RUNNING HEAD: A Study of the Effect of Classroom Immediacy

A Study of the Effect of Classroom Immediacy as a Predictor of Job Satisfaction

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In a society where the number of satisfied educators is rapidly decreasing (Peterson, 1985; Schwab, 1983), as is the public opinion of the education system as a whole (Bowsher, 1989), one must assess the context of how and why teachers teach. It stands to reason that a teacher unhappy in a classroom would have a difficult time separating those feelings from the situation. Persisting discontent regarding factors such as poor resources, conditions, and high class enrollment lead to burnout. Once burnout sets in, job dissatisfaction is not far behind (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001). Once this happens, the said discontent would be perceived by, if not directed toward, students. As these students perceive the learning environment less positively, interest fades and expectations of gain and fulfillment decline; students begin to act out (Weber, Martin, and Patterson. 2001) and teachers grow even more resentful of their situation (Baringer and McCroskey, 1998).

If discontent is a self-fulfilling prophesy for unhappy teachers, is the same to be said of teachers happy or even ambivalent regarding their careers? To what extent does the situation affect the disposition, and vice versa? The goal of this study is to prove that the way a teacher relates to other teachers and students is directly proportional to the level of satisfaction within their school environment (Spector, 1997). Therefore, as teachers maintain a positive outlook toward their environment, the same positive outlook could be directed toward others. As that perspective grows more negative, so will the reactions thereto.

Job-satisfaction and immediacy must be evaluated separately before they can be

tied together. Similarly, several components exist within each which must be taken into consideration.

Immediacy is largely defined as the presentation and subsequent perception of warmth and liking (Teven, 2001; Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001). Positive teacher immediacy involves building personal relationships with students (Compton-Hall, 2002), as well as establishing a welcoming and friendly environment for learning (Adams, 2000). Negative immediacy creates a situation where teacher and student alike are not motivated to perform their respective tasks.

Job satisfaction is an element that has gained attention exponentially in the past thirty years (Ducharme and Martin, 2000). Defined as the degree to which people like their jobs, job satisfaction is the resulting perception building on the Social Exchange Theory, the concept of equity, and the subsequent repercussions when an equitable conclusion is not attained (Cole, Schaninger and Harris, 2002). Equity is the perception that costs equal rewards. In this case, equity would occur when a teacher perceived his/her gain (salary, recognition, support, etc.) to be equal to the currency of exchange (effort, time, labor, etc.). Dissatisfaction occurs when teachers perceive a difference in what they believe they should, as opposed to what they actually do, receive (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001; Lawler, 2001).

As with most feelings, job satisfaction is not a concrete effect of a single cause. It is composed of various elements whose importance undulates according to their perceived availability and value. Burnout, perception of leadership and other systems of support, role overload, role conflict, and role ambiguity are all proven factors thereof.

Burnout

Burnout is defined as occupational stress in teaching environments (Abbey and Esposito, 1986). According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), there are three components to burnout: depersonalisation (emotional distancing from those needing direct care resulting in apathetic attitude toward others), emotional exhaustion (fatigued feeling and lack of enthusiasm for work), and reduced personal attachment (the feeling that work results in nothing of any value). These feelings of victimization or helplessness do not discriminate between age groups. Teachers experience the same feelings with lack of supervisional support (Littrell and Billingsley, 1994). A teacher that is not directly aware of her stress level and burnout may display negative immediacy unwittingly (Sparks, 1983). Della Rocca and Kostanski (2001) contend that a burned out teacher loses the essential communication skills of involvement, charisma, and emotional warmth when dealing with students. They found such to affect learning and motivation, as well as student discipline. Burnout can exist on many levels--including the teacher and the student. Not all cases are extreme. However, if left unaddressed it can lead to extreme apathy, disinterest, and a decrease in classroom, as well as personal, effectiveness (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001).

