THE FLOURISHING SCHOOL: SCHOOL-LEVEL FACTORS THAT IMPACT TEACHER FLOURISHING

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Doctor of Education

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When teachers find their work engaging and meaningful, experience joy at school, feel successful, and are able to maintain positive relationships, they are more effective in the classroom and are more likely to stay in the profession. These teachers can be described as flourishing. Situated in the field of positive organizational psychology, a new surge of research investigates individual attributes that impact employee flourishing. However, little research has been conducted to understand school-level factors that create the conditions for teacher flourishing. By employing a sequential, mixed-methods design, this project addresses this gap in the research. In the first phase, extant data from the 2016 Oregon TELL survey was used to quantitatively identify workplace factors that impact perceptions of teacher flourishing. In the second phase, focus groups with teachers from one district were conducted to understand factors that impact flourishing in that setting. In the third phase, data from these focus groups were linked with the TELL data to deepen understanding about how school-level factors impact individual perceptions of teacher flourishing in a specific setting. The results of this study will be used to inform district and state officials about the importance of implementing and supporting school structures that create the conditions for a flourishing school community.

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Inara Scott, who read every paper I wrote for the last three years and is my best friend, life companion, and moral compass. I am grateful to be sharing my life with such a remarkable person. To my children, Leo and Annija, who bring me joy everyday and constantly remind me to not take any of this too seriously.

To study hard, think quietly, talk gently,
act frankly, to listen to stars, birds, babes,
and sages with open heart, to bear all cheerfully,
do all bravely, await occasions, hurry never.
In a word, to let the spiritual,
unbidden and unconscious,
grow up through the common.
This is to be our symphony.

William Ellery Channing

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

To flourish "means to live within an optimal range of human functioning, one that connotes goodness, generativity, growth, and resilience" (Fredrickson & Losada, 2005, p. 678). Individuals who are described as flourishing have high levels of emotional, social, and psychological well-being (Seligman, 2011). When applied to schools, a flourishing classroom is a space where teachers and students create positive relationships, are deeply engaged in learning, find their collective actions meaningful, feel successful, and regularly experience joy at school (Butler & Kern, 2016; Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich & Linkins, 2009). By definition in this proposal, flourishing schools create the conditions that encourage positive well-being for students and teachers resulting in vibrant and joyful school communities.

Although there is an emerging body of literature on individual teacher characteristics that impact teacher well-being (Wayne & Youngs, 2003), which is referred to as TWB throughout the rest of this paper, little research has been conducted to understand school-level factors that contribute to a flourishing school. It is the goal of this research project to address this gap in the literature by studying school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing in a specific school district.

In this chapter, I first explain why creating conditions for flourishing in schools is important, review relevant literature on factors that impact teacher flourishing, and identify gaps in prior research on teacher flourishing. I conclude this chapter by explaining how this literature review sets the foundation for the research project I completed for my dissertation, and by listing the research questions for this study.

Relevance of Teacher Flourishing

Teaching is a profession that requires not only high levels of content knowledge, pedagogical expertise, and intellectual curiosity, but also the ability to forge emotional connections with students. A host of research supports the linkage between individual teacher psychosocial characteristics (e.g., self-efficacy, goal orientation, and relationships) and student performance (e.g., test scores, grade point average, and engagement) (Butler, 2007; Chu, Saucier, & Hafner, 2010; Holzberger, Phillip &, Kunter, 2014; Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Wayne & Youngs, 2003; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Positive emotions expressed by teachers have also been associated with an increase in student creativity, motivation, and student engagement as indicated by the degree of interest, passion, and attention that students demonstrate when they are learning (Hattie, Myers, & Sweeney, 2004).

The relational nature of teaching means that educators may be more vulnerable than some other professionals to experiencing emotional burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). Teaching is characterized by high levels of stress and burnout that can result in depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and a decreased sense of personal accomplishment (Cenkseven-Onder & Sari, 2009; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Those factors can lead to teachers having lower perceived control and well-being than many other professionals (Grenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012). These professional conditions for burnout are often cited as one of the reasons why 20% of beginning U.S. teachers may leave the profession in three years and 40% may leave within five years (Chan, 2009). Burnout directly contributes to a nationwide shortage of teachers and administrators (Aragon, 2016).

In their recent report, *A Coming Crisis in Teaching: Teacher Supply, Demand and Shortages in the U.S.,* Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2016) identified teacher attrition as the most important driver of teacher shortages. The authors asserted that reducing attrition by even a slight percentage (i.e. from the current attrition rate of 8% for beginning teachers down to 5% annually) would virtually eliminate shortages nationwide. Poor workplace conditions such as dissatisfaction with collegial relationships, administrative support, peer collaboration, and school culture directly impact teacher burnout and attrition (Aud, 2010; Pillay, Goddard, & Wilss, 2005). Creating school conditions that support the overall psychological well-being of teachers is an essential first step in addressing teacher burnout and attrition. For example, encouraging positive relationships between teachers and students (Adena & Klem, 2004), creating collective opportunities to celebrate student learning (Cherkowski & Walker 2013), and implementing positive behavior systems (Bradshaw, Koth, Bevans, Ialongo, & Leaf, 2008) have all been shown to impact TWB and improve retention.

TWB is an important factor that impacts teacher burnout, student achievement, and overall teacher job satisfaction. More research is needed to better understand school-level factors that create opportunities for maximizing TWB and create conditions for teacher flourishing. In the section below I present the process I followed to identify and include specific research articles in the literature pool related to TWB and school factors that impact teacher flourishing.

