



An investigation of teachers sense of efficacy, principal leadership behaviors, and the professional zone of acceptance of teachers
by Theresa JoAnne Greenwood

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:

This study investigated an expanded concept of teachers' sense of efficacy which included both professional and organizational efficacy. The study hypothesized that teachers who were at different levels of efficacy would have differing perceptions of a principal's leader behaviors and differing zones of acceptance of unilateral decision making by that principal. Professional efficacy was defined as the belief a teacher holds regarding his/her ability to perform instructional tasks in the classroom in order to gain learning achievement from all students. Organizational efficacy referred to a teacher's belief regarding his/her ability to influence superiors in the school organization in order to gain desired outcomes on professional decisions. The dependent variable of leader behaviors was measured using Stogdill's LBDQ-Form XII. The range of a teacher's acceptance of unilateral decision making was measured with the PZAI developed by Kunz and Hoy.

The study surveyed a sample of 400 Montana public school teachers. The sample was stratified on the following variables: gender, instructional level (secondary or elementary), and size of school organization (established by student enrollment). Further, the study investigated whether the variables of gender, years of experience, and organizational size made a significant difference in a teacher's sense of efficacy. Participants in the study completed a mailed survey instrument. The response rate was 80 percent.

Based on an analysis involving Chi-Square, One-Way ANOVA, and Two-Way ANOVA, the following conclusions were drawn. Teachers who were organizationally efficacious or efficacious tended to perceive their principals as significantly higher on the person-oriented leader behavior dimensions of the LBDQ-Form XII. Efficacy levels did not influence a teacher's zone of acceptance in regard to the principal's unilateral decision making.

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by

Theresa JoAnne Greenwood

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of the requirements for the degree**

of

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July 1990

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APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

Theresa JoAnne Greenwood

This thesis has been read by each member of the graduate committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated an expanded concept of teachers' sense of efficacy which included both professional and organizational efficacy. The study hypothesized that teachers who were at different levels of efficacy would have differing perceptions of a principal's leader behaviors and differing zones of acceptance of unilateral decision making by that principal. Professional efficacy was defined as the belief a teacher holds regarding his/her ability to perform instructional tasks in the classroom in order to gain learning achievement from all students. Organizational efficacy referred to a teacher's belief regarding his/her ability to influence superiors in the school organization in order to gain desired outcomes on professional decisions. The dependent variable of leader behaviors was measured using Stogdill's LBDQ-Form XII. The range of a teacher's acceptance of unilateral decision making was measured with the PZAI developed by Kunz and Hoy.

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Based on an analysis involving Chi-Square, One-Way ANOVA, and Two-Way ANOVA, the following conclusions were drawn. Teachers who were organizationally efficacious or efficacious tended to perceive their principals as significantly higher on the person-oriented leader behavior dimensions of the LBDQ-Form XII. Efficacy levels did not influence a teacher's zone of acceptance in regard to the principal's unilateral decision making.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

All other reforms are conditioned upon reforms in the quality and character of those who engage in the teaching profession. Just because education is the most personal, the most intimate of all affairs; there, more than anywhere else, the sole ultimate reliance and final source of power is in the training, character, and intelligence of the individual teacher. . . . But as long as the school organization . . . tends to repel all those of independent force, of intellectual ability, or tends to hamper them in their work . . . so long will all other reforms be compromised at their start. . . . (Dewey, 1949, p. 37)

Conceptual Framework for Study

Throughout the 1980s, criticizing education and the individuals who work in education has been a growth industry in this country. Reports from commissions (i.e., National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; College Entrance Examination Board, 1983), manifestos from almost everybody (i.e., Adler, 1982; Maeroff, 1982), and research studies (i.e., Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; Sizer, 1984) sounded the alarm bells early in the decade. A national depression in learning was diagnosed. SAT scores, declining since early in the 1960s, plunged to an all-time low in 1980. Thirteen percent of the nation's high school graduates were declared to read

and write at a sixth grade level. In public four-year colleges, remedial math courses had increased 72 percent between 1975 and 1980. Matched against other industrialized nations, American students placed last in 7 out of 19 academic tests -- and first in none of them (Gross and Gross, 1985). Exacerbating an already bad situation, the framework of this educational crisis developed while Americans were caught in the nation's worst economic recession since the 1930s. Consequently, educational and social policymakers easily connected the failures of education with the idea of an entire nation at risk. A few months before his retirement late in 1984, U.S. Secretary of Education Terrell Bell observed:

Human intelligence is the prime resource in this country. It's not the natural resources anymore that count -- it's human intelligence. And we're faced with competitors -- in other nations. And we're one global village. Maybe our time has passed, as has happened in other civilizations. And whether we can renew ourselves and regain our vigor as a nation, I think largely depends on how well we educate our people. (Frady et al., 1985, p. 3)

Properly alarmed, the American public agreed something must be done about the schools. This initial reform agenda saw the schools as organizationally sound but, due to a variety of reasons, slothful. Consequently, tough-talking federal and state educational policymakers worked with the elected representatives of the people, the state legislators, to mandate a dizzying number of standard-tightening reforms to shore up accountability in the areas of academic standards, curriculum requirements and teacher worthiness. These changes, policymakers claimed, would improve student achievement

in the nation's classrooms and make America competitive again. While the policymakers of this reform agenda had high hopes, more cautious laborers in the educational vineyards had serious reservations. Historians like Diane Ravitch (1983) traced a cyclical nature to public education reform movements with little actually being accomplished. Larry Cuban (1988a, 1990) noted "a fundamental puzzle" connected with all reform agendas in the public schools:

