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The Impact of Texas High School Teachers' Perceptions of Culture on Their Intent to Stay or Leave from Their Position

Teacher attrition is a complex issue that schools and states consistently confront (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Gujarati, 2012; Sutchter et al., 2019). Nationwide, many school districts face a shortage of teachers, often creating demand that exceeds the supply (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). And, post-COVID, the issue has only intensified.

For example, in Texas, the percentage of teachers leaving the profession between the two years prior to COVID-19 hovered around 16% (Landa, 2023). This number drastically increased for the 2022-2023 school year following COVID-19 – to over 20% (Landa, 2023). Moreover, greater than a quarter of all first-year teachers left the teaching profession that same year (see Table 1).

Table 1

Longitudinal Texas Certified Teacher Employment and Attrition Rates by LEA

Year	Number of Teachers Employed	Overall Attrition Rate*	First Year Teacher Attrition Rate**
2017 – 2018	331,577		
2018 – 2019	333,160	16.04%	21.29%
2019 – 2020	335,657	16.22%	21.58%
2020 – 2021	335,962	13.92%	17.02%
2021 – 2022	336,546	17.00%	20.66%
2022 – 2023		20.88%	26.01%

* “Attrition represents teachers leaving an LEA that employed them in the prior year” (Landa, 2023).

** “First-year teachers are educators obtaining an initial, standard teaching certificate in an academic year and employed as teachers for the following academic year.” (Landa, 2023).

Adapted from “Teacher Attrition by LEA Size 2018-19 through 2022-23” by J. B. Landa, 2023, Texas Education Agency (<https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/educator-data/teacher-attrition-by-lea-size.pdf>). Copyright 2023 by Texas Education Agency.

Attrition can be a concern for any high school leadership, but leadership can be particularly impacted when teachers leave, given the complexity of course and program scheduling. This is particularly true in Texas high schools that are required to offer endorsements and pathways for students to graduate (Scott, 2014; TEA, 2019). The courses and program could vary widely, creating demand for teaching staff who were qualified to teach in specialized areas.

With attrition rates on the rise in Texas schools, hiring and retaining specialized staff has been increasingly challenging. A high school principal has little to no control over external causes of teacher attrition such as compensation family changes, or policy shifts (Podolsky et al., 2016). But principals do have a degree of control over the organizational culture and teacher workload, two factors that are related to whether a teacher will stay or leave the teaching profession (Podolsky et al., 2016).

Organizational Culture

Culture is the mechanism by which everyone on a campus either makes sense of their surroundings or finds conflict with their own beliefs (Marion & Gonzales, 2014). On a high school campus, this occurs within departments, during extracurricular activities, in relationships between all stakeholders, and during the year as a campus moves forward toward graduation. Many have good intentions to create a positive culture; however, it is the behavior of the leaders and other campus personnel that new staff members observe to determine if the culture is right for them (Stone & Heen, 2015).

Districts often measure organizational culture through climate surveys of staff with the information often used to determine staff satisfaction. District and campus leaders often use the information to improve practices in areas such as administrative support, campus leadership opportunities, student discipline and faculty relations. Although the surveys are likely informative, because they are limited to examining staff's level of satisfaction, they often do not specifically measure teachers' individual intent to leave or stay within the district or the profession at large. Measuring teachers' intent to leave or stay along with their perceptions of organizational culture will allow examination of the relationship between the two constructs to determine to what extent changes in organizational culture, over which principals have some control, may impact teacher attrition and/or retention.

Organizational culture is the conceptual framework that aids in understanding how culture influences one's intent. Definitions of organizational culture are vast, and can depend on the primary function or focus of a business, campus, or program. Marion and Gonzales (2014) state that "Culture...is a phenomenon that encompasses every element of the organizational life" (p. 259). To aid in clarifying between climate and culture, "*Culture* is how we *behave*, *climate* is how we *feel*," (Muhammad, p. 19).

The theory of organizational culture began in the business sector with Elton Mayo and his experiments at the Western Electric plant (Marion & Gonzales, 2014), when he determined that personal interactions with people had made an impact on worker productivity. The theory was then promoted in education by Halpin and Croft with their publication *The Organizational Climate of Schools* (1962). As organizations have different levels of members, leadership became a role connected to organizational culture. According to organizational culture theorist Edgar Schein "The only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture," (Schein, 1992, as cited in Marion & Gonzales, 2014, p. 276). He predicated that the success of organizations is a direct result of the leadership within the organization.

While organizational culture can be defined in multiple ways, Schein (2016) suggests that behaviors and climate are the two categories that can aid in understanding it. Within the behavior category, Schein offers multiple identification markers, such as group norms, expressed values, and a cultivated mission. The idea "we've always done it that way" is an often-heard phrase Schein points to as being an indicator of behavior. Schein identifies climate to be more about the feeling one gets when interacting with the organization. The category of climate has identifiers such as trademark skills, patterns in thinking, and a shared, internal vocabulary.