Likewise, the amount of attention that the teacher is able to devote to one student in a class of thirty is drastically less than a classroom that has fifteen students. As a teacher has fewer divisions of attention, his/her relaxation will increase, stress will logically decrease, and the perceived likeability will improve (Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001). Finn (2002) found that teacher morale increased dramatically in smaller classroom settings. Similarly, fewer disruptions occur in the smaller settings, which allow a teacher to spend more time in instruction and actual interaction and less on

classroom management. The study also found that students' engagement in learning was increased as were aspirations for college. Biddle and Berliner (2002) found that the behavioral and motivational benefits of smaller classes, if they occur early in a student's academic career, are learned and manifested later, even in standard size classrooms. Au (2002) found that over crowded schools (primarily urban) had a higher level of teaching dissatisfaction. She found that larger schools had a higher rate of teacher turnover because many teachers would transfer to a smaller, more personal setting once tenure was established.

Furthermore, the consistency of burnout is relative to the enjoyment taken in teaching (Oakes, Franke, Quartz, and Rogers, 2002). Factors such as how well prepared a teacher feels to handle the stress of a classroom, and how well supported the teacher feels within his/her role as instructor were found to affect teaching enjoyment (Au, 2002). A program instituted to train teachers revealed a much lower turnover rate in teachers graduating from more involved training programs. Oakes, Franke, Quartz, and Rogers (2002) found that 90% of the 326 graduates they had monitored in a more rigorous program of learning were still teaching in urban communities five years later, rather than transferring to a smaller, more financially grounded school.

Support Systems

Social support and how teachers perceive the capability of their leaders/administrators are related to how secure teachers feel within their positions. Calabrese (1987) contends that female teachers experience more stress regarding leadership than males due to under representation on school boards and in other decision

making positions. According to research compiled by Skrla (1999), of public school teachers in the United States, females compiled 74.4 %. The almost overwhelming majority of teachers are female, yet nationwide, only 27% of administrative/leadership positions are filled by women (Young and McLeod, 2001). That percentage has only increased by 17, from 10%, in 1980 (Howard, 1980). However, the odds of a female teacher advancing from a teaching position to that of a superintendent were one in 825, while men held odds at one in forty-three. Similarly, school boards are filled with a majority of people who have never taught in a classroom. Members are individuals residing within the district (often maintaining full-time jobs and families as well) who have taken an interest in school politics (Hutchinson, 2002).

Why have so many women chosen the field of teaching? Inglehart, Brown, and Vida (1994) found that women often change their field of study in deference to a less competitive, less male-dominated field of study simply because they are tired of the competition for the top grades and subsequent recognition. The authors claim that competition might have a different meaning for males than females, and alters the outcome of performance between the sexes in competitive settings. Adkinson (1981) further stated that the lack of female administration is also due to gender stereotyping and role socialization. Women have been conditioned to perceive men as more effective in leadership roles. More women choose careers in teaching because it is a role which is not competitive across the sexes. Calabrese (1987) states that many women choose teaching because it allows them to frame their career around their children's school.

Furthermore, principal support plays a large part in how secure and/or happy a teacher feels (Littrell and Billingsley, 1994). Spector (1997) believed that the level of job

satisfaction is reflective of perceptions of good treatment—especially fairness and respect. Such support is crucial to reducing stress and burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981) by encouraging feelings of approval, recognition, encouragement, and by providing positive/constructive feedback (Mowday, Porter, and Steers, 1982). The teacher-supervisor relationship is central to the success of the teacher's work environment (Chamberlin, 2000).

Not all support comes from higher management, however. Interaction with coworkers, or lack thereof, also influences stress and burnout (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001). The way a teacher relates to students and other coworkers could be strongly affected by the individual sense of satisfaction within the school (Spector, 1997). In an average day, teachers have one period for parent/student conferences, meetings, some of which must be spent monitoring halls, cafeterias, common areas, and such. Another period is set aside for lunch. This is the only time for interaction with others in their profession. Social support has been identified as a buffer against stress on the job (Abbey and Esposito, 1986). Yet, teachers spend most of their day isolated from peers (Sparks, 1983). Similarly, this time away from teaching is structured such that little of it is available for grading assignments. What cannot be accomplished at school is taken home. As more time is spent working at home, dissatisfaction and resentment can arise from family members expediting the same sentiments from the teacher and leading to even more stress (Abbey and Esposito, 1986).

