r=.43). The relationships between the two measures of job satisfaction and leadership style varied a little. Three of the four correlations were high, one was medium, and one was not significant.
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Small: $r=.10$ to $.29$, medium: $r=.30$ to $.49$ and large: $r=.50$ to 1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the researcher will address the findings of the study in terms of the research presented in the review of literature and in response to the research questions. Findings will also be discussed using the theoretical framework that guided the work. This chapter will also include conclusions, implications for practice/future research and any limitations or weaknesses of the study.

The researcher explored the relationship between organizational climate and job satisfaction and how program leadership and practices affect work attitudes, teacher satisfaction and organizational climate in a for profit childcare center, allowing directors to have a fine-grained view of what the attitudes of their employees are towards their work so they can begin to make improvements. Improvements within an organizational climate can increase positivity in employees work attitudes and in some cases increase their productivity at work.

It is important for work place communities to do continual organizational analysis, as it gives the community a sense of structure for continuing improvement. Taking the time to understand or listen to the collective perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, and values of individuals in a work setting shows staff respect and encourages team work and problem solving, but most importantly it provides data about precise problems within a community that can be improved. Both job satisfaction and organizational climate are influenced by the organization’s structure and the interactions between individuals who work in the environment, reflecting Bloom’s model of a child care center as a social system.

Directors have to be responsible for consistently checking in with their center and keeping track of changes needed within the community. Directors need to actively educate themselves on new and effective methods and approaches in the field. The perception a staff has of their leader is not one a leader should take lightly. It is that perception that keeps teachers at centers or drives teachers out. A director who takes the time to reflect on his or her performance will shine as an effective leader.
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND JOB SATISFACTION**

Research indicates a connection between job satisfaction and organizational climate (Bloom, 2010), and the results of this study support this connection. Pearson product moment correlations indicated large to medium correlations between organizational climate and job satisfaction. Organizational climate influences teachers and administrator’s behavior. How employees feel about their job, their work attitude, influences the organizational climate. Various organizational practices contribute to the summary perception employees may have of their work environment.

With the perspective of early childhood centers as a social system, research implies that one dimension of the climate can impact another (Bloom, 2005). When looking at the relationship of organizational climate and job satisfaction within the four centers under investigation, it became clear that each center as a social system has dimensions of their climate that need attention in order to increase the number of satisfied teachers. When discussing the organizational climate from the teachers’ perspective, it is important to acknowledge that the organizational climate of a workplace is established on employee’s subjective version of events and behaviors in the setting. This type of perspective may not align with the authenticity of what is happening in the center, or with the director’s perspective, however, it is important for directors to be able to understand why their employees see the climate the way they see it.

How do directors know what the best climate for their center is? Climates that are positive, high energy, open and trustworthy with a sense if efficacy reflect a good climate, however, there is no ideal climate that should be uniformly applied to all centers. Rather, each center director should evaluate the needs and expectations of the teachers of their center. The results of this study can help directors to do this.

Center A had three dimensions within the organizational climate that were above the national norm: professional growth, task orientation, and innovativeness. Seven dimensions were below the national norm: collegiality, supervisor support, clarity, reward system, decision-making, goal consensus, and physical setting, of those seven three were below the baseline of five. When looking at the relationship of organizational climate and job satisfaction, it is important to acknowledge that collegiality, supervisor support, physical
setting and reward system all fell below the national norm, and are also four of the five facets of job satisfaction. This data implies that teachers at Center A are not satisfied. When looking at job satisfaction and work attitudes, it is now clear as to why the teachers at center A had work attitudes scores below the ideal score of 50; they are unsatisfied in four of the five dimensions of job satisfaction. This data is also supported in the qualitative data. Six participants out of 11 responded with pay being an improvement they would like to see in the job, six out of 11 participants mentioned the building and playground equipment as improvements needed. Pay & promotion and the building (identified in organizational climate as physical setting and in job satisfaction as working conditions) are facets of job satisfaction that teachers at center A state they are unsatisfied with. The qualitative data and quantitative data implied that teachers at center A are not having their needs met.