One's perception of culture determines whether they either identify with the organizational beliefs or they do not (Marion & Gonzales, 2014). Azjen (1991) developed the Theory of Planned Behavior, which connected people's beliefs and knowledge of their circumstances to what motivated their behavior. The more strongly people felt toward a topic,

the more motivated they were to take action. The three variables of Azjen's theory were the attitude one had toward the actionable step, the control one had over the action, and one's ability to handle the pressure of taking action (Azjen, 1991). For a teacher, this action would be their view of applying, their ability to say yes to a new position, and the "perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior" (Azjen, 1991, p. 188).

Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research was to investigate the connection between teachers' perception of organizational culture and teachers' intent to leave or stay. Teachers have been vocal about leaving their teaching positions; however, few connections have been made between the reasons why they intend to leave. This research focused on teachers' relations with other teachers, administrative decisions, teachers' perception of student discipline, learning/assessment, attitude and impression of their overall organizational culture in conjunction with their intent for remaining in their current position. While there are many political and societal elements that impact a teacher's intent to stay or leave, this research focused on local points a campus principal could control.

It is important to note this study focuses on intent, not behavior, which would be the actionable step of leaving. For the purposes of this study, leaving will be defined as leaving the position that the individual currently occupied.

This study aims to provide information to building principals on teachers' perceptions of culture and how this relates to a teacher's choice to stay or leave their position. Through the information gathered, a principal could be introspective to the culture on their campus and determine what cultural aspects are impacting their retention rate. This study canvassed high school teachers in Texas during May and June 2023, specifically when teachers are considering leaving or staying for the 2023-2024 school year.

Review of Knowledge of Action

Teachers frequently enter the teaching profession with idealistic goals and intrinsic motivation to make a difference in the world. Having a love of the content, being the catalyst for student learning, and witnessing student achievement led many teachers to enter the profession (Bennet et al., 2013; Curtis & Wise, 2012; Perryman & Calvert, 2020). Autonomy in the classroom, the ability to show creativity in the learning experience, and leading as a role model for students also determine why a person enters the profession (Bennet et al., 2013; Curtis & Wise, 2012; Perryman & Calvert, 2020).

Once in the profession, the statistics showed the rapid attrition rate of new teachers. Among all states, Texas averages one of the highest yearly attrition rates at approximately 20% (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). TEA collected statistics for first-year teachers in Texas over five years, and for the 22-23 school year, approximately 26% of these new teachers left their district after the first year (Landa, 2023). As a comparison, the attrition rate for first-year teachers for the 18-19 school year was approximately 5 percentage points lower, at 21.29% (Landa, 2023). In this same report, for veteran teachers leaving their positions, the attrition rate for the 22-23 school year was reported at 20.49%, which was 4.86% higher than the 15.63% reported in the 18-19 school year (Landa, 2023).

When teachers made decisions to leave their positions, each reason could be categorized according to level of control. Aspects that were outside of a district or campus's control included salary, state or national policies, and mandated testing and accountability measures (Ingersoll, 2001; Podolsky et al., 2017; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Ingersoll et al., 2016). Areas controlled at the local level included organizational culture, administrative support and student discipline (Ingersoll, 2001; Olsen & Huang, 2019; Weiss, 1999). At a time when retaining teachers is critical, a principal will likely need to look at the aspects they could control.

The culture on a campus influences job satisfaction, and therefore, motivates the desire to stay or leave (Johnson et al., 2012; Greenlee & Brown, 2009). On a high school campus, these markers of organizational culture are demonstrated in multiple areas. Collegiality will either provide or hinder job satisfaction (Johnson et al., 2012). Teachers develop perceptions concerning the administrative decision-making system, whether it is shared with other teachers or autonomously (Ingersoll, 2001; Liu et al., 2021). The systematic approach to student discipline is also important, as teachers perceive that it either supports their classroom management or it does not (Ingersoll, 2001). Finally, the specific approach to learning and assessment on a campus often has a common, shared vision between the teacher and the administrators to curb attrition (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). As Lencioni (2002) points out, one of the primary reasons to focus on organizational health is to reduce employee turnover.

Faculty Relations

Multiple aspects of relationships between faculty and administrators impact the sense of functionality teachers are seeking on a campus. Trust, or a lack thereof, could cause a teacher to close themselves off from those they did not trust or believe had their best interests in mind (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Strong communication is an important contributor to culture and to staff satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Recognition of student achievement within the staff develops collegiality, as it is important for teachers to be recognized for their skills by their peers (Petty et al., 2012; Podolsky et al., 2019). Studies have found that when a staff member is unified through their commitment to the vision of the campus leadership and develops strong professional and non-professional relationships, they are more likely to create a sense of forward movement and remain on the campus (Devos & Bouckenoghe, 2009).