Roles

As the line between time spent at and away from work diminishes, role overload sets in. Calabrese (1987) states that the compulsion to teach stems from a higher

"predisposition to nurture" (p 229). As these working parents fulfill the needs of their children, they allow themselves to be exploited—accepting more work, stricter time limitations, etc. for smaller salaries. Regardless of sex, the salaries do not compensate for time spent working at home to stay caught up. As time spent working is time not spent attending to personal needs, stress compounds.

The more diminished the distinction between parent/spouse and teacher, the higher the likelihood that role conflict will occur. Role conflict is defined as an internal need to reduce tension by choosing between contradictory roles—a sort of situational prioritization (Rothwell, 2001). The subtlety of this phenomenon and the level of stress experienced are directly proportional.

The very role of an instructor has been reconceptualized. Teachers are no longer viewed merely as givers of fact. Now they are recognized as mentors, monitors and decision makers. Each must look at the available means of communication to find the most effective approach to the situation (Weber, Martin, and Patterson, 2001). Teachers must also be able to evaluate and react to progress and student perceptions. Instructors must take in and give out at the same time. Similarly, while the natural response is to gravitate towards pleasant stimulation and move away from things less favorable, teachers are expected to maintain a posture of being nonbiased (Baringer and McCroskey, 1998). The traditional perception identified teachers as carriers of information alone. Over the years that perspective has changed to recognize the role of decision making and negotiation for meaning, not just for themselves, but for each individual student (Chamberlin, 2000). Segal (1998) poses that teachers have to have an element of improvisational comedy in their repertoire. While the lesson plans may be

neatly structured and class time strictly regimented, a teacher cannot predict how a student will react to such. The teacher must immediately (and ideally positively) react to blank stares, non-responsiveness, and preconceived notions regarding both the teacher and the lessons.

Immediacy

The question of the effect and repercussions of student immediacy toward the teacher illustrates the role of a teacher as human one—prone to respond to a variety of influences both positive and negative. Immediacy is understood as both verbal and nonverbal communication (Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001). Verbal immediacy encompasses telling personal stories, encouragements, asking questions, etc., while nonverbal involves physical closeness, increased direct body and facial orientation, eye glaze, smiling and head nods, and frequent and animated gesturing (Chamberlin, 2000). The opposite of these aforementioned characteristics form negative immediacy. Studies show that students' positive ratings of learning, trust, willingness to talk, and motivation are affected by teachers' behaviors and how these behaviors are subsequently interpreted by students (Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001; Teven, 2001; Bainbridge Frymier and Houser, 2000).

Disposition and approachability are identified and perceived in terms of immediacy. The use of immediacy within a classroom is listed as of the utmost importance. The perception of affection for and from a teacher by a student has been shown as a good predictor of how well the student will do in that class. In a study by Teven (2001), the actions of a teacher rate highly. If a teacher acts in a way that is interpreted or received as distant, a student will not care to perform for that instructor.

The study looks deeply into the student's evaluation of a teacher and the outcome of their period of interaction. Teven finds that perceived caring is often associated with perceived cognitive learning in the classroom. Behaviors of immediacy are also directly linked to student recall and impact the motivation and subsequent learning (i.e., positive perceptions of immediacy yield positive results; negatively perceived behaviors lead to a negative outcome). The teacher's leadership skills are a matter of ethos—though not based on a single interaction. Instead, as time progresses and trust is built up, the student feels more comfortable in interacting with the teacher and fellow classmates. The question is therefore raised: to what extent would a single verbally aggressive behavior affect positive perceptions of immediacy? Would the so-called track record of an instructor be nullified by a slip of the tongue on a stressful day? Furthermore, Teven found that behaviors which translate negatively are further transcribed onto the perception of caring. The use of aggressive behaviors by an instructor relates to the student affect for the mentor, affect for the context, and affect for the recommended code of behaviors. Feelings of disengagement would ensue and performance would decrease. Therefore, teacher effectiveness would decline.