Center B had four dimensions of organizational climate below the national norm: reward system, goal consensus, task orientation, and physical setting. Dimensions of organizational climate that were above the national norm included: collegiality, professional growth, supervisor support, clarity, decision-making, and innovativeness. When looking at the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational climate, Center B had three dimensions on organizational climate that aligned with job satisfaction as they were below the national norm: reward system, task orientation which can be identified in job satisfaction as the nature of the work itself, and physical setting which can be identified as working conditions in job satisfaction. In the qualitative data of Center B teachers spoke about pay and needing more time as improvements they would like to see at their center. Of the response set, four teachers out of ten indicated needing more time and for deadlines to be more spaced out, while one teacher mentioned pay and benefits. Three of four teachers at Center B also stated that the lack of time they had to complete tasks was the highest demand of their job which is in alignment with task orientation. This measure was also below the national norm for this center. However, the work attitudes score for center B was the closest to the ideal score of 50, scoring 36.66 in my work and 31.16 in working conditions. This suggests those teachers’ attitudes towards their work and the working conditions are positive, and that the teachers at center B are the most satisfied teachers of the four centers. However, they are still 24 points below the ideal score of 50. The qualitative data and quantitative data implied that teachers at center B are having their needs met in six of the ten dimensions of
organizational climate, however there are changes within the organizational climate including reward system, task orientation, and physical setting that could potentially increase teacher job satisfaction.

Center C had four dimensions above the national norm and six below the national norm in regards to organizational climate. Below the national norm were collegiality, supervisor support, clarity, reward system, goal consensus, and task orientation. Collegiality, supervisor support, reward system, and task orientation (the nature of the work itself) are all facets of job satisfaction as well; this data implies teachers at center C are unsatisfied. The scores for teacher work attitudes, 33.33 in *my work* and 31.75 in *working conditions*, at Center C are below the ideal score of 50 as well, supporting the concept teachers are unsatisfied. In the qualitative data for Center C two of three teachers spoke about the children, families, and their co-workers as an aspect of their job they enjoy most. However in the analysis of the organizational climate, collegiality was below the national norm. Support and reward system were both areas of improvement that teachers would like to see. A strong sense of need for community, pride in their work, and respect were themes that emerged from the data from Center C. When looking at the relationship of job satisfaction and organizational climate, the data implies teachers at Center C are the least satisfied of the four centers.

Center D had seven dimensions of organizational climate above the national norm and three below the national norm including reward system identified as pay and promotion in job satisfaction, clarity, and goal consensus. Through the data it appears teachers are satisfied and committed to their jobs at center D, however, there are specific dimensions, reward system, clarity, and task orientation (the nature of the work itself) that need attention in order to increase job satisfaction at this center. Qualitative data indicated that reward system is the dimension that first needs attention. Four of 11 teachers mentioned pay as an improvement they would like to see at their job. Second was time or lack of time, which was mentioned by five of the 11 teachers. While it appears through the organizational climate teachers at center D are satisfied, their work attitudes are below the ideal score of 50. It appears teachers are satisfied and committed to their jobs at center D, however there are specific dimensions, including reward system, clarity, and task orientation that need attention in order to increase job satisfaction at this center. Specifically, center D’s teachers spoke
about co-worker relations, the need for more time, and challenging behavior as areas they would like to see improved in their center.

It is important to acknowledge that consistently throughout the qualitative data, 20 of 29 teachers indicated that the children in their class are the number one most enjoyed aspect of their job. When adopting a systems perspective, this data indicates that the micro system of the teacher-child in these centers is working in a positive way. Teachers are finding satisfaction in their job in regards to the children in their class, as exemplified by the following quotes in regards to the things they enjoyed about their work: (1) seeing the children develop skills, having the children tell stories, receiving a hug and a smile each day, (2) spending time with the children and facilitating healthy growth and development, and (3) seeing the positive impact on children’s lives. The definition of the work itself is described as including “the importance of the work and the extent to which it provides intrinsic enjoyment and fulfills the need for recognition, creativity and skill building” (Bloom, 2010, p. 17). While it was also included by nine of 20 teachers that children and challenging behavior can be one of the highest demands of a teacher’s job, the conclusion drawn from this data is that while children can be challenging, teachers feel that it is rewarding to help children on their journey and that this brings job satisfaction to teachers in the field.