Although studies have found that teachers' relations impact one's decision to stay, a study of secondary math teachers found that "colleagues would not be a factor in their decision to leave" (Curtis & Wise, 2012, p. 77). This impact could be due to the perception of positive or negative relationships. If the relationships were not positive, then teacher relations were not supportive of people to stay (Hughes, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

While these characteristics are possible on any campus, differences are noted between the culture of an elementary campus versus that of a high school campus. As Fuller et al. (2016) noted, elementary teachers often form more cohesive relationships within the staff and are traditionally smaller in staff number than high school faculties. These two groups also tended to differ in their disciplinary approaches, with high school teachers enforcing prescribed rules while elementary teachers negotiated better choices from their students (Tomal, 2001). Due to the time demands outside of the workday, this additional responsibility increases the opportunity for burnout, as the extra time involved often hinders work-life balance when an activity is in season (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). The complexity of coursework also demanded more time, which created a challenge for teachers (Aktas Ustun, 2020). The time required to complete a high

school teacher's job successfully causes teachers to support each other and value relationships with their colleagues, therefore, developing a support system necessary to remain motivated for the job (Bechter et al., 2021).

Administrative Decisions

An often-cited reason for teachers to leave the field was the level of involvement teachers have in the decision-making process of a campus (Curtis & Wise, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001; Shen, 1997). Teachers typically want a culture of shared decision-making with campus administration and to feel valued in their knowledge (Berry et al., 2021; Carter-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). One element identified by O'Reilly and Chatman (1996) in creating a healthy culture was shared decision-making, which allowed others to contribute to the decision-making process and experience ownership in the outcome (as cited in Marion & Gonzales, 2014). If campus administrators make decisions autonomously or without regard to their relationship with teachers, then this practice creates a sense of disinterest in teachers' voices.

Teachers want to be valued for their direct knowledge of students, time and responsibilities required of the job (Simpson, 2021). When administrators do not give teachers a voice in decisions, this can cause teachers to wonder if they are important to those in leadership. Teachers have first-hand knowledge of students and the time required to complete tasks, and when campus leaders pass over teachers' opportunities for ownership in planning, this can lead to job dissatisfaction (Curtis & Wise, 2012).

Student Discipline

A common reason teachers leave a campus is the handling of student discipline (Curtis & Wise, 2012; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001). Students can make poor behavioral choices, and the teachers' perceptions of an administrator's capabilities are based on success in changing the behavior. The difficulty with student discipline is that a campus with few discipline issues also has teachers who are successful in managing their classrooms, along with administrators who know how to reform poor behavior. The opposite situation is a teacher who perceives that campus administration does not support them in this area; however, the teacher's classroom management skills are not developed enough to address the poor behavior in the first place.

Teachers' perceptions of the administration's handling of student discipline are even more critical on Title I campuses, which historically experience higher teacher attrition rates (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). When teachers at low socio-economic, Title I campuses perceive a lack of a discipline plan, this perception causes them to leave and seek campuses which were either lower in percentage of Title I students or non-Title I campuses (Simon & Johnson, 2015). The rate of teacher attrition for lower socio-economic campuses is consistently higher than for non-Title 1 campuses (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019; Berry et al., 2021).

Learning and Assessment

Student academic growth is impacted when a positive culture of learning and assessment exists. Educational researcher John Hattie (2012) studied how nearly 200 factors impacted student learning, finding that the top two factors were connected to teachers' positive perceptions

of student learning. When these positive perceptions lead toward a healthy culture, “the professionals within it will seek the tools that they need to accomplish their goal of universal student achievement,” (Muhammad, 2018, p. 25).

An important aspect of the principal is how teacher attrition impacts student achievement. Educational law, such as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) (US Department of Education, 2024), have brought a higher level of scrutiny to learning in classrooms nationwide, and thus on principals to raise student achievement scores. As Ronfeldt et al. (2013) discovered, even moving teachers between grade levels can negatively affect student achievement. According to the same study, when consistency in instruction exists, student learning generally increases. While studies can point to higher teacher attrition in Title 1 schools (Simon & Johnson, 2015), a study by Johnson et al. (2012) found that “collegial relationships, the principal’s leadership, and school culture are the strongest determinants of student achievement growth” (p. 25).