Weber, Martin, and Patterson (2001), examined several factors affecting the type of exchange that occurs between a student and a teacher. Interest is a key factor according to the article. "Interest is what promotes long-term storage of information and motivation for learning" (p 74). The authors further speculate that students take an active role in activities in which they are interested, regardless of whether or not the said activities achieve a goal. Interest leads to motivation, motivation leads to action, and action leads to a sense of accomplishment. Also, meaningfulness in any setting is listed

as a key component of interest. If a task has personal meaning, the effort that goes into that task will be maintained until it is completed. If a person feels that an undertaking has meaning, it will have an impact, and the authors contend that the more impact an individual feels he/she will have, the more interest he/she will feel. This applies to both teachers and students. If a teacher does not display interest in the classroom, students will not either. Similarly, dissatisfaction with employment often spurs from feelings that nothing worthwhile results from labors (Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

Weber, Martin, and Patterson (2001) also look at the affect of trust in the student-teacher relationship. The issue of trust is addressed as a self-fulfilling prophecy. As the students feel that a teacher trusts them, they respect the teacher and seek to build upon that, thereby earning the trust of the teacher. Similarly, students are willing to accept discipline from the teachers they respected and honor their punishments as legitimate. However, if a teacher does not act in a manner that is perceivably respectable, little or no credence is given.

Adams (2000) looks at various elements of school misbehavior and the resultant punishment. By addressing the cause/effect relationship between student behavior to teacher reaction and vice versa, Adams identifies the various methods and successes/failures thereof. He looks at the Epp and Watkinson (1997) model of violence and victimization to broaden the category of student victims. He claims that any instance where a student is disadvantaged or prevented from learning qualifies as harm. By this definition, Adams contends that teachers often resort to using negative reinforcement against, or victimizing, students as a method of mass management. Through his research, he finds that schools are microcosms of the larger society. Violent societies largely

produce violent schools, while non-violent communities similarly produce generally peaceful schools. Adams poses reducing school size and consequently student-teacher ratios as a solution to the problem of school violence and student victimization. He credits Raywid (1997) for finding correlates of smaller schools, and therefore classes, with fewer behavioral problems, decreased student drop-outs, greater student participation, and continued academic achievement.

Punishment, or behavior that is perceived as extreme or unfair, will be more negatively received and could lead to further, more extreme misbehavior by students (Wilder, Flood and Stromsnes, 2001; Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001; Teven, 2001). Adams (2000) suggests that emotional, verbal or physical violence perpetuates further violence. Furthermore, there is no violence without a victim. Consistent feelings of victimization lead to feelings of helplessness and acceptance of fate—therefore student burnout.

Frymier and Houser (2000) attempt to identify the aspects affecting the interpersonal relationship between the teacher and the student. The first difference they point out is that of the time constraint present in this context which is not present in normal friendships. Teachers have a greater set of limitations from the very start in that the time they are allowed to spend developing a relationship must be divided into a class period and between each individual student. Frymier and Houser also seek to define the actual role of immediacy within a classroom. Differing from other studies, theirs focused on the perceived pattern of behavior in relation to comfort, and in turn to cognitive learning. They look at the communication between student and teachers as relational as well as content driven. They find that students evaluate their instructors based on clarity

of material presentation and ego support. The students in the experiment did not learn primarily from clarity of explanations, but had to be boosted or motivated emotionally to learn. The authors examine the role of clarity in instructional presentation and pose that complicated objectives lead to student frustration. This frustration stems from feelings of inadequacy and together reduces liking and, as a consequence, performance. Similarly, Frymeir and Houser identify the element of learner empowerment as an aspect of instructional competency. They find that student success is not only related to good grades, but to feelings of being worthwhile and the ability to contribute. These empowered students are reported to have higher levels of learning and motivation than their unencouraged counterparts.

Rather than teacher immediacy to the student, Baringer and McCroskey (1998) take the student-teacher relationship from a different perspective, and look at student immediacy toward the teacher. They presume that immediacy is based largely on reciprocity, such that if one uses eye contact, facial expressions, certain tones of voice, postures, movements, etc., those behaviors will be returned. Likewise, Baringer and McCroskey discuss such behaviors of immediacy as transmitted via channels of instructional feedback. As teachers assess the feedback to be positive, they will relay similarly positive messages. The perception of immediacy by a student toward an educator and the tutor's attitude and perception of the student was found to be a cyclical pattern.