This data is supported by Bronfenbrenner’s (2004) bioecological theory of human development that examined how knowledge, activities, and communities emerge together as part of the process of the workplace learning. Within this theory, human interactions and meanings form part of the workplace context or organizational climate as the systems interconnect and nest within the larger system they are part of. The teacher-child system is within the nest of the larger systems they are part of. A person’s physical biology is the foundation environment of where their professional growth and job satisfaction begins. Therefore, how teachers are feeling about their interactions with the children in their class is a biological feeling that is bringing satisfaction to their job.

For each of these centers, it can be concluded that although the staff within the communities would like to see changes and improvements, they are committed to their centers but have needs and expectations that are not being met to their fullest potential. It can be concluded from the qualitative and quantitative data that teachers employed by CCLC feel universally that they are not valued when it comes to their pay and feel they need more
time to accomplish the tasks expected of them on a daily basis. These stressors were consistent with Kelly and Berthelson’s (1995) study, which consisted of teachers keeping reflective journals over a 2-week period of their daily challenges and sources of stress. The results showed that time pressures, meeting children’s needs, and dealing with non-teaching tasks were among the top themes or sources of stress.

Each of the four centers included reward system as dimension below the national norm and, throughout the qualitative data, pay was mentioned 15 times by 29 participants as an improvement teacher’s would like to see. Throughout the field of early childhood, teachers and administrators continue to indicate that their pay and job is under-valued by society (CCW, 2007). Society, is included in the external environment of the social system, and can have a strong impact on the system of the childcare center. For the purpose of this research, the centers are nested within the environment of the corporate system, which is nested within the larger external environment. The external environment includes macro-system variables such as the socio-political climate that currently undervalues the field of early childhood education. This external environment impacts the corporate office system that controls the wages disbursed to teachers in their organization. Pay and promotion are a part of the process of a system. A teacher at Center C stated, “Wish they would go to corporate to negotiate fair pay raises… we haven’t had even a cost of living increase in over two years despite the fact that tuition for the children has been raised and our waitlist is tremendous (meaning our center is doing well)” (21, personal communication, March 16, 2012). For teachers in the system of early childhood specifically, wages provide a way for teachers to cross compare their value in a center. Early childhood directors, providers, and advocates must continue the fight for fairness in pay and value in the field (Whitebook & Eichberg, 2002).

Within the qualitative data, the third theme that emerged was the feeling that teachers need more time to accomplish the tasks expected of them by their job title as a teacher within the teacher center system. This research has reported that job stressors teachers face include day-to-day demands such as the physical workload, time pressures, challenging child behaviors, and overall shift work (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001). There is an implicit code among teachers, not just early childhood teachers, which indicated that they will work more hours than you are paid. Implicit codes and behavior develop under the
label of culture within the social systems theory, as most childcare centers have implicit codes about the expected workload and the use of time on the job (Bloom, 1991). As stated by teachers across the four centers, they need more time to accomplish the expected workload. A teacher from center D stated, “There are too many requirements to fulfill, EOL board, care program, smile box, lesson plans, and not enough time to get it done”, and another shared that “My only high demand and stressor in this line of work is not having scheduled prep time to accomplish all that is expected of me as a head teacher” (43, personal communication, April 11, 2012). This type of code can lead to emotional exhaustion and disengagement, and impact self-efficacy which can then lead to burnout and teacher turnover (Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

**IMPACT OF LEADERSHIP**

Overall the data indicated that CCLC has employed two directors with the leadership style that is task-oriented, one that is people oriented, and one that is an integrated leader. When teachers had the opportunity to report three words to describe their director they spoke positively and indicated overall like for their director. Within 28 responses, 16 had three positive words to describe their director. Directors were described as kind, smart, efficient, and transformational. Teachers working for each type of leader, appear to have a goodness of fit with their leader.