Literature Search and Review

In this section I review the literature on TWB with a focus on research about school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing. I begin with an explanation of my literature search process and how I selected research articles for inclusion in my final literature pool. Next, I present a brief summary of the articles selected and the methodology used to analyze each article. In the final section, I present themes from the literature that relate specifically to my research questions.

Theoretical Foundation for Literature Search

Much of contemporary research related to well-being, including the flourishing theory that I used as the foundation for this literature review, is positioned within the field of "positive psychology" (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013), which is the study of strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive (Wong, 2011). Maslow originally coined the term positive psychology in the 1950s, but the movement of positive psychology as it is known today was established in 1997 by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Martin Seligman (Kristansson, 2012). In the last twenty years, Seligman has written several best-selling books about topics such as authentic happiness (2002), character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), and human flourishing (Seligman, 2011). These books have popularized positive psychology theories and have spurred a host of research projects (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013).

In contrast to traditional psychology that uses a pathology model to study the causes, processes, and effects of various diseases, positive psychology was envisioned as a scientific discipline designed to understand "what makes life worth living" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000 p. 5). Positive psychologists asserted that "psychology is not just

the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000 p. 5). Instead of identifying what is wrong with the human psyche or documenting when things go wrong, positive psychology seeks to better understand how phenomena such as love, courage, happiness, and well-being shape humanity (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Positive psychologists describe human flourishing as a complex state of being that involves the fluid interplay between several psychosocial domains (Butler and Kern, 2016). To better understand this multidimensional construct, Seligman (2011) introduced a theory of well-being that isolates positive emotion (P), engagement (E), relationships (R), meaning (M), and accomplishment (A) as distinct components that taken together capture the complexity of flourishing. He argued that this PERMA model integrates many of the established characteristics studied by other researchers into a comprehensive, unified model. This PERMA theory describes the outcome of flourishing, but it does not necessarily describe specific factors or attributes that impact flourishing. Thus, it is a descriptive model that contributes to a deeper understanding of different dimensions present in when a person is flourishing, but it is not a prescriptive model that tells people what exactly steps they need to take to flourish. A diagram of the theory is included below as Figure 1.

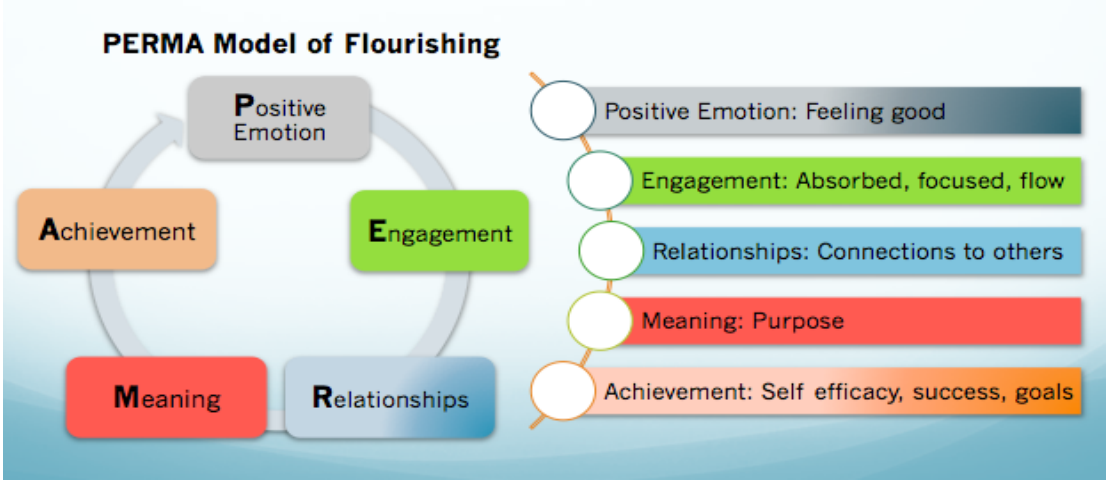

Figure 1. Dimensions included in PERMA model of flourishing.

According to the PERMA theory, positive emotion captures the need to have an optimistic outlook that is founded on both pleasurable experiences and more long-lasting feelings of deeper enjoyment that come from intellectual stimulation and creativity. Engagement relates to experiences that completely absorb a person in the present moment. Relationships based on authentic connections and intimacy with other people and having a purpose or meaning in life are both essential components of human flourishing. Finally, feeling a sense of achievement based on accomplishments and success contributes to human flourishing.

I used the PERMA model to structure a review of the literature on school factors that impact teacher flourishing because it provides a theoretical grounding and operational definition for the somewhat abstract concept of flourishing. Research on the PERMA model is used in this paper therefore to portray a picture of the *outcome state of interest*, which is the construct of Flourishing. Note that later another theoretical model, the Job-Demands Resource Model (JD-R) (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011), will be used to explore how teachers balance factors that impact *flourishing at school.* The JD-R will be

described in the upcoming section entitled "Theoretical Models." It is introduced there because a search of the literature revealed that researchers commonly use the JD-R to explain the process of how different factors impact TWB. Therefore, for this dissertation, the PERMA model is used to describe the desired outcome of flourishing at school and the JD-R is used to describe the process of how different factors might impact flourishing.

In the next section I describe the process I followed to locate and select a collection of articles related to each PERMA dimension.