For reasons personal to teachers, many work in education because of the autonomy they believe they can display when teaching lessons (Perryman & Calvert, 2020). The flexibility and creativity a teacher could use as the best method for instructing the class is important not only for student learning, but also for teacher self-efficacy (Petty et al., 2012). When teachers are given time to collaborate with their peers concerning curriculum and instruction, this self-efficacy generally grows even more and retention rates are higher among staff (Olsen & Huang, 2019).

Methodology

Thus, this study sought to determine the relationship between culture and teachers’ intent to stay or leave. The research questions for the study include the following:

1. How do teachers’ perceptions of faculty relations impact their intent to leave or stay?
2. How do teachers’ perceptions toward campus leadership/decisions impact their intent to leave or stay?
3. How do teachers’ perceptions of student discipline impact their intent to leave or stay?
4. How do teachers’ perceptions of learning and assessment impact their intent to leave or stay?

Research Design

Through an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, Texas high school teachers were studied through attitudinal measures to determine how their perception of organizational culture impacted their decision to stay or leave their current position. A survey was created to measure their perception of four areas of organizational culture and their intent to stay or leave their position. Following the survey, respondents were asked if they would like to be considered for an interview to discuss their responses in depth. The data from the study was used to quantify teachers’ perceptions of organizational culture, as well as their intent to stay or leave. The qualitative portion was to provide context of teachers’ experiences that lead to a decision to stay or leave.

In order to solicit responses from teachers in public small schools to large schools and rural areas to cities, a database of contact information was utilized. Multistage cluster sampling was used in for data collection, due to the size of the population to be sampled (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). In Texas, nearly all public high schools participate in the University Interscholastic League (UIL) competitive system for academics, sports, fine arts, and spirit

organizations (UIL, 2023). By utilizing the 2022-2023 UIL Academic Alignments for schools 1A – 6A, 163 schools were selected from across the state according to size classification, socio-economic status, and type of town/city in which they located to gather a broad spectrum of potential participants and to canvass an even distribution of teachers across all six sizes of campuses. Schools selected ranged in geographic location from Canadian High School, a rural campus in the Panhandle, to Brownsville Veterans Memorial High School, an urban campus on Texas' southern border, as well as Fabens High School in far West Texas to Newton High School, near the Louisiana border. High schools that claimed Title 1 status were used, as well as high schools in recapture districts. High school teacher email addresses were gathered from district websites that published their staff email addresses.

The Alliance for the Study of School Climate's (ASSC's) School Climate Survey was utilized because it focused on these four areas of culture (Schindler, 2022). Four of the eight sections in the original survey were selected to measure Faculty Relations, Leadership/Decisions, Discipline Environment, and Learning and Assessment, due to their direct reflection on the principal's control and teachers' practices, observations, and impact in performing their jobs. Permission was received from ASSC to utilize this survey.

The Turnover Intention Scale 6, or TIS-6, was developed to measure an individual's intent to stay or leave their current position (Roodt, 2004). This survey was developed from the Theory of Planned Behavior, and after validation of the tool, Roodt identified six questions which effectively measured intent and offered a shortened version, known as TIS-6 (Bothma and Roodt, 2013). Permission was received from Roodt to utilize this survey.

These two instruments were combined into one survey administered via the online Qualtrics platform. The survey also collected basic demographic information from participants, and each teacher was also asked if they would be interested in participating in a 15-minute follow-up interview, if selected to do so. The survey took participants approximately 20 minutes to complete.

Data Collection

Surveys were sent to over 6,700 teachers, and responses were collected during May and June 2023 with 522 submitted responses. After the survey was closed, any partial responses were removed, leaving 362 complete responses. Approximately twenty teachers volunteered to be interviewed for the qualitative portion of the research.

Through purposeful sampling, five participants were selected to be interviewed. Purposeful sampling was used to select participants with varied backgrounds to a comprehensive understanding in addition to the quantitative data (Creswell & Guetterman, 2018). The participants were selected based on the subject they taught and the demographic location of the school within the state.

The interviews were structured for the interviewee to describe their background demographics in education, then respond to four questions based on the four areas of culture and their intent to stay or leave, with an open-ended final question of their thoughts on teacher attrition/retention. Each question was designed to give context to the research questions. Interviews were conducted through Microsoft TEAMS video conferencing and transcribed through the TEAMS platform. The interviews were verified for accuracy with the interviewee and stored on a secure server.

Data Analysis

For the quantitative analysis, the survey data were analyzed by using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 29), and multiple linear regression analysis was used to analyze the relationship between teachers' perceptions of culture and their intent to stay or leave. Each question to culture's response was scored on a 5-point Likert scale, and none of the questions required reverse coding. For Likert scale scoring, 1 point was the best and 5 was the worst, therefore, low means indicated positive experiences while high means indicated negative experiences. The mean score of the survey's four culture sections was calculated for each participant, followed by calculating the overall mean for each of the five variables. The TI-6 survey asked teachers to rate their reactions to six questions on a 5-point Likert scale. Each person's score was totaled, with a minimum score of 6 and a maximum score of 30. Scores between 6 and 18 indicated a desire to stay, and scores between 18 and 30 indicated a desire to leave. Multiple linear regression analysis was then applied to calculate the relationship between the independent variables and the intent to stay or leave a teacher's position.