Set aside the vocabulary of crisis and the clever images of rising tides of mediocrity, however, and few of those aggressive cheerleaders for current reforms could say that the governance of schools, the way teachers teach, or the organizational structures of schooling have substantially changed over the last century. . . . How can it be, then, that so much school reform has taken place over the last century, yet schooling appears to be pretty much the same as it always has been? (Cuban, 1988a, p. 341)

The guardedly cautious critics of the initial reform agendas of the 1980s were confirmed in their caution by the end of the decade. Seven years after reform steps were initiated, the most recent studies on student achievement do not chart any marked improvement. A major study funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities found that almost 50 percent of American 17-year-olds could not correctly identify the half-century in which the American Civil War occurred (Ravitch and Finn, 1987, p. 47). Dropout rates in the nation's most at-risk school district, Chicago (according to then Secretary of Education William Bennett), approach 50 percent (Beck and Springen, 1988, p. 57). In a major survey querying teachers about the mandated reform

efforts of the early 1980s, "Report Card on School Reform," researchers from the Carnegie Foundation disclosed a dark assessment of "first-wave" reform. Teachers awarded the initial reform agenda only a C grade, noting they were more "dispirited" and "less empowered" than five years ago (Carnegie Foundation, 1988). David T. Kearns, President of Xerox and member of the board developing a national certification policy for teachers which was established as a result of another Carnegie report, said, "The first wave of reform has broken over the nation's public schools, leaving a residue of incremental changes and an outmoded educational structure still firmly in place" (Kearns, 1988b, p. 565). The 1989 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report, *Crossroads in American Education* (Mullis, 1989), presented only two pieces of good news. Blacks and Hispanics have made great strides in basic reading and writing in the past 20 years. The gap between whites and these two minority groups narrowed to half of what it was 20 years ago. The other piece of good news was that most students could read simple material and do basic adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing with whole numbers. Otherwise, as Shanker (1990) noted, the results were "dismaying."

Schools are now embarking on a "second wave of reform" (Lieberman, 1988b, p. 648; Kearns, 1988b, p. 565) with a far more ambitious agenda.

The second wave must produce strategic changes that restructure the way our schools are organized and operate. It must create a new public school system

characterized by accountability and performance.
(Kearns, 1988b, p. 566)

Whereas the first-wave reform agendas stressed adding courses, changing requirements, monitoring teacher effectiveness more closely, and rethinking curriculum and instruction (particularly in the high school), second-wave reform agendas focus on the teaching profession and redefining organizational roles and relationships within the school structure in order to obtain higher commitment from the teaching work force. The organizational agenda of second-wave reform is more ambitious than the early 1980's reform which simply focused on developing greater organizational efficiency and effectiveness by forcing greater accountability. As students of organizational change have noted, first order changes try to make what already *is* more efficient and more effective without disturbing the status quo too much. Second order changes focus on so-called "deep structure" issues and attempt to alter basic ways in which the organization functions (Watzlawick et al., 1974). Policy-makers who proposed the first-wave reform measures viewed the schools as being essentially sound and felt the organizational structuring of the schools was adequate. The second-wave reformers in education mirror deep dissatisfactions with the effectiveness of current school practices and organization; indeed, these reformers hypothesize that a key problem in the schools is *the* existing model of school organization.

Significant gains in student achievement may well require basic changes in the ways schools are governed and organized -- in the authority entrusted to them, the

objectives imposed upon them, and the professional discretion they are granted. Such changes would, however, threaten the security of political representatives and education administrators whose positions are tied to the existing system and who now hold the reins of reform. (Chubb, 1988, p. 29)

Albert Shanker (1990) believes that the signs are unmistakable. He asserts that public education will either improve or be destroyed, citing the 1986 Carnegie report, *A Nation Prepared*, as starkly presenting the reason the schools must improve:

If our standard of living is to be maintained, if the growth of a permanent underclass is to be averted, if democracy is to function effectively in the next century, our schools must graduate the vast majority of students with achievement levels long thought possible for only a privileged few. (Shanker, 1990, p. 347)

Clearly, strong pressures exist for continuing to tinker with the schools -- and the tinkering now being advocated would drastically change the working relationships between schoolteachers and their supervisors, the school administrators.

Perhaps the most influential reports outlining second-wave reform agendas are *Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group* (Holmes Group, Inc., 1986) and *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986). Both reports focus on teachers as the critical components in effectively getting the schools to function. *Tomorrow's Teachers* addresses the necessity for reforming teacher education in order to develop a group of teachers who are well-trained in the knowledge base of pedagogy. *A Nation Prepared* focuses on the actual

practice of teaching in the educational workplace. Its policymakers advocate a restructuring of the school organization's leadership roles so as to foster increased professional growth and work commitment in teachers via empowerment of the teacher. Both reports advocate the development of a far more knowledgeable teaching force who will assume an active leadership role in the larger school organization. *A Nation Prepared* presents the following vision of a professional teacher:

Teachers must think for themselves if they are to be able to help others think for themselves, be able to act independently and collaborate with others, and render critical judgment. They must be people whose knowledge is wide-ranging and they must be able to learn all the time. . . . Teachers will not come to school knowing all that they have to know, but knowing how to figure out what they need to know, where to get it, and how to help others make meaning of it. (Carnegie Forum, 1986, p. 25)