Description of the Search Process

I began my digital search using the University of Oregon website to search the University LibrarySearch, ERIC, PsychNet and ProQuest Education Journal databases. I chose ERIC (https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/eric.asp) and ProQuest Education (http://www.proquest.com/products-services/pq_ed_journals.html) because they contain a comprehensive database of published research in education. I chose PsychNet because much of the research on well-being and flourishing comes from the field of psychology. To narrow the search toward the most relevant references for this review and my intended dissertation study, I elected to identify only English language peer-reviewed articles published after the year 2000. I chose the year 2000 because it marked the reemergence of research in positive psychology following Seligman's tenure as the American Psychological Association president (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor, & Robinson, 2013).

First, I searched each database using TWB as my primary search term. I then linked each of the individual PERMA dimensions to TWB. For example, I searched for TWB and positive emotions, then TWB and engagement, etc. The pairing between TWB

and different components of the PERMA model produced a collection of 217 articles. Second, I reviewed the titles and abstract of each of the 217 articles. I decided to retain articles that addressed or were related to school-level factors that impacted TWB and discarded articles that focused on student well-being or individual teacher characteristics related to well-being. For example, I eliminated articles on teacher personality traits related to well-being, the impacts of individual teacher engagement and student achievement, and conditions for student socio-emotional learning in the classroom. I chose to not include these types of articles because the school is the primary unit of analysis for this research project. Even though individual perceptions of flourishing are important, for this project I sought to understand school-level factors such as responsiveness of school administrators, presence of collaborative work teams, and systematic opportunities for teacher leadership that impact TWB. Using this thematic analysis based on studies related to school-level factors I narrowed the pool to 33 articles. The number of articles related to each search term is summarized in Table 1.

Third, reflecting the international interest in teacher wellness and positive psychology, these 33 articles represented research from 22 different countries. In an attempt to narrow the focus to school systems that are more similar to the schools in Oregon that I am studying, I selected articles from countries that have similar educational systems as the United States such as Australia, United Kingdom, Canada, and countries in Western Europe. Adding support to this rationale, Parker, Martin, Colmar, and Liem (2012) argued that the well-being of teachers in Australia, United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom were similar and could be generalized to wider Western

Table 1

Literature Search Results and Articles Selected

Secondary Keywords	Results	Articles Retained
Positive emotion	14	4
Engagement	36	9
Relationships	49	12
Meaningful work	19	2
Achievement	57	3
Efficacy	42	4
Total	217	33

contexts. They asserted that this generalization is possible because school systems in these countries have similar structures and work conditions for teachers. Pithers and Soden (1999) further established support to the similarities between teacher experiences in these countries by establishing that work stress and strain is perceived similarly in Australia and Scottish schools due to similar working conditions for teachers in these countries. After completing this stage of the review process, 24 articles remained.

Fourth, I further filtered the remaining 24 articles in the following ways. I included only articles related to k-12 education with an explicit identification of PERMA school-level factors that affected TWB and/or flourishing. I discarded seven articles that studied pre-school teachers, private afterschool academies, and music teachers who did not work in k-12 schools. I further discarded five articles that focused on individual TWB but did not explicitly identify school-level factors linked to well-being. For example, articles focused exclusively on parent-teacher relationships (focused on teacher

characteristics), disruptive students (focused on student factors), and teachers working in specialized classrooms for significantly impacted students (focused on unique classroom factors) were not included. This filtering process reduced the pool of literature to 12 articles.

Finally, I carefully re-read each of the 12 articles and cross-referenced cited works that appeared related to my subject. When I found a new article that was related to my topic based on the title, I applied the same process I had used previously, in which I would review the article to determine if the article: (a) generally related to school level factors influencing teacher well-being, (b) was conducted in a country similar to the research setting, and (c) examined k-12 schools with an explicit focus on school-level factors. I then repeated the process by cross-referencing cited works from these additional studies. Using multiple rounds of this iterative process, I added five new articles to the final pool of references.

In sum, this process of searching databases for key terms, screening based on established criteria for applicability and similarity to my research setting, reading selected articles to discover more studies, and conducting additional screening in an iterative process resulted in a total of 17 articles for my final literature synthesis. Figure 2 visually outlines the process I followed to identify the articles reviewed for this dissertation.

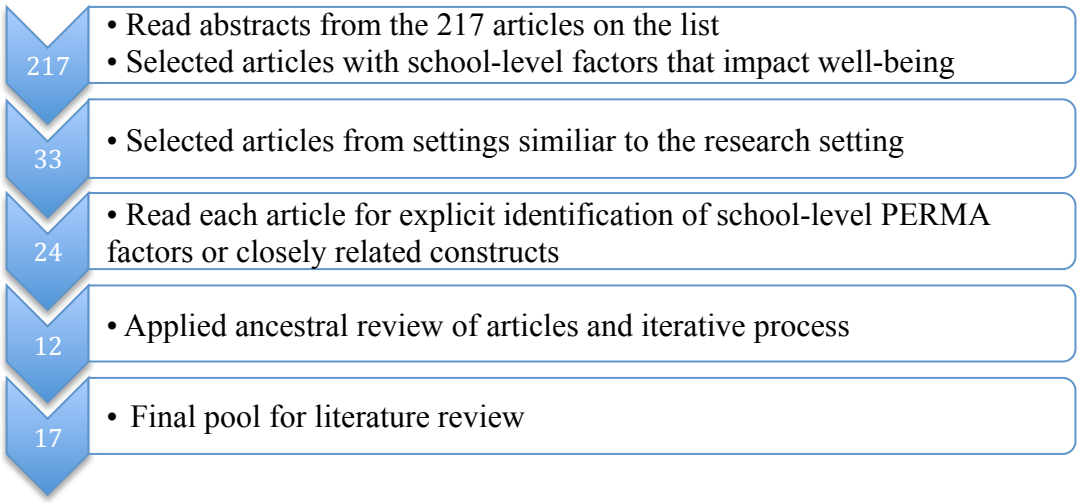

Figure 2. Summary of iterative literature selection process.