For the qualitative analysis, each interview was transcribed using the Microsoft Teams transcription capabilities, and the interview was checked before being sent to the interviewee. The interviewee validated the transcription and approved it for coding. The first portion of each interview was coded for demographic information, while the second portion was coded using values coding (Saldana, 2021). This method was utilized to explore the underlying values, beliefs, and attitudes the teachers had toward their perception of culture and their intent to stay or leave the profession (Gable & Wolfe, 1993; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The themes were then analyzed to enhance the statistical data analyzed from the survey.

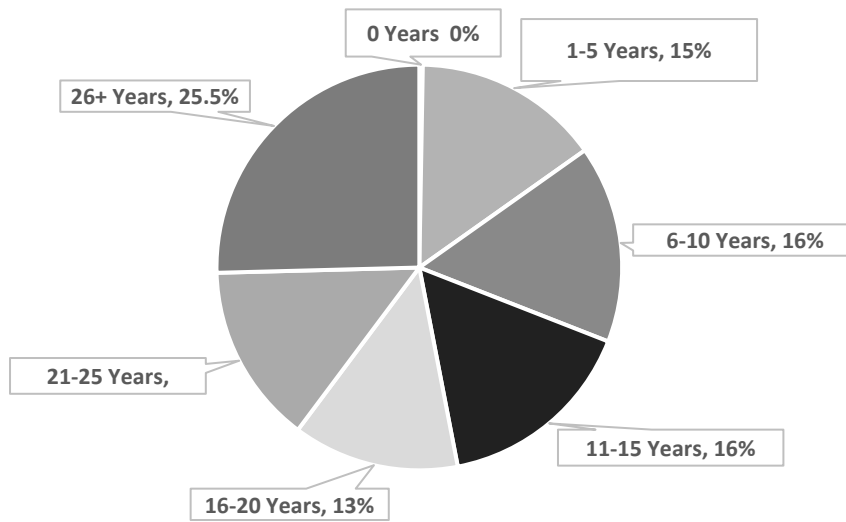
Results

Survey Demographics

Demographics of the respondents ($N = 362$) showed that teachers across a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experiences provided answers to the survey. Teachers ranging in experience from completing a partial year to over 26 years responded (see Figure 1), as well as teachers across every subject area (see Figure 2). The respondents had a wide variety of educational experience, with 0.6% having an associate's or technical degree, 53.6% having a bachelor's degree, 42.3% having a master's degree, and 3.6% with a doctoral degree. Data showed that 82.5% of the teachers had taught on 1-5 campuses thus far in their careers, with a severe drop off for those who had taught on 6 or more campuses.