The agenda of *A Nation Prepared* looks critically at the teacher-administrator relationship and suggests that teachers need increased organizational empowerment. It advocates teachers assuming a much wider organizational role professionally, a role that would take the teacher out of the classroom far more. However, just as Chubb (1988) suggested, the second-wave reform measures concerning school restructuring advocated in *A Nation Prepared* are largely being resisted by educational administrators. Immediately after the release of *A Nation Prepared*, Scott D. Thomson of the National Association of Secondary School Principals suggested:

. . . the Carnegie task force unfortunately assumes that principals and teachers are adversaries in seeking a better blueprint for schools. It somehow believes that if

the teacher's role grows in prominence, the role of the principal must shrink. (Thomson, 1986, p. 6)

In an attempt to initiate second-wave reform agendas, the Rochester school district in New York state underwent a lawsuit initiated by the local school administrator's association. The lawsuit challenged a master teacher/peer supervisor model program the district superintendent was implementing in conjunction with the teacher group. The model program allowed classroom teachers without any type of administrative endorsement to perform supervisory work with beginning teachers in the district ("New York Lawsuit. . .," 1987).

However, despite these challenges, increasing support for the second-wave reform agendas has developed in the business sector. This support is important since researchers in organizational change maintain that educational organizations, like most public-supported, institutionalized organizations, tend to respond to externally-mounted change demands more frequently than to internally-mounted change demands. This willingness to respond to external change demands is present because of the need in these organizations to maintain the support and faith of the external environments on which they depend for survival (Meyer and Rowan, 1977). Most recently, business-based commentators on educational concerns argue that the way schools are organized is the *critical* reason why so many schools are ineffective despite the increasing financial and resource commitment society has made to the schools in the last eight years (Kolderie, 1987). David T. Kearns and Denis P. Doyle, in stating the business perspective on improving schools, argued:

From a business perspective the education system presents an alarming picture. It is one in which too little is expected of too many, results are sacrificed to bureaucratic convenience, and professionalism -- particularly teacher professionalism -- is discouraged. The system is just not failing a large number of students . . . it is failing dedicated teachers as well. (Kearns and Doyle, 1988, p. 32)

Close analysis of the reform story shows first-wave reform was the reform response mounted by the administrators and the leadership group within the educational structure in conjunction with elected representatives, the legislators. Their goal was to make the organization more efficient and effective by monitoring both teachers and students more closely -- a solid managerial objective. However, in light of the fact that a second-wave reform now exists, it is obvious the first-wave agenda has been ineffective. The second-wave reform objectives are largely being generated by higher education policymakers (The Holmes Group) who are more tenuously connected to the organizational structure of the schools or by external policymakers (The Carnegie Foundation and individuals from business, teachers, and citizens from the larger society who authored *A Nation Prepared*). The agenda of this second-wave reform is aimed at fundamental change in the school organization, a fact which is clearly recognized by the major power stakeholders in the current organizational structure (Thomson, 1986; "New York Lawsuit. . .," 1987; Rodman, 1987; Shanker, 1990). In this second-wave reform analysis, the recognized school leaders -- the administrators -- are frequently depicted as the villains in the piece, contributing to the

schools' problems by fostering the development of low workplace commitment via inappropriate organizational actions (Chubb, 1988; Ashton and Webb, 1986). Because the goals of second-wave reform are challenging the status quo, it is critical that those goals be generated based on solid knowledge of what teachers' actual beliefs and perceptions of their organizational experiences and organizational leaders are. However, even a cursory examination of past educational reform efforts indicates that, generally, reform in education has most frequently been established without such knowledge (Callahan, 1962; Ravitch, 1983; Deal, 1986; Cuban, 1990). Therefore, if second-wave reform agendas are not to be discredited and viewed as unsuccessful, more information needs to be accumulated concerning how teachers actually view their organizations and their leaders in those organizations.

The Teacher Today

The recent shifting of the teachers' status from being a *cause* of the problem to being a *victim* of the system is a result of an accumulation of research findings which reflect several alarming trends in the teacher workforce. These findings clearly indicate both a decline in (1) teacher quality and (2) teacher workplace commitment. These declines are viewed as precursors to the development in teachers of the corrosive belief that teaching is not a critical factor in student learning and academic achievement. The

belief that teaching does not matter has been shown to have a direct relationship with lower achievement in students (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

The Issue of Teacher Quality

The need for increased teacher commitment, which second-wave reformers use to make their case for deep-structure change in the public schools, is fueled by a growing concern over both supply and quality issues in regard to the teaching profession (Wise, 1987; Theobald, 1987). Over the past decades, studies have shown that schools are unable to retain their most academically talented teachers (Lyson and Falk, 1984; Charters, 1970; Vance and Schlechty, 1982). The academic caliber of new teaching recruits, at least to the extent that it is revealed by measures of verbal ability, is considerably lower than a decade ago (Schlechty and Vance, 1983). The importance of this finding is linked to studies substantiating that the teachers with the highest verbal ability stand the greatest chance of helping students learn academically (Husen et al., 1978; Ekstrom, 1975; Gibson and Dembo, 1984). Yet not only can such individuals not be recruited into teaching, the teachers with those skills tend to defect from teaching at a disproportionately higher rate than those with low verbal ability (Mark and Anderson, 1985; Schlechty and Vance, 1983). Related findings also show that attrition in teaching most frequently occurs in the earliest career years among high academic ability recruits (Schlechty and Vance, 1983). Further, among those who stay in

teaching, teaching effectiveness seems to considerably decline after five years (Levin, 1970; Lortie, 1975; Summers and Wolfe, 1977).