A list of the final 17 articles is included in Appendix A. In the following section I provide a summary of this collection of articles.

Results of the Literature Search

In this section I provide an overview of the articles I selected and summarize themes from that literature pool. For this collection I provide the following: (a) an overview of the research methodologies employed; (b) a presentation of the theoretical frameworks used in the collection of articles; (c) a description of the subjects and settings; (d) a summary of the instruments used; (e) a description of the methods used to analyze the literature data and (f) explanations of the literature findings. Finally, I present a selection of themes that emerged from the literature documenting how variables drawn from the literature might impact conditions for teacher flourishing.

Research Methods of the Literature Search

I present a summary of the research design utilized in each study below in Table 2, including the theoretical or empirical model the authors used to frame the study.

A total of 13 of the 17 articles employed quantitative, quasi-experimental methods

and the other 4 employed qualitative methodologies. For the quantitative designs regarding repeated measures, of the 17, 12 used cross-sectional designs and one included a longitudinal design. One of the four qualitative studies used a repeated measures interview design that will be described below, but the other three qualitative studies employed cross-sectional designs that involved interviewing subjects at one point in time.

The Bermejo, Hernandez-Franco, & Prieto-Ursua (2015) study is a good example of a research project that employed a quantitative, cross-sectional design. Using the Job-Demands Resource Model (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006), the authors sought to understand the impact of work demands, personal resources, and job resources on teacher well-being. They administered a self-reported questionnaire to 180 teachers in Madrid, Spain. The survey isolated job demands such as student behavioral problems, and teacher work overload and job resources such as work autonomy and social support to measure how these variables impacted TWB.

Table 2

Types of Research Design and Theoretical Model

Citation	Quantitative, Quasi-Experimental	Qualitative	Theoretical or Empirical Model
1	X		Job-Demands Resource Model
2		X	Positive Organizational Theory
3	X		Self-Determination Theory
4	X		Mastery vs. Performance Goal
5	X		Job-Demands Resource Model
6	X		Maslach Burnout Inventory
7	X		Maslach Burnout Inventory
8	X		Job-Demands Resource Model
9		X	Coping Strategies for Resilience
10	X		Engagement and Exhaustion
11		X	Learning Communities and Teacher Flourishing
12	X		Transactional Model: Stress/Coping
13	X		Teacher Efficacy, Burnout, and Positive Behavioral Supports
14		X	Protective Risk Factors
15	X		Job-Demands Resource Model
16	X		Teacher Burnout: exhaustion, depersonalization, accomplishment
17	X		Teachers Professional Well-Being
Total	13	4	

For the qualitative studies, all of the four studies used interview data: two employed semi-structured interviews, one was a case study design, and one study used a Delphi-survey technique.

For example, Cherkowski and Walker (2016) employed a qualitative, repeated measures research design and structured interview data to explore the construct of flourishing from the perspective of school principals. The researchers conducted two rounds of data collection using a structured Delphi technique, which involved gathering initial data from a group of participants, sharing a summary of that data with the group, and then asking them to respond to a new set of questions based on the initial data. In the first round, principals were asked to complete an on-line survey that asked them to identify factors in their schools that gave them a sense of satisfaction, meaning, purpose, and happiness. The researchers thematically coded these responses and wrote a set of new questions based on the emergent themes related specifically to flourishing. They sent the second survey back to the principals who had completed the first questions asking them to think about specific ways they attend to flourishing and how they work to create conditions in their schools to encourage flourishing. Themes that emerged from this second round were described in detail by the authors.

Theoretical Models

There were several different theoretical models represented in this collection of articles. However, Maslach's (1993) theory of burnout and/or the related Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was the most prevalent and was cited in 10 of the studies. The MBI is a theory-driven instrument that isolates three interdependent factors related to the

opposing conditions of burnout and engagement: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. The Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2009) study is a strong example of how Maslach's theory is often used to study teacher burnout and job satisfaction. The researchers sought to understand if school context variables such as supervisory support, time pressure, and autonomy influenced teachers' perceptions of emotional exhaustion, engagement, and depersonalization. They used a shortened version of the MBI to measure teacher burnout as the dependent variable and a host of other instruments to measure the impact of the other school context variables. Using the MBI allowed the researchers to isolate the three dimensions of burnout and see if specific context variables impacted these dimensions differently. For example, they were able to ascertain that increased time pressure impacted emotional exhaustion, but did not impact feelings of personal accomplishment.

The Job-Demands Resource Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) was cited in six of the articles as either the primary theoretical framework or a secondary framework used to interpret findings. This theory is widely applied to organizational studies (Bakker & Bal, 2010) and divides factors related to job stress into two categories: job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to physical, social, or organizational factors that require sustained physical or mental effort and consequently can lead to strain and exhaustion. Job resources are aspects of the job that reduce demands and contribute to personal growth and feelings of accomplishment. According to the JD-R model, negative factors that impact teacher well-being can be buffered by positive resources at school (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007).