Further examining the relationship between the student and the teacher, Naveh-Benjamin and Lin (1994) look at ways to expand the structure in which students learn. They contend that an extended personal relationship between students and teachers is

beneficial. Furthermore, previous knowledge of the students would further the educator's ability to adequately understand the various dimensions of those being educated. This prior understanding would enable the instructor to relay material in a more relative and applicable, thereby absorbable, manner. With this in mind, Naveh-Benjamin and Lin (1994) sought to illustrate the structure of cognitive learning. By administering a uniform test throughout a semester (beginning, middle, and end), they hoped to reveal the amount of knowledge gained in a specific class. The study revealed that while the students all started at the same basic level of knowledge, some students' performances had not changed at the end of the class. The resultant theory postulates that strong and weak students are not a result of previous differences in knowledge structures. Rather, some students are not motivated to learn simply presented material.

The question of what causes the distinction between cognitive ability and actual learning is not the effort, but the motivation to exert that effort. It is up to the teacher (additional responsibility and stress) to adapt styles to maximize motivation. Covington and Roberts (1994) looked at the effect of early motivation on later study habits and motives for learning. In their study, they seek to develop a model which successfully illustrates need achievement and self-worth in categories which further reflect the patterns in which learning is approached. The authors look at the Atkinson quadripolar model of need achievement which illustrates a student as somewhere between high and low approach and high and low avoidance. Approach habits reflect a student's willingness to take on tasks; avoidance habits reflect a student's willingness to perform those tasks (high avoidance is equal to high procrastination). Covington and Roberts (1994) also looked at the self-worth theory which argues "that the need for self-

acceptance is the highest human priority and that, in reality, the dynamics of school achievement largely reflect attempts to aggrandize and protect self-perceptions of ability" (p. 160). The authors argue that a student's self-perception of success is based largely on the ability to achieve competitively. The coping or compensation for this competition results in four distinct categories of students: success-oriented (high approach/low avoidance), overstrivers (high approach/high avoidance), failure-avoiders (high avoidance/low approach), and failure-acceptors (low avoidance/low approach). The study continued by assessing a student's perception of ability and the personality traits that are associated with each category. The resulting data showed that success-oriented students were generally out-going, socially poised, tolerant of fellow students, and psychologically sophisticated. They are confident in their ability and feel little in the way of achievement anxiety. On the opposite end of the spectrum, failure-acceptors tend to be unsure of themselves and subsequently avoid competition. They are generally intolerant of other students and preoccupy themselves with worries about personal and health problems and concerns for the future. As a result of such worry, they have a difficult time starting tasks and seeing them through to completion.

This study seeks to clarify the types of student and how each student reacts to the competition inherent in any system where more than one person is set to perform the same task. Not only that, but it also takes a look at the way a student performs under that competition. The very nature of competition rests on the assignment of a winner and a loser. If a student perceives him/herself as a failure on repeated occasions, he/she will grow resigned to accept repeated instances of that "failure" and even unconsciously act in a way that will ensure that those expectations are not violated. Covington and Roberts

(1994) examine the phenomena of self-worth becoming interwoven with the ability to achieve competitively. Able students who compete against standards which are easily met become bored, while less able students who compete at levels too high become discouraged and quit. The authors also recognize that if there were no losers in the learning game, it would probably not be worth playing for some. Also, the students able to thrive under the competitive structure would probably resent the change. The ready solution would be smaller settings. Competition is unavoidable (Covington and Roberts, 1994; Tenenbaum, Hall, Calcagnini, Lange, Freeman and Lloyd, 2001; Inglehart, Brown and Vida, 1994; Adkinson, 1981). Possibly, the better solution would be to reduce the size of the teams (Finn, 2002; Biddle and Berliner, 2002; Weber, Martin and Patterson, 2001).