Some evidence also indicates the quality decline in preservice teachers is most noted among the female recruits to teaching. Historically, teaching has been a female occupation, but the high-ability women who were always available in past decades appear not to be as readily available now (Schlechty and Vance, 1983; Darling-Hammond, 1984). In brief, then, individuals with the potential to make the greatest contributions to schools are electing not to teach in even greater numbers than in past decades; or, if they do train for teaching, they are the teachers who will defect earliest from teaching before they have invested large amounts of time and personal energy. Further, after five years in the field, the remaining teaching workforce as a whole appears to suffer a declining commitment to the dominant motivational goal of teaching: "promoting students' growth and development" (McLaughlin et al., 1986, p. 420). Clearly, these findings identify a pressing need to understand conditions and/or variable interactions under which teachers might either initiate, maintain, or renew commitment to the profession and the school organization.

The Issue of Workplace Commitment

A worker's commitment to his/her work task is closely bound to the concept of the worker's effectiveness (Hackman and Oldham, 1980). Of the many resources required for school improvement (as the second-wave

reformers clearly recognize), the most vital are the contributions of teachers' efforts, beliefs, and involvement in the overall mission of the schools. But the quality of teacher contributions is not only related to reforming school goals, it is ultimately the means by which most other vital resources are acquired by and for the school organization (March and Simon, 1958). For example, schools that reflect higher teacher commitment among their workforce are able to attract larger numbers of teacher applicants than schools with lower levels of staff commitment (Morris, 1980), and teachers with high levels of commitment to their organizational leaders will assist the organization in successfully weathering budget crises (Roberts, 1985). Clearly, the very survival of the organization depends on the commitment of these workers. Consequently, it should be a central objective of any administrative group in the schools to want to motivate teachers to both maintain and/or renew their commitment to make continuing contributions to the school's main goal of student achievement rather than to some competing endeavor or goal which may work in competition to the main organizational agenda (Rosenholtz, 1987, 1989).

Recently, however, research findings also show a sharp decline in workplace commitment by teachers. This decline has, in some cases, been linked to the managerial-aimed first-wave reform initiatives. Rosenholtz (1987) traced two first-wave reform initiatives -- minimum competency testing and career ladder plans -- and suggested that when poorly led and managed,

these initiatives actually resulted in waning workplace commitment on the part of teachers.

For more than a decade, research findings have accumulated to support the position that the organizational conditions under which teachers work have limited both their professional commitment to teaching and their commitment to the belief that student achievement can be fostered via the act of teaching (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Rosenholtz et al., 1986; Boston Women's Teachers' Group, 1983; McLaughlin et al., 1986). These studies suggest that many of the issues impacting teacher commitment grew out of a range of organizational issues involving the structuring of work, powerlessness, and isolation in the workplace in combination with the uncertainty involved in the act of teaching.

Rosenholtz (1987) identified teacher isolation and fragmentation of the teacher work role as two of the contributing reasons for Tennessee teachers to resist the minimum competency testing initiative of that state's reform program. In her investigation, she found teachers saying:

I think the morale of teachers is very low. The teaching load as far as book work, paperwork, is just weighing them down so heavily that they resent spending their time with paperwork and not actually teaching. If we had aides to help us, then we could spend more time teaching. Teachers just realize that there are not enough hours in the day, so many of us will bring stacks of work home, and I work almost every night until eight or nine o'clock, sometimes midnight, and that gets old after awhile. You have to enjoy what you're doing, and I do enjoy being with children, if I had more time to teach them instead of filling out reports. In the past I've always enjoyed teaching.

I felt that I helped in some way. Now there is so much other than teaching I am required to do. I guess I am just burned out. I am not looking forward to the fall. (Rosenholtz, 1987, p. 543)

Rosenholtz indicated that 60 percent of her sample complained of lower faculty morale as a result of the minimum competency reform initiative. The goal of first-wave reform to tighten the system and make it more accountable has, apparently, inadvertently helped erode teachers' beliefs in the efficacy of teaching.

Leadership behaviors and the managerial decision styles of individuals in positions of leadership also were frequently cited by teachers as issues that promote their sense of powerlessness in their workplace. This powerlessness appears to erode commitment to teaching even though teachers have the knowledge of how to teach effectively. A common thread through these investigations is mirrored in the following remarks by an elementary teacher:

That's the thing that really kind of aggravates me about education: we as educators are not treated as adults. I feel that the administrators still look upon us as being one of the children. So you teach elementary education, so you have an elementary education mind, and we can tell you just about anything and you will believe us. And at this point I would like to get into a situation where . . . I could be respected for *my* thinking as a person, as an individual, and I find that in this particular field, I'm not usually treated that way, and I resent it and I'm angered by it, too. (Boston Women's Teachers' Group, 1983, p. 265)

Many teachers also commented on how leadership behaviors among administrators tend to "infantilize" teachers (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Weiler,

1987). Roland Barth (1986), in exploring the relationship of the principal with the profession of teaching, commented:

The biggest problem besetting schools is the primitive quality of human relationships among children, parents, teachers and administrators. School boards infantilize superintendents; superintendents, principals; principals, teachers; and teachers, children. (p. 476)

A further issue which appears to complicate this problem of behaviors within the teacher-administrator relationship is the issue of gender. Research in women's studies suggests that women, due to differences in both educational and socialization experiences, do have a somewhat unique "way of knowing" (Belenky et al., 1986). As a result of these differences, some psychologists (Gilligan, 1982) have suggested that women have different expectations in relation to organizations and work experiences than men. Other researchers (Weiler, 1987) suggest it is the combination of the organizational powerlessness of women in the patriarchy of male principals which contributes to the sense of teaching being a "bitter" experience with little positive qualities to redeem it -- what Madeline Grumet (1988) labels "bitter milk."