The Simbula, Panari, Guglielmi, & Fraccaroli (2012) study found support for the

JD-R model when they examined how the combination of stressful and motivating school characteristics influenced TWB. They hypothesized that professional development and social support systems would be resources that teachers employ to increase feelings of work engagement and job satisfaction. Using the JD-R model, they also predicted that perceived inequity and role ambiguity would be demands that led to exhaustion and decrease positive work outcomes. They categorized groups of teachers based on their access to job resources as resourceful, stressed, or wealthy. They found that participants who had low levels of job demands and high levels of job resources (the wealthy group) were more open to change, had higher levels of organizational identification, and felt more confident when responding to student misbehaviors. Thus, these individuals would appear to have more characteristics aligned with conditions for flourishing than teachers who have higher demands and lower resources.

Subjects and Research Settings found in the Literature Search

In Table 3, I summarize information about the subjects, sample size, percentage identifying as female, school description, and location where each study was conducted. With the exception of the Cherkowski and Walker (2016) study that was based on principal surveys and the Klusmann, Kunter, Trautwein, Ludtke, & Baumert, (2008) study that incorporated data from teachers and principals, the subjects for all of the other articles were public or private school teachers. Public school educators were studied in 12 of the articles, 3 articles surveyed private school teachers, and 2 articles included data from both public and private schools. A total of 7 of the 17 studies used data from

Table 3

Subjects, Sample Size, % Female, School Description and Location

Citation	Subjects	Sample	% Female	Description	Location
1	K-12 Teachers	180	72%	Priv/Pub	Madrid, Spain
2	Principals	14	NA	Public	NewBrunswick, CA
3	K-12 Teachers	485	76%	Public	Canada
4	K-5 Teachers	295	81%	Pubic	Belgium
5	9-12 Teachers	282	55%	Private	Barcelona, Spain
6	K-12 Teachers	246	71%	Private	Queensland, Aus.
7	K-12 Teachers	320	74%	Public	SE Ohio, USA
8	K-12 Teachers	2,038	79%	Public	Finland
9	K-8 Teachers	10	90%	Public	Adelaide, Aus.
10	Teachers	1,939	51%	Public	Germany
	Principals	198	26%		
11	K-6 Teachers	15	NA	Public	South Australia
12	K-12 Teachers	430	67%	Private	Australia
13	K-5 Teachers	184	NA	Public	Oregon, USA
14	K-5 Teachers	5	80%	Public	Ohio, USA
15	9-12 Teachers	439	62%	Public	Milano, Italy
16	K-8 Teachers	563	68%	Public	Norway
17	K-5 Teachers	72,190	70%	Priv/Pub	International Sample

Note: The sample for article #10 incorporated two distinct data sets. Article #17 included data from 23 different countries that participated in the 2008 Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development TALIS. Articles #2, #11, & #13 did not include gender information. Articles #1 & #17 included data from public and private school teachers.

teachers in k-12 schools, 6 from teachers working in elementary schools, 3 from high school teachers, and 2 from teachers working in k-8 schools.

The proportion of women participants was greater than men in 13 of the 14 articles that included this information about the study participants. Most of the samples reported between 60% and 80% women with nine samples having between 67% to 74% women. This percentage is similar to the 76% of women who make-up the public school teaching force in the United States (https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=28). The one study that included a higher percentage of men was based on a population of high school principals in Germany. This sample incorporated 26% women and 74% men.

As Table 3 demonstrates, the sample sizes ranged from five elementary teachers who contributed to an in-depth case study to a sample of 72,190 public and private elementary teachers from 23 different countries. The research settings also varied widely. They included private and public schools; schools from large urban centers such as Madrid and Barcelona; schools from rural areas in New Brunswick and Ohio; elementary, middle, and high schools; and schools from nine different countries. This variety of settings makes it possible to better understand the universality of some school factors that impact teaching flourishing and factors that might be unique to specific settings. For example, the qualitative study conducted with five elementary Special Education teachers in one district in Ohio highlighted the importance of strong social support networks for TWB (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler 2005). This same factor was found to be important for TWB in 14 of the 17 articles included in the pool. However, the Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler (2005) study also found that mentoring and providing job-specific information was equally important to this group of teachers. These factors were

not mentioned in other studies and could be especially salient to new Special Education teachers.

Two samples in particular are unique and merit more discussion based on their comprehensive sample populations. Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2006) surveyed all public school teachers employed by the Education Department of Helsinki, Finland. Helsinki is the largest city in Finland with a population of approximately 1.4 million (http://www.visitfinland.com/helsinki/). The size and scope of the survey, which had a response rate of 52%, with responses from nearly 200 schools in Helsinki, provides unique insight into work engagement of Finnish teachers. The extant data used in the Yildirim (2014) article also represents a unique sample of teachers. Drawing on data generated by the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) which was sponsored by host nations in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the article compiled data from public and private teachers in 23 different countries. All of the countries represented in the 2008 TALIS sample were also included in my final pool of resources as well as data from 14 other countries.

The subjects and research settings of the articles included in the literature pool represent a diverse group of teachers and schools. This diversity makes it possible to better understand how TWB is experienced by individual teachers across a wide variety of settings. In the next section I summarize the instruments used to measure factors that impact TWB.