Tenenbaum, Hall, Calcagnini, Lange, Freeman and Lloyd (2001) look at individual task orientation, perceived ability and confidence as predictors to how a person will step up to the challenge of a competitive situation. The authors contend that the willingness to compete is contingent on the individual's meaning of achievement. Tenenbaum et al. describe the two types of goals: task goal (focuses on the development of competence) and ego goal (reflects the need to prove competence or avoid the label of incompetence. Furthermore, the authors find that a positive validation of competence can be attained only when the performance in question compares favorably to others' performances.

Inglehart, Brown and Vida (1994) also looked at competition in a system to be a factor which increases stress. Stress, the authors contend, affects a person's appraisal of the situation and has the potential to alter the amount of effort exerted. While stress

management is unique to the individual, the competition inherent in its conception will shape the level of stress. The individual's attitude toward competition, how they value it, will determine the amount achieved. The authors state that the more a person views competition as a challenge to show true potential, the better off that person should be.

Effective teachers try to give 100% to their students. As they grow to feel incapable of such dedication, Della Rocca and Kostanski (2001) found that teachers develop "negative, cynical, and sometimes callous attitudes towards students, parents and colleagues" (p. 6). As this negativity compounds, a sense of helplessness, hopelessness and frustration ensues (Calabrese, 1987). Logic necessitates that these feelings, unless expressed, eradicated, or otherwise purged, would continue to grow and likewise continue to effect further communication.

This study looks at the relationship between immediacy and job satisfaction. From the review of the literature, the following two hypotheses emerge:

H1: A positive relationship will exist between perceived positive teacher immediacy and job satisfaction.

H2: A positive relationship will exist between perceived positive teacher immediacy and perceived teacher effectiveness.

Method

Participants

Participants in the study were 40 junior- and senior-level high school teachers and the respective administrators who had observed the teachers' classroom teaching. Teachers completed surveys evaluating the level of perceived job satisfaction. No

specific demographic group was targeted. In fact, information regarding, sex, and race were never requested. Such lengths also served to protect the anonymity of the participant as several surveys were taken from smaller, seemingly more closely-knit schools.

In the field of teaching, it would be difficult to obtain an unbiased view of a teacher from a student's perspective. Opinions could be altered by something so trivial as a hairstyle or a pair of pants, much less an undesired or unsavory homework assignment. For this reason, students were not engaged to participate in the surveys. Instead, an administrator who had observed the teacher in the classroom (generally the vice-principal) completed the survey which gauged the immediacy behaviors of teachers.

Measurement—Job Satisfaction

The first questionnaire involved in this study was a six-question, five-point Likert-scale evaluating job-satisfaction completed by teachers (See Appendix 1). Developed by Plax, Kearney and Downs (1986), the survey is two-dimensional assessing the teachers' attitudes toward teaching in general and also in terms of student receptivity (Beatty, 1994).

Alpha reliability for the dimension of the survey focusing on satisfaction with teaching as estimated by Plax, Kearney and Downs (1986) were .88 and .85. The reliability for the student factor was .85 and .86. However, when taken as a unidimensional questionnaire, the combined reliability estimates were .76 and .91. Using the unidimensional approach, alpha reliability for this study was .84 and .87.

Measurement—Immediacy

The second component of this study was a fourteen question, five-point Likert-type scale on nonverbal immediacy (NIB) (Richmond, Gorham and McCroskey, 1987; Kearney, 1994) and a seventeen question, five-point Likert-type scale evaluating verbal immediacy patterns (VIB) (Gorham, 1988; Richmond, 1994) (See Appendix 2). The combined questionnaire was filled out by administration based on either in-class observations or the teacher's most recent performance evaluation. The purpose of combining the two questionnaires was to gauge a wider range of behaviors—examining both facets of immediacy—than one survey could provide. These specific instruments were chosen because they both demonstrated easily identifiable behaviors and did not rely solely on the opinion of the observer. Eye contact with the class, position in relation to the students (i.e. in front of or behind desk/podium, back turned toward front board for majority of class), appearance of relaxation in classroom setting through posture and attitude (use of humor, solicitation of input, encouragement of individual expression), and relationship with students and fellow staff members through conversation and/or appearance of interest were a few of the primary focal points the questionnaire addressed.