The goodness of fit between and individual and a community is crucial. The individual’s need for stability and achievement depends on the goodness of fit between the teacher’s personality and the work environment. The data implied that most participants were committed to continue working at their center for at least two more years, indicating there is some goodness of fit between the employees and the directors across the four centers.

When looking at the organizational climates of the two task oriented leaders, both have dramatically different organizational climates. Task-oriented leaders, as defined by Bloom, put organizational needs first and view these needs as most important. These directors show a strong concern for high performance by teachers in accomplishing daily tasks, “This type of director places emphasis on planning, directing, following procedures, and applying uniform standards and expectations for all” Bloom (2005, p. 193). Center A, led by a task oriented leader had seven out of ten dimensions of the organizational climate score
below the national norm. Within the qualitative portion of the survey, when the teachers at Center A were asked if they felt supported by their director, five of ten participants had a negative statement. The data implied that the teachers at Center A overall are not having their needs and expectations met by their leader. However, Center B, is also led by a task-oriented leader and had only two dimensions of the organizational climate score below the national norm. When the teachers at Center B were asked if they felt supported by their director, five out of six participants had something positive to say. Both centers had staff who expressed they were committed to their center. This data supports the idea that each director must adapt and make changes that fit the unique staff that they employ. For example, Center A’s staff spoke about the paperwork, lack of time, and desire for better playground equipment. By having an organizational analysis, Center A’s director will know and understand these are the dimensions she should first make changes in, in order to improve staff job satisfaction. Teachers at Center B spoke about feeling on all the time, how physical the job is, and a need for change in the curriculum, specifically the need for themes to be eliminated. Teachers in both Centers A and B had different needs and expectations, although a task-oriented leader leads them. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and leadership style, Centers A & B will need to look at different aspects of their organizational climates to increase job satisfaction.

An integrated leader leads Center C. This type of leader is defined by Bloom, (2005) as a leader who is trying to achieve both center goals and maintain a high morale. An integrated leader is flexible, recognizes that different situations may require a different emphasis on center wide needs or individual needs Across the dimensions of organizational climate, Center C had six dimensions that scored below the national norm, and four above the national norm. Center C’s teachers spoke about lack of planning time, having a draining staff, and dealing with parents as areas they would like to see improved in their center. These reflect different needs and expectations than those of teachers that are led by a task-oriented leader. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and leadership style Center C, the Director will need to introduce some preventative care, to nurture the adults in the center, in order to not have teacher burnout and improve organizational climate
Center D is led by a director with a people oriented leadership style. People oriented leadership style as defined by Bloom (2005), as when the leader first tried to achieve harmonious group relations and wants to achieve a friendly and comfortable work place for their staff. However, many who work under this type of leadership style complain about lack of order and coordination. Within the qualitative portion of the survey, when the teachers at Center D were asked if they felt supported by their director, ten of the 12 participants said yes, followed by a positive statement, while two teachers said no and followed with a negative statement. Center D had three dimensions that scored below the national norm within their organizational climate, and seven that scored above. For Center D, the data implied that the type of staff employed within this community have a goodness of fit with this type of leadership. With this type of organizational analysis the Center D director will be able to start making changes in reward system, clarity, and goal consensus, the dimensions that fell below the national norm first. When considering the relationship between organizational climate and leadership style, it will be crucial for Center D to work on the dimension of clarity while making these improvements.