Measures and Instruments

Table 4 summarizes the delivery mechanisms and instruments used in the 17 studies included in the literature pool. In order to study a variety of factors that might

impact TWB, 12 of these researchers combined questions from a variety of different instruments to create a more comprehensive survey. A good example of this approach is the Simbula, Panari, Guglelmi,and Fraccaroli (2012) study, in which the authors used 4-5 questions from 11 different surveys to measure 12 distinct variables related to TWB. One of the advantages of combining several instruments into one survey is that the newly created survey can simultaneously measure numerous constructs such as role clarity, support mechanisms, flexibility, and organizational identification because it draws questions from several other instruments. However, a drawback to this approach is that the psychometric properties of each individual instrument impacts the validity and reliability of the newly constructed instrument and the properties of the instrument can be difficult to ascertain. Simbula, Panari, Guglelmi, and Fraccaroli (2012) did provide the names and citations for the original surveys, but they did not include a discussion about the validity and reliability of each instrument nor the combined instrument. Therefore, the psychometric properties of the combined instruments is difficult to establish.

Maslach's Burnout Inventory (MBI) or the MBI Educator Scale was used to measure teacher burnout or engagement in 9 of the 17 studies. (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). Different versions of the MBI have been used extensively across many occupational groups and in several different nations (Schutte, Toppinen, Kalimo & Schaufeli, 2000). This instrument has reasonably robust validity and reliability properties as reported in the literature (Schwab, 1983). The survey asks teachers to respond using a 7-point frequency scale ranging from *never* to *everyday*. For example, one item on the instrument states, "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job." The Dorman (2003) article is a good example of how the MBI can be used to measure TWB. Using the MBI and several

Table 4

Delivery Mechanism and Instrumentation

Cite	Delivery	Instruments
1	On-line survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory, Brief COPE, Cognitive Emotional Regulation, Multidimensional Support
2	Email survey	Author created questions related to school flourishing
3	On-line survey	Flourishing Scale, Work Climate, Basic Satisfaction, Motivation at Work, Organizational Commitment
4	On-line survey	Leadership Scale, Frequency of Collaborative Interactions, Patterns of Adaptive Learning, Perceived Difficulty, CES-Dep.
5	Survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory, Teacher Support Resources, Teacher Psychological Needs, Work Engagement
6	On-line survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory, School-level Environment, What is Happening in the Classroom, Classroom Environment
7	Paper-Pencil survey	Maslach Burnout Inventor-Educators Survey, Comprehensive Assessment of School Environment, Teacher Climate Measure
8	Paper-Pencil survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory-General, Utrecht Work-Engagement, Healthy Organizations, Org. Commitment
9	Face-to-Face IV	Author survey: resilience, supports and job stressors
10	On-line survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory, Occupational Stress and Coping, Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)
11	Face-to-Face IV	Author survey: professional learning communities and TWB
12	Survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory, Teacher Engagement and Motivation
13	On-line survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey, Sense of Efficacy
14	Face-to-Face IV	Author survey: experiences of first year teachers
15	Survey	Survey questions gathered from eight instruments.
16	On-line Survey	Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey, Job Satisfaction (author created), School Context (author created)
17	On-line Survey	Teaching and Learning International Survey-TALIS

other instruments, the authors identified 11 observable variables that each related to one of the burnout dimensions isolated in Maslach's theory of burnout: depersonalization, engagement, and emotional exhaustion. The MBI allowed the researchers to understand how different variables independently impact each of these factors that contribute to teacher burnout.

In all of the qualitative studies, the researchers used their own lists of questions in both open-ended and semi-structured interviews. For example, Howard and Johnson (2004) wrote eight questions to better understand how teachers respond to stressful incidents based on sources of support at the school. They asked all the teachers' questions like "What are your main sources of support? "and "Who do you talk to?" However, the researchers also asked follow-up questions based on the answers given by the participants. Miles & Huberman (1994) asserted that these types of interviews provide some structure for uniformity between interviews, but also allow the researcher to actively probe when seeking to understand unique aspects related to respondents lived experience.

Data Analysis of the Literature Search

A summary of the data analyses techniques with the related dependent and salient variables is included in Table 5 below. As is noted in the table, twelve of the articles in the pool used some form of regression analysis to estimate relationships between variables. Seven of these articles employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and two of the articles used Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to not only estimate relationships, but also account for possible error in the proposed models and to test specific hypotheses.

Because of nested data, the HLM studies (Klusmann, Kunter, Trautwein, Ludtke, & Baumert, 2008; Yildirim, 2014) both used modeling to predict between and within differences in teachers' engagement and exhaustion. HLM was used because it can effectively disentangle within and between school variance. This analysis accounts for more error by taking into consideration the structure of nested data than a more simple regression analysis that is not multilevel for the same data sets.

SEM was used in seven of the articles. This type of modeling can enable researchers to test possible relationships between multiple observed and latent variables simultaneously. SEM, HLM, and many other statistical techniques can offer effective visual displays of quantitative relationships. Byrne (2016) argued that visually displaying variables in a comprehensive model that outlines relationships between observed and latent variables leads to better understanding of complex phenomenon. Visual enrichment seems especially applicable to a complex construct like teacher flourishing.

Bermejo, Hernandez-Franco and Prieto-Ursua (2015) identified 13 separate variables that they believed impacted perceived job resources and coping mechanisms for teachers. Using SEM, the authors then measured the extent to which coping mechanisms and resources were associated with four conditions related to engagement and burnout. SEM enabled the authors to estimate the strength of the relationships among these variables, the likely direction of the association, and potential mediating variables. The result was the identification of five salient variables that impacted TWB for the teachers included in their sample.