Past research (Christophel, 1990; Richmond, Gorham, and McCroskey, 1987) has estimated the reliability of the NIB Instrument to range from .73 to .89. The lower numbers reflect a teacher's self-reporting while the higher estimated reliability relied on students' reports of their teachers' immediacy skills. Similarly, the VIB Instrument has shown to have a consistently high reliability—ranging from .86 to .94 when reported by students. The self-reported reliability was estimated at .89 for teachers (Christophel,

1990; Gorham, 1988). Combined in this study, the estimated reliability was .88.

Data Analysis

To analyze the data relating to the hypotheses, simple correlations were computed between the scores for job satisfaction and immediacy to determine the extent to which one was a predictor for the other. Alpha was set at $p < .05$ for all tests of significance.

As predicted in hypothesis one, teachers who report satisfaction with teaching exhibit positive teacher immediacy behaviors. A strong correlation exists between perceived positive teacher immediacy and job satisfaction ($r = .82$, $p < .01$), indicating that a teacher's environmental evaluation is closely linked to the behaviors s/he demonstrates. Furthermore, if a teacher feels positively toward a classroom situation, the teacher will (often unknowingly) reaffirm his/her own perception through more immediate interactions within the entire educational setting (with coworkers, administrators, as well as students)

As predicted in hypothesis two, a relationship exists between perceived positive teacher immediacy and perceived teacher effectiveness ($r = .67$, $p < .05$). These results indicate that equity was attained largely on the basis of perceptions. The positive perception of her/his communication skills was transposed onto the perception of ability to deal with occupational stressors.

Discussion

The current study sought to expand on two key facets of the educational workplace. In a society where education is valued as a badge of merit, every advantage should be explored for both the educators and the educated. The goal of the research was

not to verify that job satisfaction led to immediacy or vice versa. Instead, the goal was to find a relationship between the two. A relationship does exist. The results of the research support the two main hypotheses. Negatively perceived immediacy is a predictor of decreased job satisfaction, and positively perceived behaviors of teacher immediacy lead to increased job satisfaction. Similarly, as the relationship between feelings of job satisfaction and immediacy shift to one direction or another, so does the perception of effectiveness.

The study was intended to reinforce the give and take relationship between student and teacher and substantiate the notion that reciprocity plays a large part in the amount of immediacy displayed and perceived on a variety of fronts (Cialdini, 1993). Reciprocity, or an equitable exchange of goods and services (Lawler, 2001), requires that behaviors first be superimposed on one person before they can be returned by another. In the current example, as a teacher exhibits positive immediacy, the student takes notice and responds in a similar fashion. Similarly, the student/administrator assumes the teacher is friendly, treats him/her accordingly, and the teacher reciprocates. As the immediacy becomes perceived in terms of liking and trust, these feelings become the currency of exchange. This circular pattern has the potential to continue indefinitely—reinforcing positive (or negative) behaviors until a violation occurs (Buchan, Croson and Dawes, 2002) and the cycle is disrupted.

If liking and trust are units of exchange in immediacy, what is the currency in the realm of individual satisfaction? Certainly, literal currency is a possibility. With the bombardment of tasks and responsibilities, time is a precious commodity. As a teacher invests more time and effort into a project, goal or career, vulnerability and trust become

both the costs and possible rewards in this arena. If the project fails or the goal is not met, the teacher's self-trust will suffer and feelings of vulnerability will be validated and subsequently exacerbated (Lawler, 2001). Like trust, mistrust is a reciprocal entity. Should a teacher not trust another teacher or student's ability motives, the second party will soon perceive the lack of faith and manifest similar feelings (Uslaner, 2001).

Limitations

Regardless of the positive outcome of this study, limitations were encountered. The first limitation was the sample size. The surveys were distributed to random schools in the early part of the spring semester...a time not conducive to extraneous paperwork. With Spring break, T.A.K.S. tests, midterms, U.I.L., then finals, gaining teacher and administrative participation proved difficult.