Students of social systems recognize powerlessness as a major issue in alienation. Alienation in the workplace is usually described as a perceived lack of freedom and control on the job (Locke, 1976). Teachers who have directly experienced first-wave reform initiatives, such as the teachers in Rosenholtz's (1987) investigations concerning career ladders and minimum

competency testing, have noted an erosion of teacher autonomy in all areas of the school workplace including the individual classroom. This erosion of autonomy has resulted in a rising sense of powerlessness among some teachers. However, many teachers who have not been directly involved with the managerial-focused, first-wave reform objectives still cling to the traditional teacher perception that inside the individual classroom teachers hold a measure of autonomy and control over their work lives. This perception of teaching as being a primarily isolated, classroom-focused activity is, however, increasingly flying in the face of what is identified as best practice in the effective schooling research (Rosenholtz, 1989). This research suggests that effective schools support a shared governance model which requires teachers to be increasingly active in the school beyond the immediate classroom (Steadman, 1987). This redefinition of teaching (supported by second-wave reformers) presupposes that all teachers accept this view of their work. However, existing research does not show teachers supporting this view (Eisenhart et al., 1988). Policymakers' knowledge of how teachers currently perceive their work experiences is fairly ambiguous since the research in understanding how teachers view their organizational roles is fairly nascent. Researchers who have studied teachers have primarily focused on investigating teachers in relation to their experiences (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Cox and Wood, 1980; Rosenholtz, 1985). In matters outside the classroom, however, the literature shows most teachers feel a sense of inefficacy and

powerlessness which appears to erode their motivation to be committed to the goals of teaching and education and also erodes their willingness to be involved in the larger organization (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Zielinski and Hoy, 1983; McLaughlin et al., 1986; Dombart, 1985). The following teacher comment illustrates the mounting frustration teachers reflect about their overall workplace.

Take a look at the working world of the insider. You will find that it is not an atmosphere that nourishes visions. Though we teachers are numerous, we are virtually powerless. We affect none of the key elements in our working lives. For example, we have no control over class size or the length of the school day and class periods. We have almost no input into the form and content of the report cards. We do not select our schedules, grade levels or the buildings in which we teach. Indeed, we do not even control the time within our own classrooms, for we are slaves to the P.A., to notes from the nurse, from guidance, the librarian, the main office. We are often without the essentials, like paper and pencils and desks. In many buildings, janitors and secretaries control these. Acquiring a new pencil sharpener may involve stroking three separate egos and forgetting everything you ever read about reporting sexual harassment. Often, obtaining the basics interferes with teaching the basics. When individuals or groups lack the weight of power, it is easy to overlook them. They become, in Ralph Ellison's word, invisible. And so it is with teachers. (Dombart, 1985, p. 72)

As Rosenholtz (1985, 1989) has observed, teachers who feel professionally disempowered and inefficacious become disaffected, frequently absent themselves from work, and/or exit early from the profession. Ashton and Webb (1986) noted in their research that teachers with low teaching efficacy also tended to focus on other agendas rather than the tasks of teaching while

working; in conversations with colleagues, attention tended to be focused on poor working conditions and how one could improve these conditions rather than on teaching problems. These conversations concerning how the work organization is stacked against teachers tends to buttress their belief that any lack of teaching success is attributable primarily to external causes in the larger school community over which they have little or no control. And as they dialogue, according to Ashton and Webb (1986) and Rosenholtz (1989), colleagues convinced themselves that, when confronted by such overwhelming odds, no one can reasonably be expected to succeed. Ashton and Webb labeled this belief "universal helplessness," traced its origin to a low sense of teaching efficacy, and saw it as a primary reason why teachers who can teach effectively cease to try to do so.

Importance of Understanding Teachers' Inefficacy in Relation to Reform Efforts

Understanding the factors and interaction of variables which impact the crisis of teacher workplace commitment is clearly important if any workable agenda for school organizational reform is to be implemented. The need for reform in the schools is clearly shown by the increasing pressure external agents of change are placing on the schools. However, without a solid knowledge base established from an understanding of teachers' attitudes and beliefs about their work experience and their work supervisors, reform efforts designed to improve the school situation can, ironically, result in making

schools even more dysfunctional as work environments. Rosenholtz's (1987) preliminary data on the effects of first-wave reform initiatives supports this conclusion. Chubb (1988) argued that the chances of successfully implementing second-wave reform objectives are also bleak since current understanding of the complex interweaving of political and organizational agendas at work in the schools is inadequate, especially understanding the relationships involved between major stakeholders' power agendas. Former Secretary of Education William Bennett, indeed, has claimed that reform is not really taking place in the public schools; that vested interests have hijacked "the reform agendas or watered them down past recognition" (Beck and Springen, 1988, p. 57). Clearly, policymakers seeking to improve the schools recognize the validity of the following comment.