Even though it helpful to identify a wide number of possibly salient variables and possible interactions between different variables, SEM and HLM can result in a laundry

Table 5

Data Analysis, Dependent Variables, Salient Variables

Cite	Analysis	Dependent Variables	Salient Variables
1	Structural Equat. Model (SEM)	Engage. & Burnout	Autonomy, feedback, social supports, variety, work demands
2	Thematic coding	Flourishing	Passion, play, shared purpose
3	SEM	Well-Being	Perceived autonomy, competence, relationships, work efficacy
4	Linear Regression	Self-Efficacy & Depression	Goal structure of school, principal meetings, peer collaboration, mentoring
5	SEM	Engage. & Burnout	Need satisfaction, teacher support resources, recognition, achievement
6	SEM	Engage. & Burnout	Affiliation, work pressure, mission consensus, co-operation, task orientation
7	Step-Wise Reg.	Accomplish & Exhaustion	Student relationships, behaviors, parent interaction, support, academic orientation
8	SEM	Engage. & Burnout	Behaviors, job control, social climate, admin. support, workload, communication
9	Thematic coding	Resilience	Support group, competence, achievement, agency, school stressors
10	Hierarchical Reg.	Engage. & Burnout	Support, cooperation with colleagues, discipline, workload, peer relationships
11	Thematic coding	Flourishing	Professional learning teams, shared vision, trust, accomplishment, leadership
12	SEM	Engage. & Burnout	Goal orientation, mastery, coping, stress
13	Multi-Level Reg.	Engage. & Burnout	PBIS systems, efficacy, positive rewards
14	Thematic coding	Retention	Mentoring, relationships, training
15	MANOVA Cluster Analysis	Engagement, satisfaction	Job resources, role clarity, support, flexibility, organizational identification
16	SEM	Accomplish & Burnout	Supervisor support, time pressure, autonomy, parent relations
17	Hierarchical Reg.	Well-being	Co-operation, feedback, climate, teaching practices, classroom climate

list of variables that can be difficult to decipher and interpret. For example, the articles that employed SEM and HLM analyses identified 62 salient variables or factors that were shown to impact TWB. Combining these variables with those identified by the other researchers included in the pool resulted in 77 variables that were shown to have an impact on TWB.

All of the qualitative studies used thematic coding to make sense of the interview data. However, Owen (2016) was the only qualitative researcher included in the pool who clearly specified the method used to record, transcribe, and code the data. Owen used a process of line-by-line reading and segmenting the transcripts to identify emergent themes and sub-themes. Following the protocol from Punch (2009), Owen identified 14 themes that were relatively consistent across all of the participants. The author also included quotes form the actual interviews as evidence for the emergent themes.

In the section below I summarize the findings from the literature pool and present these findings in three general categories.

Key Findings and Themes of the Literature Search

To make sense of these variables and organize the findings, I decided to group the variables from all of the articles thematically into general descriptive categories. Using the list of salient variables displayed in Table 5 above, I carefully reread each article to best understand how the salient variables were defined and studied. Next, I starting grouping the variables together under general thematic headings and I named the themes. For example, teacher perceptions of their own competence, a sense of achievement/accomplishment, efficacy, and recognition for good work were variables isolated in seven of the articles from the literature pool. Since all of these variables relate

to a feeling by the teacher that they can successfully accomplish tasks and be recognized for their work, I named this category "Teacher Efficacy". The result of this grouping and consolidation process was 11 descriptive categories that capture all 77 variables studied by authors included in the literature pool. The list of descriptive themes, the number of variables placed in each category, the percent of the total represented by variables in this, and a list of the specific related variables are included below in Table 6. Each theme and a sampling of the related articles that illustrate variables in that theme will be presented in this section.

Relationships

Relationships or barriers to relationships with colleagues, students, and parents seem to have a direct impact on TWB and was identified as important in 12 of the 17 studies included in the literature review.

Relationships with colleagues. Bermejo, Hernandez-Franco, and Prieto-Ursua (2015) found that social supports from colleagues was a key resource that teachers used to combat exhaustion and cynicism. Cherkowski and Walker (2016) interviewed principals about their perceptions of flourishing schools and found that creating conditions for positive relationships between teachers was one of the most important catalysts to promote flourishing. Yildirim (2014) demonstrated that cooperation among staff and a positive school climate evidenced by strong peer relationships were two of the main factors that impacted TWB. The importance of maintaining strong relationships with peers was identified as important in elementary, middle and high schools as well as in all of the countries represented in the literature pool.

Table 6

Summary of Themes from the Literature

Descriptive Theme	**# of variables**	**% of total**	**Variables the impact TWB**
Relationships	12	16%	Relationships (x3), student conduct (x3), support group (x3), student relations (x2), parent relations
Supports and Resources	9	12%	Administrator supports (x3), support resources (x3), PBIS systems, need satisfaction
Teaming	9	12%	Co-operation (x2), collaboration (x2), affiliation, co-operation, teamwork, professional learning communities, mentorship
Collective Vision	8	10%	Shared vision (x2), passion, goal relatedness, goal structure, mission consensus, goal orientation, identification with mission
Teacher Efficacy	7	9%	Competence (x2), achievement (x2), accomplishment, efficacy, recognition
Work Demands	7	9%	Workload (x2), work demands, work pressure, school stressors, stress, time pressure
Autonomy	6	7%	Teacher Autonomy (x3), job control, agency, variety/choice
Feedback	6	7%	Feedback (x3), task orientation, role clarity, expectations
Leader Attributes	6	7%	Leadership, coping strategies, flexibility, staff communication, meetings, support with parents
Climate	5	6%	School climate, play, positive rewards, positive climate, classroom climate
PD/Training	2	3%	Training, teaching practices
Total	77	100%	

Relationships with students. The most commonly cited job demand that negatively impacted TWB was difficult student behaviors or negative student relationships. This job demand was cited in 6 of the 17 articles.