Figure 1

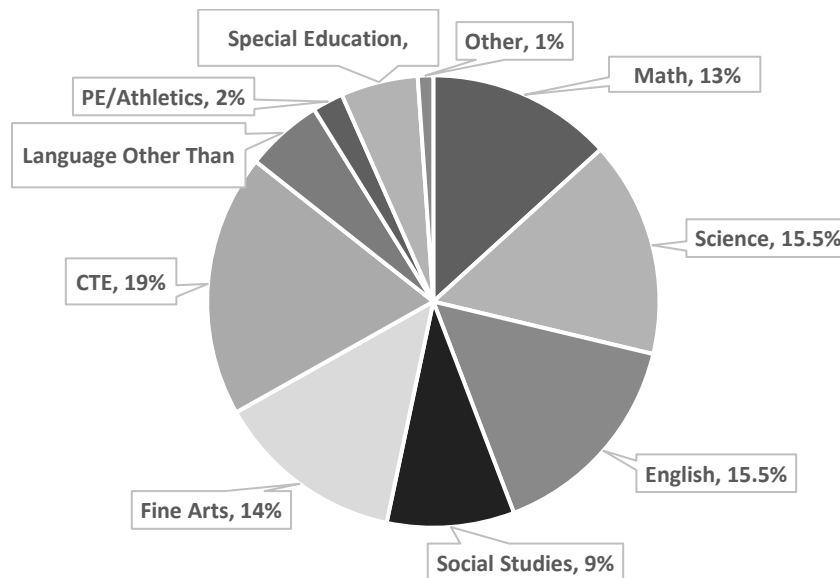
Respondents' Years of Experience



Note: n=362

Figure 2

Respondents by Certification Area



Note: n=362

Quantitative Results

The TIS-6 survey asked participants to self-reflect on their perceptions of self-worth and fulfillment from the work they do. From among the respondents ($N=362$), 195 (54%) scored between 6 and 17 on the TIS-6 survey, indicating a likelihood they would stay in their positions. The lowest possible score for the TIS-6 was 6, indicating a few respondents ($n=3$) were extremely satisfied with their perception of the work they do within the context they teach. Respondents ($n=144$; 40%) who scored between 19 and 30 were likely to leave their positions. The highest possible TIS-6 score was 36, however, no individual participant scored higher than 30. This suggests that no one found complete job dissatisfaction in their position. There were respondents ($n=23$; 6%) who scored 18, indicating they were not committed either way to leaving or staying.

Visual comparison of each of participants' data for the four independent culture variables with the TIS-6 intent to stay or leave supported these statistics (see Table 3). The lower the mean score for the independent variables, the more satisfied the teacher was with that specific cultural aspect. The mean score for each category was an average of 8 – 10 questions per category, and the figures show that very few people averaged below 2 or above 4.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Independent and Dependent Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skew	Kurtosis
Faculty Relations*	2.62	.74	0.47	0.11
Administrative Decisions*	2.89	.93	0.17	-0.66
Discipline Environment*	2.77	.77	0.15	-0.04
Learning & Assessment*	2.71	.77	0.38	0.38
TIS-6**	17.13	6.26	0.34	-0.88

*based on Likert-scale score of 1-5

**based on a summative score range from 6-36, with scores between 6-17 indicating intent to stay, scores between 19-36 indicating intent to leave, scores of 18 indicating neutrality in leaving or staying

Statistical significance demonstrates a variable's meaningful measure in research, and the meaningful measure totals 100%. The overall regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 357) = 59.794$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .401$. Together, the four independent variables accounted for approximately 40.1% of the 100% of reasons that impact of teachers' intent to stay or leave. As seen in Table 4, administrative decisions (B) were a statistically significant predictor of a teacher's intent to stay or leave and was the strongest predictor of a teacher's intent to stay or leave. Student discipline, learning and assessment, and faculty relationships were not statistically

significant as predictors, meaning while they might seem important, they are not always a clear indicator of intent.

Squared structure coefficients ($r_s(r_s^2)$) gave each variable full credit for its impact on teachers' intent. The shared variance between an individual variable and the predicted measure of the dependent variable ranged from .59 to .96. According to Cohen's (1992) effect size guidelines, all four predictors had large effect sizes. Administrative decision had the largest effect size at .96, which indicates that almost 100% of the dependent variable prediction could be attributed to administrative decisions.

Table 4

Unstandardized and Standardized Regression Coefficients and Structure Coefficients for the Multiple Regression Analysis

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	$r_s(r_s^2)$
Intercept	3.49	1.03	-	-
Faculty Relations	-0.06	0.61	-0.01	0.66
Administrative Decisions	3.33	0.47	0.50*	0.96
Student Discipline	0.98	0.65	0.12	0.79
Learning & Assessment	0.55	0.59	0.07	0.59

* $p < .001$

Relationship between the intent to stay or leave with each of the four predictors yielded different outcomes (see column *B* in Table 4). Faculty relations had a near-zero, but negative relationship as shown by the beta values with the intent to stay or leave, which meant that as the relationships improved, teachers were slightly more likely to leave. Although this seems counter-intuitive, the data shows that even if a teacher has great relationships with their co-workers, it is likely not enough to retain them (Curtis & Wise, 2012; Hughes, 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Administrative decisions had a positive relationship with the dependent variable, demonstrating that when teachers have positive perceptions of administrative decisions, it generally impacts the intent to stay. Student discipline also had a positive correlation in that when administrators enforced student discipline as teachers had been charged to do, teachers tended to stay in their position. The learning and assessment relationship had a slightly positive relationship. This could be because teachers have accepted the normalization of accountability in their classrooms, or that this point does not register as a motivating factor for teachers. It should be noted, however, that it is likely that all independent variables are intercorrelated given the large squared structure coefficients.

Qualitative Analysis

The purpose of the qualitative interviews was to provide context to the survey, and values coding was used to analyze the interviewees’ responses. Values coding is used to identify “a participant’s values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview” (Saldana, 2021, p. 167). Several common themes emerged which supplemented the multiple regression results. These themes were the Importance of Education, Teacher-focused Growth, Support from Fellow Teachers, and Consistency in Student Discipline (see Table 5). The interviewees responded with examples and situations concerning values they believed to be important. These values were either exhibited or lacking in their current culture, and influenced their perception of whether they would stay or leave their present position. Pseudonyms were used to maintain anonymity.