The purpose of this research was to investigate how leadership practices impact teacher job satisfaction and organizational climate in a for profit childcare center in an effort to understand what causes teachers to be unsatisfied in their job and in some cases leave their center. Noting that attrition is not a trivial matter in the lives of the children at a specific center, this research shows a significant relationship between leadership style and work attitude. There was a large, statistically significant correlation between leadership style and organizational climate as shown by Pearson product moment correlations. Likewise, there was a large to medium correlation between leadership style and job satisfaction. There was a large correlation between leadership (decision making) and job satisfaction (pay and promotion) and a medium correlation between leadership (supervision) and job satisfaction (pay and promotion) as shown by Pearson product moment correlations.

Based on analysis of the data, it can be concluded there is a strong relationship between teacher’s perceptions of leadership style and work attitudes, organizational climate and teacher job satisfaction in a for profit childcare center. How teachers perceive the leadership style of their director has an impact of their work attitude, which impacts the organizational climate, which can impact their job satisfaction. This type of conclusion
supports Bloom’s (1991) concept that early childhood centers are a social system. A system has a network of social relationships with its own distinctive culture. Each of the four centers has their own culture that defines them as well as creates a need for change. Teachers want to be a part of a community that is respectful, kind, nurturing, and challenging. If a teacher does not feel they are working for someone who hears them, understands them, and acknowledges them it will impact their attitude, which impacts the organizational climate, which could impact the level of job satisfaction within the center.

**Implications for the Future**

Many areas of conflict that arise within a center begin at the basic needs and motives of an individual within the community. Teachers tend to individualize their roles to meet their needs and desires within the context of their roles, while organizations try to mold the individual with policies and procedures to meet the organization’s needs. When the tension from this interaction builds it has an impact on the system, and how this type of tension is handled impacts the center outcomes. To merge the individual desires and the organizational needs, a change must occur.

Not all change must be a big change; change can be done via ripple effect and change can happen through small incidents. For example the whole staff may not see the importance of team building activities, celebrating birthdays in the lunch room, and encouraging teachers to be a part of their community, but if a director can get a group within the community to see the importance and participate the collegiality may increase in a center, therefore the organizational climate may increase, and teacher job satisfaction may increase. One positive interaction for a teacher may impact another teacher, starting with a simple tradition in a community.

Directors will need to start building a vision for change. It will be necessary for each director to build a clear and informed vision for his or her center. It sounds very simple, but directors will need to articulate what is wrong and how they are going to begin a change in their community.

Bloom’s (2005) research is directed at the idea that teachers who feel they are a part of a community rather than a teacher who follows policies and procedures feel motivated to exhibit higher levels of professional duties and take further advantage of professional
development opportunities. It can be concluded from the data that teachers within the CCLC community do not feel they have much influence on many organizational decisions. When teachers were asked how much influence they have and would like to have the teachers in each center reported a desire to have more influence then they currently do. If teachers were given more autonomy within their community they may feel more motivated to grow within their community, which would increase teacher retention. Within self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2008) teachers whose needs for competence and relatedness are satisfied have higher levels of intrinsic interest in their work. When levels of interest in work are heightened teachers become more interested in professional development opportunities, which may increase levels of teacher commitment to their center.

As the four centers go forward it will be important for them to keep the concept of change as an abstract idea. Each center director will need to take it upon themselves to see the change as continuous, be able to identify problems, explore new avenues of change, evaluate the changes when they have been made and redefine new problems. This research can be a starting point for developing a plan of action. Simply because the investigator assesses employee’s attitudes it does not mean teachers feel more valued, however it is the first step in respecting teacher’s needs and expectations.

**Implications for the Macro System**

This discussion builds on Bloom’s (1991) social system model to propose a change in the external environment, by noting the patterns that emerged from the response set’s qualitative data. Narrative themes within the data were identified and isolated to determine larger patterns and meanings. Through content analysis of the 48 responses, it was found that the patterns found within the qualitative data could be categorized into components of Bloom’s (1991) model (i.e., external environment, culture, people, structure, process). It is this researcher’s opinion that for a positive change to happen in ECE programs and to produce more satisfied teachers, change needs to begin in the macro system. Early childhood needs to be taken seriously in the macro level in order for change to occur at the micro system level.