The issues most central to the health of the teaching profession and to long range quality of U.S. education have to do with the fact that competent teachers . . . indeed, some of our most talented teachers -- believe they can't, and thus won't, teach. Teachers who won't teach either leave the profession completely or resign themselves to going through the motions of educating children. Teachers who won't teach are symptoms of an ailing educational system. In fundamental ways, the U.S. educational system is structured to guarantee the failure of teachers. Ironically, a teacher can experience professional success, in terms of fostering student learning, but still feel a profound sense of personal failure because the experiences of teaching are frustrating, unrewarding, and intolerably difficult. (McLaughlin et al., 1986, p. 420)

In practical terms, then, a needed major research agenda involves a more explicit understanding of how teachers perceive their work experiences and their work supervisors (Bacharach et al., 1986). Instead of myopically focusing on sleuthing out supposed shortcomings of individual teachers and administrators, research needs to focus on understanding the relationships between and among different members of the public school workforce. A more thorough understanding of the work relationships in the school organization can only result in improved policy formation for structuring and managing school work so that the individuals who do the school's work can experience a greater sense of efficacy and worthiness in their labor.

Historically, organizational control was aimed at making the productivity of a system both more effective and more efficient while also addressing the professional individual worker's needs for empowerment and autonomy within his/her work role. Max Weber (1947) initially identified *the* critical dilemma of work organizations when he asked how one can control organizational participants so as to maximize their effectiveness and efficiency and yet keep at a minimal level their unhappiness that this need for organizational control inevitably produces in subordinates. Obviously, from the mere fact that a new second-wave reform agenda aimed at restructuring the school workplaces exists, it can be concluded that schools were, during the initial reform effort of the early 1980s, unsuccessful in resolving Weber's critical dilemma in a meaningful fashion. A critical goal for second-wave reform is that the

objectives of that reform effort be framed with adequate knowledge and critical analysis so as to not further aggravate the crisis in the schools in regard to teacher workplace commitment and motivation. And yet, a close analysis of the initiatives of second-wave reform must inevitably lead a critical evaluator to agree with Rosenholtz when she noted:

Most of the reform efforts have been subjected to too little critical analysis and even less evaluation. To make matters worse, interventions are apt to be implemented without the use of currently available knowledge about the teaching occupation -- knowledge that strikingly contradicts many approaches to school reform currently underway. (Rosenholtz, 1987, p. 535)

While this single study cannot address the entire range of issues within this dilemma, the goal of the study is to contribute some insight for understanding the teacher/administrator relationship as viewed from the teacher's perspective. Hopefully, this insight will help support the formation of more precise policy in the area of school change or teacher/administrator training and staff development experiences; thus, it will help foster the development of improved training and organizational work experiences for both teachers and administrators.

Major Problem of Study

The justification for the major problem of this study has been developed via an extensive review of the literature in education in the areas of teacher effectiveness, school effectiveness, and analysis and recommendations for reforming the schools. The researcher also investigated the literature in

organizational psychology and theory in the areas of job satisfaction and work commitment, and the changing roles of organizational leadership and followership. From this review, the construct of self-efficacy emerged as the major variable of interest. Research on self-efficacy in the field of education (Dembo and Gibson, 1985; Gibson and Dembo, 1984; Ashton, 1985; Ashton et al., 1983; Ashton and Webb, 1986) has tended to define teacher's sense of efficacy in terms of the major work responsibility of teachers -- obtaining learning achievement from students. This aspect of a teacher's sense of efficacy is called professional efficacy in this study. Fuller et al. (1982), however, have suggested that the individual work efficacy of a teacher might involve not only the teacher's perception of his/her capabilities in relation to instructing students, but also the teacher's perception of his/her capability to exercise influence in the larger school organization. Fuller et al. maintained this more comprehensive view of individual efficacy was especially important in understanding change processes in the schools. Fuller et al.'s expanded concept involving influence in the organization is called organizational efficacy in this study. The major problem of this study is to explore this expanded idea of teacher's sense of efficacy. Do teachers perceive themselves as being both professionally efficacious and organizationally efficacious? If so, do these different levels of efficacy influence a teacher's perceptions of his/her principal's leader behaviors?

The Construct of Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy -- the individual's belief in his/her capability to perform specific actions and obtain desired outcomes through personal mastery and efforts -- appears to yield important information about the variety of variables in organizations (Bandura, 1977a, 1977b, 1978). Ashton et al. (1983) concluded from their comprehensive investigation focused on teachers' sense of efficacy that ". . . efficacy offers educators and researchers a powerful organizing construct for directing future research and educational improvement" (p. 3). While the primary focus of research using the self-efficacy construct in education has focused on teachers and their sense of efficacy about teaching in relation to student achievement, researchers investigating self-efficacy from an organizational perspective have suggested drawing a distinction between organizational efficacy and performance efficacy (the equivalent of teaching efficacy) in the school workplace because of the nature of the school organization. Conger and Kanungo (1988) suggested that empowering professional subordinates inside work organizations inevitably means ". . . enabling [them] via motivating through enhancing personal efficacy . . ." within the organization (p. 473). They define empowerment of subordinates as follows:

. . . a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organizational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organizational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information. (Conger and Kanungo, 1988, p. 474)

Since second-wave reform agendas repeatedly emphasize increased empowerment of the classroom teacher in the larger school organization, it is important to understand if current teachers perceive themselves as having organizational efficacy.