Table 5

Codes and Themes by Research Question

Research Questions	Codes	Themes
Faculty relationships impact on intent to stay or leave	Enjoyed working together	Supportive fellow teachers
	Intrinsic motivation	
	Authentic	Non-supportive fellow teachers
	Challenges with staff personalities	
Administrative decisions impact on intent to stay or leave	Lack of similar work ethic among teachers	Teacher-focused growth
	Leadership opportunities for veteran teachers	
	Growth opportunity through courseload	
	Mentor younger teachers	Lack of Respect
	Supportive scheduling for younger teachers	
	Gives autonomy	
	Told not asked	
	Favoritism	
	Student failure is not an option	
	Politics on staff	
	Support not given according to need	
Not listening		
Lack of follow-through		
Student discipline impact on intent to stay or leave	Discipline corrects behavior	Limited student discipline issues
	Community & campus expectations match	Inconsistent enforcement of policy
	Generations of family in town	
	Follow through from the administration	
	Accountability & expectations	
	Stereotyped student discipline	
	Handling severity of behavior	
	DAEP placement versus ISS days	
	Inconsistency among staff	
	Setting expectations for classroom management	
Learning and assessment impact on intent to stay or leave	Address learning first	Administrative attitude toward academics
	Admin attitude toward lower-level courses	Academic supports
	Change in course load	
	Lack of importance to students	
	Lack of SPED documentation system/legality	
	Lack of quality resources	
	Lack of academic emphasis	
	Academic standards do not match administration	
Excessive chances for student learning		

Each of the interviewees noted the value they placed on their role in education, understanding why learning was important, and the intrinsic reward they received. Positively impacting students' lives was the primary reason the interviewees were staying in education. Victoria, a sixth-year history teacher from South Texas, stated, "I'm heavily invested in these kids succeeding." Another reason for staying in education was the noble calling of the profession. Isaac, a twelfth-year history teacher from West Texas, noted, "it's a calling in my mind, you know, no matter how rough things get, education is always been a passion of mine."

The interviewees valued supportive fellow teachers when discussing faculty relations, although it was not a strong predictor. All five perceived that working with their fellow faculty members was a positive influence. Tammy, a twenty-fifth year math teacher from the Panhandle, noted, "My campus right now, they're there 10 minutes early because they want to be. They want to be in the halls, they want to greet kids. They're excited to greet kids. It's reignited (me) wanting to be a teacher, to be on a campus that's authentic." Justin, a fifth-year English teacher from Central Texas, stated, "my colleagues are supportive and they don't interfere [with my plan for teaching]." Victoria shared, "We're solid. We stick up for each other. We watch out for each other."

In the area of administrative decisions, which was statistically significant, four interviewees expressed that they valued the autonomy given from their administration. Each spoke of the either positive or negative occurrences, due to the level of input they received from their campus administration. For those who spoke positively, the participants endorsed campus administrators' use of the teachers' individual interests and self-efficacy. Tammy stated, "One of the things that I kind of have a passion about is new teachers. I love teachers and every campus I've been at, I kind of adopt the new teachers, and I mentor." Justin shared "the leadership listens and they give me autonomy to do what I need to do in the classroom. They trust me."

For those who spoke negatively about their campus leadership, they reflected on the occurrences that were not valued equally by the administrators and the teachers. The values that were lacking included respect for teachers as professionals, lack of follow-through, and trust. Isaac relayed his concerns, "when politics got involved and you know, you got nepotism that's also involved with the decision making, it just makes for rough things." When he was interviewed for this research, he had accepted a position in another district, "I'm leaving and (will) just give another administrative team a chance." Jason, a first-year science teacher from East Texas, shared his concerns about the conflict between his own standards for accountability and his campus administration's decisions, "I did have a little bit of some serious frustrations with administrative decisions regarding what it takes to pass and the fact that they have very different standards for it than I do." In the end, he chose to stay because there was a leadership change. "I think that might be a good thing and I'd like to see what happens with it," he stated.

While student discipline was not a statistically significant factor in why teachers chose to stay or leave, the interviewees valued consistency in handling discipline issues from the campus administration. Isaac, Tammy, and Justin were at high school campuses with less than 500 students, and all three commented that the challenge of student discipline is that everyone is connected, and there are politics involved in enforcing strong disciplinary consequences. When the discipline policy was not consistent, trust between teachers and administration was lost. Isaac stated, "Teachers want to have that trust with their administration about you know what's right, know what you need to do." Victoria and Jason were at campuses with over 2500 students enrolled, and noted different difficulties. Victoria observed the importance of looking at all demographics of students who receive referrals, including free-and-reduced lunch compared to

those who do not qualify, implying an imbalance between socio-economic statuses. “Just go to the ISS (In-School Suspension) room, look at the kids you see in there,” she stated. Jason described times when he could handle student behaviors versus when he felt the administration should be available. He had a plan for handling a disruptive student in his class, however, “on the other hand, if I have a student come by and kick my door or shout profanities at me through the door and then walk away, that's (going to) be something that I need to get administration.”