This lack of participation could have potentially affected the results posted. Teachers reflecting a lower level of job satisfaction may not have felt the need to participate. A key element of low job satisfaction is the perception of inequity (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001). In a situation already rife with discontent and feelings of being cheated, the motivation to sacrifice time out of a busy schedule to complete a survey would logically be low. According to Moreira, Fox and Sparkes (2002) motivation stems from expected outcomes of a behavior as well as the "valence, value or importance of those outcomes" (p. 846). As a random, anonymous survey would have no personally tangible rewards, the importance attached to the task of completing said survey would be minimal. Similarly, a higher level of role overload experienced by those with lower levels of job satisfaction could have prevented them finding/making the time. When it comes to grading papers or filling out a seemingly meaningless survey on

personal time, papers would obviously come first.

The second limitation was the potential bias on the level of the administrative reviews of immediacy. As immediacy is largely based on perception, an accurate reading is virtually impossible. Even if the teacher had been observed in a laboratory setting, or had his/her class been observed, the disruption in routine could have disrupted the normal behavior patterns and potentially skewed the research even more than any bias.

The third limitation was one that was felt on the level of both the administration and teachers nationwide—political undercurrents. With news of state budget cuts filtering through the ranks, tensions are running high. The state of Massachusetts' budget was cut by twenty percent and lead to teacher lay-offs and other forms of restricted educational spending. In Oregon, nearly one hundred school districts shaved days off the academic year to reduce costs (Gehring, 2003). What is the proposal to relieve this deficit? Increase fees at state universities and decrease spending throughout. Those in administrative positions are being put in the awkward position of the bearers of bad news. Teachers are often at the receiving end of that bad news. With necessary layoffs, those remaining are shaken by the sudden loss of job security and are faced with the grim reality that, as enrollment does not fluctuate with the undulations of the economy, fewer classes will be offered resulting in more students in each. The extent to which the recent financial cuts and redistricting will effect job satisfaction remains to be seen.

Possibilities for Future Research

One aspect of future research could focus on motivating teachers through non-monetary methods. Given current events, the means to reward financially are potentially more harmful than helpful. Therefore, research on finding rewards that are perceived as

fair and equitable would be extremely beneficial on both an individual and societal level.

Future research could also be centered on a similar topic as this study but enlist the perceptions of students rather than administration. One way to possibly overcome biases against the teacher would be to administer the same test at various times throughout a given term (i.e. beginning, middle and end of a semester) and using the average. If administered by an outside researcher to a class with assigned seats, an individual mean could even be obtained for a higher level of accuracy while still maintaining full anonymity. Similarly, the surveys could be accessible through the internet or distributed early in the academic year to potentially side-step many of the time constraints encountered in this particular study. By expanding accessibility, a wider, more representative, sample could be obtained.

Other areas of future research could be conducted to build on existing research regarding reciprocity of teacher-student immediacy in a culture increasingly influenced by mass-media. Furthermore, teachers consistently ranked high in perceived immediacy could be evaluated on effectiveness in cross-cultural or English-as-a-second-language courses. As this study did not focus largely on effectiveness, examining that solely as a predictor of job satisfaction is another option. Humor and physical/interpersonal attractiveness are also potential predictors to explore as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study found that a correlation between job satisfaction and immediacy does exist in the classroom. However, certain aspects of each are unique to the individual. Regardless, factors which could increase satisfaction such as a pay raise, responsibility reduction, and perceived support (Della Rocca and Kostanski, 2001) should

be explored in order to entice and encourage potential/current teachers to persevere. Similarly, finding ways to combat burnout as excessive role assignment/assumption, as well as increasing social support networks within the educational system are tasks vital to future teachers and students alike. As this study found that job satisfaction is directly related to immediacy which is likewise related to effectiveness, maintaining a positive workplace environment for teachers should be of the utmost priority. If the effectiveness of teaching is dependent on job satisfaction, the subsequent question should not be "How can the current situation be improved?" but "How *soon* can the current situation be improved?"

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