Performance efficacy (or, as defined in this study, professional efficacy) covers the perceived efficacy a worker would have performing his/her own work tasks independent of social and political interactions of other staff members in the school organization (Fuller et al., 1982). Weick (1969) has argued that in loosely coupled work systems (like the current school organizations), the individual teacher can choose to remain isolated organizationally and focus almost totally on the classroom aspects of teaching. In a study of elementary teachers, Lortie (1969) established that the typical teacher believes the pursuit and achievement of desired work outcomes is more consistently rewarded within the classroom rather than in the larger external organizational world beyond the classroom; consequently, the classroom arena becomes the teacher's primary work concern and seeking an organizational role beyond the classroom is neglected. Such organizational isolation is well-established in education literature (Zielinski and Hoy, 1983; Forsyth and Hoy, 1978; Bishop, 1977; Little, 1982). Teacher beliefs about preferred work experiences show they are most positive when the task involves direct instructional contact with students in the classroom. Conversely, they are least positive toward work activities, such as curriculum

development, record keeping and testing programs, and other management activities which do not directly interact with student instruction and learning (Eisenhart et al., 1988). Yet, as noted earlier, current restructuring agendas in the schools advocate administrators seeking to involve teachers in these less-preferred work arenas.

Organizational efficacy refers to an organizational actor feeling empowered in the organization beyond his/her immediate work setting -- the classroom. An organizationally efficacious teacher would feel able to gain desired outcomes both for his/her classroom and the larger school structure via influencing another person in a higher level of the organization (Fuller et al., 1982). Through faculty councils, union committees, community activities, and interpersonal relations with work superiors, for example, a teacher can develop varying levels of influence within the organizational structure, thus developing a sense of organizational empowerment and efficacy. This sense of efficacy would be (to some degree) separate from the sense of professional efficacy a teacher may derive from his/her dealings with his/her students. Fuller et al. (1982), in defining organizational efficacy, emphasized that "while a school actor may feel efficacious when interacting with other individuals in her same level, we emphasize interaction across structural levels due to our interest in organizational change and resilience" (p. 9). For this study, the distinction of a subordinate influencing a superordinate across organizational

levels was of value in developing the conceptual framework of professional and organizational efficacy.

The distinction between performance or professional efficacy and organizational efficacy also appears to be a valuable one in light of the findings of Ashton and Webb (1986) that performance, or as they phrase it, "teaching efficacy," is influenced by organizational structures. Ashton et al. (1983) also noted that conditions in the schools -- professional isolation, the uncertainty of teaching, and feelings of powerlessness and alienation -- made it difficult for teachers to maintain a high level of teaching efficacy (i.e., professional efficacy) in the classroom. They concluded that "major contributors to teachers' sense of inefficacy are organizational and structural" (p. 35). However, in their study of teachers' sense of efficacy, they drew limited distinctions between the concepts of organizational and performance or professional efficacy. Following the established pattern of self-efficacy studies in school settings, Ashton and Webb (1986) focused on the performance or professional efficacy aspect of self-efficacy despite Bandura's (1986) suggestion that self-efficacy involves many factors since self-efficacy arises from both a cognitive and an affective appraisal of one's capabilities and is of a situation specific nature.

Bandura (1982), who originally articulated the conceptualization of self-efficacy in clinical settings, has also indicated that self-efficacy affects one's choice of settings and activities, effort expenditure, and the initiation and

persistence of coping efforts in face of obstacles. Bandura (1977a) maintained that efficacy expectations can influence an actor's choice of environment. As a result of Bandura's findings, one can hypothesize that a teacher with high organizational and professional self efficacy might seek a new responsibility that offered increased challenge and a wider range of responsibility, such as peer supervision, or greater recognition and pay (both typical reform-focused activities). However, a teacher with low organizational efficacy but high professional efficacy might choose either to remain within the status quo of the classroom or elect to support only those change initiatives which focused on instructional improvement. In addition, a teacher with low efficacy in both domains might be resistant to all change initiatives and focus on either stress and burnout issues (if s/he was experiencing inefficacy as a result of personal inefficacy) or on emphasizing how "out-of-control" a teacher's existence is both in the performance and organizational areas (if s/he was experiencing inefficacy from a low general teaching sense of efficacy). Likewise, a teacher with high self-efficacy organizationally might respond positively to persuasive and directive leadership behaviors which challenged the teacher with new tasks since this teacher would feel enabled, via his/her high sense of efficacy in the organization, to influence the decision making of the principal in relation to these tasks. Conversely, a teacher with a low sense of organizational efficacy might respond negatively to such behaviors and prefer a more low-key, less directive set of leader behaviors

which supported the status quo and increased the teachers' sense of safety in the organization. In light of these interactions, a need exists to explore the two domains of self-efficacy in the educational workplace -- organizational and performance or professional efficacy -- in order to investigate how teachers who are efficacious in one domain and not the other or who are efficacious in both domains or in neither of the domains perceive aspects of their work experiences and the behaviors of their immediate supervisor.