The data clearly states that teachers like their directors and there was a goodness of fit between the teachers and their director. Unfortunately, simply because there is a goodness of
fit between a teacher and their director it does not mean that teachers are satisfied at their job. Teachers consistently spoke of the need for more time to complete tasks and better pay. Pay provides teachers with a sense of acknowledgement and a sense of worth. Every teacher at every center stated they were unhappy in regards to their pay, this change must occur at the corporate office system, which is a part of the external environment, which is impacted by macro system variables such as values, beliefs and ideologies. Unfortunately, the value of early childhood education is not recognized in our society and this impacts organizational climate, work attitudes and job satisfaction at the individual and center level.

The researcher investigated four for profit childcare centers and in this context the bottom line for each center is to make a profit. It appears that teacher salaries are a dimension where money out of the budget is saved, meaning; teachers’ salaries are lower based on the need to make a profit.

**CONCLUSION**

Providing care to children in early childhood education is an extremely demanding, emotional, and rewarding responsibility to have on a daily basis. Teachers within this investigation stated the demand of tasks to be completed, within the time they were given, was a high stress point of their job. Teachers also stated the demands of running a classroom effectively with their limited resources and materials was another aspect of stress in their job, as well as dealing with challenging child behaviors. Each of these variables is not meeting the needs and expectations of the individual teacher.

Achieving job satisfaction with one's job is a complex multilevel phenomenon when looking at the social system of the early childhood work environment. This research shows there is a connection between leadership practices and organizational climate as well as leadership and job satisfaction. Future research in the field of early childhood education must be done to examine the impact of the macro system on the micro system in order to make powerful changes that could create more satisfied teachers. More satisfied teachers create a more loving and richer learning environments for the children of the future.

The quality of the program appears to be found at the intersection of the people, structure, and processes, all of which are influenced by the external environment. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine how much influence, whether direct or indirect,
the external environment has on the childcare center as a whole. It is in the opinion of this researcher that there needs to be a change in policy in regards to teacher and administrator educational requirements, time provided to teachers for administrative tasks and reflection, and pay for early childhood teachers.

Bloom and Sheerer (1992) establish leadership training for teachers and directors to notably improve classroom quality. This finding is significant to consider as policy initiatives are developed to help advance child care quality and propose that training directors and teachers to create better work environments may be as important as training them about developmentally appropriate practices. Attention on the childcare industry’s program administration is necessary to understand its multi-dimensional characteristics and to describe the relationship between leadership, teacher relationships, and global quality.

Teachers in the current study indicated exhaustion as a predictor of low job satisfaction, and although exhaustion is not listed as a facet of job satisfaction or organizational climate it has an impact on their task orientation. As stated earlier, teachers do not have enough time in their day to complete the tasks assigned to them based on their job title responsibilities. This is a significant finding to consider as policy initiatives are developed to help advance child care quality. It is imperative that policy makers address the hours teachers work, how long their breaks are, and how teachers time is used to complete the tasks required by their job title.

Teachers indicated feeling undervalued in regards to their salaries. However, childcare teachers who are able to financially stay in the field may be more likely to stay long term if the policy is created to raise the teacher pay scale. This finding is significant to consider, as policy initiatives are developed to help advance childcare quality and propose that early childhood teachers be more valued in regards to their pay throughout society. Teachers, today, spend a significant amount of their own money on their classrooms, and policy must be created to allow teachers a budget that is not their own to supply their classrooms with the resources they need as well as be fulfill their personal financial responsibilities.

The thing about teachers is that they leave footprints on all of their student’s hearts and sometimes never get the credit. It is from these teachers and by those footprints that children grow emotionally, cognitively, and physically. My hope is that children can have
consistent teachers who are impacting children’s lives in a positive way. Policy change within the macro system will allow for teachers to remain in the field longer, be less emotionally exhausted and able to focus their full attention on the children in their classroom - the reason most early childhood educators join the field of early childhood education.
REFERENCES