Learning and assessment was not a strong predictor in the quantitative analysis, and when asked about this aspect, this was the least discussed topic from the interviewees. Tanya shared her observations of a first-year teacher struggling with the responsibility of being the sole Algebra I teacher because of the accountability ratings associated with it. Isaac spoke of the lack of documentation in Special Education at his current campus, causing him to question if he was following the legal requirements for Special Education and Section 504 students.

The interviewees were each asked of their intent to stay in their position or leave. Four of the interviewees stated they would be staying in their positions, each emphasizing one important factor in their decision. Victoria felt that she could provide encouragement and be an advocate for her students, although she was looking for the right opportunity to leave. When she left, it would be because of an opportunity for better administrative support. Tammy had experience in multiple districts and felt her current district was the right fit for her. She recognized that every district and position had issues, however, what she was experiencing could be overlooked to work on a campus that supported teachers. Jason’s campus had a new administration; therefore, he was willing to stay and give the new principal a chance to change issues. Justin was given a large amount of autonomy in the classroom, which caused him to stay in his position. The only interviewee to express intent to leave was Isaac, who cited that administrative decisions had motivated him to seek another opportunity.

Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of Texas high school teachers’ perception of culture and their intent to stay or leave their position. The results of this research are aimed at assisting principals with reexamining their view of organizational culture and its’ connection to their attrition rate.

Through this research, organizational culture was shown to likely impact a teacher’s intent to stay or leave (Johnson et al., 2012; Greenlee & Brown, 2009). The regression model showed that 40.1% of the variance in teachers’ decisions to stay or leave can likely be attributed to organizational culture. Perceptions, both positive and negative, motivate one’s intent to begin looking for a new position or stay in the one they currently have (Azjen, 1991).

This research found that the administrative decisions a principal or campus administration makes have the most impact on whether a teacher decides to stay or leave a position, as calculated in the multiple regression analysis and supported through the interviews. The research also found that faculty relationships are not as predictive as compared with other aspects of a organizational culture on whether a teacher stays or leaves. This investigation concludes that no matter the strength of the faculty relationships, if the campus leadership is not meeting the teacher’s expectations, then the teacher is more likely to leave (Curtis & Wise, 2012).

Of all the indicators of teacher retention that a campus principal can control, developing shared decision-making practices and acknowledging the voice of the faculty in administrative

decisions has been shown to have the greatest relationship with teachers' intent to stay or leave (Berry et al., 2021; Carter-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). While the other areas were not as impactful as administrative decisions, as shown in the regression and structural coefficients, there were informative data points that could help a principal make small adjustments to improve teacher perceptions on his/her campus.

From these results, principals can take small steps to improve teachers' experience with administrative decisions. Including teachers in interview panels for new staff members or including teachers who will share a space with the new teacher gives a veteran teacher a voice in who will join the campus faculty. It would be easy for a principal to make a hiring committee for time saving purposes, however, including a variety of teachers will also gain trust, as this action negates the assumption of favorites. Principals can also give anonymous mid-year and end-of-year surveys to gather feedback. A principal's presence in classrooms and interacting with students and staff can also provide an opportunity for conversation, which is foundational for relationships.

In the field of organizational culture and education, there are several possibilities for future research. Each area of culture has strands that could be identified and researched to aid in lessening teacher attrition.

1. What are other administrative decisions/specific data points a principal can leverage for improving teacher perception of involvement in the decision-making process?
2. What is the foundation that a principal needs to establish for faculty relations to function well, and when does the time spent on faculty relations become null?
3. How can a high school staff calibrate their classroom management beliefs to impact teacher retention?
4. How can a principal better align the campus's values of learning and assessment when interviewing potential candidates?

Teacher attrition continues to be an important issue for administrators. With the Texas teacher attrition rate rising to 20.88% post-COVID, retaining faculty becomes more imperative than before (Landa, 2023). While not all teachers leave due to job dissatisfaction, it is never easy for a principal to replace a teacher.

The organizational culture of a school provides context for teachers to make connections and creates functionality for the staff. While there are multiple aspects of culture, this research aimed to provide information for principals in four of those areas.

There are aspects of the teaching profession that a principal cannot control, however, there are variables within one's control that can be influential in retaining teachers. The culture of a campus can either afford teachers a place to find commonality and opportunity, or their experience encourages them to look for another position. It is ultimately the decision of the campus leader how to value the controllable, positive factors placed on the culture and the importance of teacher retention.

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