The Variable of Leadership

The development of self-efficacy is fostered, according to Bandura (1982), by four information cues. His research identified these cues (from most to least influential) as: (1) inactive mastery, (2) vicarious experiences, (3) verbal persuasion, and (4) physiological arousal. Bandura (1986) has indicated that a sense of efficacy can come from vicarious experiences of observing similar others (i.e., co-workers, other teaching professionals) who perform successfully on the job. During staff training, modeling techniques often are used to empower workers. Very frequently, a principal's positive behaviors will enable subordinates in schools to believe they can mimic such behaviors or, at the very least, make some incremental improvement in their own behaviors and so be more organizationally effective. Bennis and Nanus (1985), in their study of leaders, traced how William Kieschnick, president of ARCO, learned to be a risk-taker in leadership situations through the modeling of leaders under which he had worked. While vicarious experience

is not as effective as inactive mastery in improving self-efficacy, Bandura (1986) stated modeling effects can have a significant impact on efficacy expectations.

People convinced vicariously of their inefficacy are inclined to behave in ineffectual ways that, in fact, generate confirmatory behavioral evidence of inability. Conversely, modeling influences that enhance perceived self-efficacy can weaken the impact of direct experiences of failure by sustaining performance in the face of repeated failures. (Bandura, 1986, p. 400)

Bandura (1986) has also indicated that the power of verbal persuasive influence is an important source of individual self-efficacy beliefs. However, according to Bandura, the following types of information affect the magnitude of the effect of verbal persuasion: credibility and expertness of the source, consensus among multiple feedback, and familiarity the source has with the task demands of the worker. For example, a leader's behaviors might be viewed as persuasive input and increase the subordinate's sense of self-efficacy; yet the level of the affect of that persuasion would be dependent on the subordinate's perceptions of the leader's foundation for legitimacy as a leader, such as expertise, visionmaking skills, and trustworthiness. Therefore, an individual of high efficacy in either the performance or organizational domains of efficacy might have a different perception of a leader's behaviors in relation to his/her expertise and trustworthiness than an individual with low self-efficacy in either the performance or organizational spheres of efficacy; consequently, their responses to the leader's persuasive role might be

different (Gist, 1987). Yet, the power the leader has via verbal persuasion was clearly stressed by Bandura (1986) when he noted: "People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master given tasks are likely to mobilize greater sustained effort than if they harbor self-doubts and dwell on personal deficiencies when difficulties arise" (p. 400). Clearly, the influence that leadership behaviors might exert on subordinates' sense of self-efficacy and, conversely, how a subordinate's level of efficacy might impact his/her perception of a leader's behaviors, are areas needing further investigation.

Currently in educational research, the majority of efficacy research has focused on the performance domain of efficacy and on identifying characteristics, both in the classroom and the larger organization, which could enhance or influence the development of teachers with a high sense of performance efficacy (Ashton and Webb, 1986; Dembo and Gibson, 1985; Grecas and Schwalbe, 1983). However, a need also exists to examine how subordinates who identify themselves as efficacious on both or either of the two hypothesized domains of self-efficacy in the work environment may differ in their perceptions of work experiences and preferences concerning leaders from those who identify themselves as inefficacious in both domains or in either of the two domains of self-efficacy. This study provided an opportunity to examine the relationship between organizational and performance efficacy of

a subordinate and to discover if it affected the subordinate's views of the leadership behaviors of his/her principal.

Statement of the Problem

This research sought to determine if a teacher's sense of performance or professional and organizational efficacy affected the teacher's perception of his/her principal's leadership behaviors and his/her "zone of acceptance" of unilateral decision making by that principal. The independent variables were as follows: (1) organizational efficacy, (2) performance efficacy, (3) gender, (4) years of experience, and (5) size of school district in which a teacher was employed. The dependent variables of interest were subordinate's perceptions of the leadership behaviors of their principal and their professional zone of acceptance of their principal's unilateral decision making.

General Questions to Be Answered

The following general questions were addressed in this study:

- (1) Were there teachers whose sense of efficacy focused on organizational concerns rather than instructional concerns?
- (2) Was the level of performance and organizational efficacy of teachers independent of teachers' gender classification?
- (3) Was the level of performance and organizational efficacy of teachers independent of the years of teaching experience of the teachers?

- (4) Was the level of performance and organizational efficacy of teachers independent of the size of the school work organization in which the teacher is employed?
- (5) Did teachers at different levels of performance and organizational efficacy perceive their principal's leadership behaviors differently?
- (6) Did teachers at different levels of performance and organizational efficacy have different professional zones of acceptance of unilateral decision making by their principal?
- ✓ (7) Were there significant differences in teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors depending on the teachers' gender and level of performance and organizational efficacy?
- (8) Were there significant differences in teachers' professional zones of acceptance of their principals' unilateral decision making depending on a teacher's gender and level of performance and organizational efficacy?
- ✓ (9) Were there significant differences in teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors depending on a teacher's years of teaching experience and level of performance and organizational efficacy?
- (10) Were there significant differences in teachers' professional zones of acceptance of their principal's unilateral decision making depending on

a teacher's years of teaching experience and level of performance and organizational efficacy?

- ✓(11) Were there significant differences in teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors depending on the size of school organization in which the teacher was employed and the level of performance and organizational efficacy of that teacher?
- (12) Were there significant differences in teachers' professional zones of acceptance of their principal's unilateral decision making depending on the size of the school organization in which a teacher was employed and the level of performance and organizational efficacy of that teacher?

General Procedures

The procedures in this study included the following: appropriate identification of a population and subsequent sampling, a systematic method for measuring independent variables, and a systematic method for obtaining dependent variable information concerning leadership behaviors and teachers' zones of acceptance in relation to principals' decision making. An overview of these procedures follows with a more detailed discussion of the procedures occurring in Chapter 3.