Howard and Johnson (2004) found that difficulty working with unmotivated, non-compliant students and the need to call-on other teachers or support staff for assistance in dealing with unruly student behaviors increased teacher reports of stress and burnout. Similarly, Simbula, Panari, Gugleilmi, and Fraccaroli (2012) found that for teachers working in secondary schools, student misbehavior significantly impacted feelings of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion. This negative impact was even present for teachers who reported high levels of supports in other areas at work.

Relationships with parents. Another commonly cited job demand was high levels of negative communication and interactions with parents. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2009) found that lack of trust and cooperation from parents impacted teacher stress and emotional exhaustion. Grayson and Alvarez (2008) supported the connection between the strain of navigating parent/community relationships and teachers' perceptions of emotional exhaustion. They argued that this job demand is particularly difficult when parent and community support at the school-level is lacking. Howard and Johnson (2004) found that resilient teachers were able to distance themselves from the intensity of these interactions, but non-resilient teachers were negatively impacted by stressful communication with parents. Noticeably absent in the literature were discussions of how positive interactions with parents can be possible job resources.

Supports and Resources

Administrative supports, school resources, and school support structures were

found to be impactful in nine of the studies. For example, Devos, Dupriez, & Paquay (2012) found that the quality of the principal support was more important than the frequency of that support. The teachers in their study reported that quality interactions with principals that were focused on teacher improvement significantly impacted TWB for new teachers. Howard and Johnson (2004) interviewed resilient teachers who identified positive administrative support, emotional support from colleagues, and feedback factors that impacted their ability to flourish in difficult work environments. Klusman, Kunter, Trautwein, Ludtke, & Baumert (2008) found that variation in perceived principal support impacted teacher engagement and emotional exhaustion across schools. However, principal management style was not universally identified as impactful. In contrast, Yildirim (2014) found that the principal's management style (bureaucratic or instructional) was not significantly related to TWB. He asserted that principal actions could be just one of numerous interrelated factors that impact the overall school climate. Whereas, principal actions might influence factors that were identified as impactful such as staff cooperation and collegial relationships, that teachers did not identify management style itself as important.

Researching the impact of a specific support program, Ross, Romer, & Horner (2012) studied the relationship between the implementation of Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems (PBIS) and TWB. The authors established that school-wide systems designed to explicitly teach positive student behaviors and celebrate students displaying these behaviors impacted school culture and well-being. Specifically, they established that schools with better-established PBIS support systems had significantly higher teacher efficacy scores and lower levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

Teaming

Several of the articles found that teaming, co-operation, and collaboration with peers positively impacts TWB. For example, the implementation of professional learning communities (PLC's) was also identified as a school-level program that impacted TWB. Owen (2016) found that trusting relationships supported by PLC's encouraged teachers to develop a shared purpose and sense of belonging. She found that these relationships created the work conditions that encouraged teachers to adopt innovative practices, share accomplishments, and increase teacher flourishing.

Collective Vision

Articulating and emphasizing a shared mission or collective sense of purpose was mentioned in eight studies as important. Cherkowski and Walker (2016) found that the principals interviewed in their study described that working together toward a common purpose created a shared emotional bond. This shared common purpose made it possible for teachers to overcome stressful situations and help each other during emotionally difficult times. Likewise, Dorman (2003) found that mission consensus had a statistically significant positive relationship with personal accomplishment and a statistically negative relationship with depersonalization. The research argued that teachers who perceive a high level of agreement on the overall goals of the school tend to have reduced levels of burnout. This shared vision encouraged teacher affiliation and higher levels of organizational commitment.

A shared goal structure or goal orientation of the school that is closely linked to the collective vision was identified as important in seven of the 17 studies. Devos, Dupriez, and Paquay (2012) found that organizational cultures that emphasized mastery

goal orientation, which is characterized by a growth mindset, positively impacted teachers' self-efficacy and an emphasis on performance-goal orientations designed primarily to validate one's abilities was related to feelings of depression. Schlichte, Yssel and Merbler (2005) found that when first-year teachers are mentored with a growth, active learning mindset, they report higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction.

Teacher Efficacy

Maintaining a belief that a teacher has the capabilities and resources necessary to bring about desired outcomes related to student engagement and achievement was mentioned in several of the articles as impactful on TWB. For example, when interviewing resilient teachers working in Australian schools, Howard and Johnson (2004) found that teachers who believed that they could employ effective strategies for working with difficult students were more resilient and effective than teachers who doubted their abilities to use these strategies.

Work Demands

Specific work demands such as time pressure, workload, lack of perceived supports, negative student behaviors, and job stress were cited as impactful to TWB in seven of the 17 articles. For example, Bermejo, Hernandez, and Prieto-Ursua (2015) found that perceived work demands such as student behavioral problems, work overload, and role conflict increased perceived levels of tension and negative impacted TWB. Similarly, Hakanen, Bakker, and Schaufeli (2006) found that demands such as workload, physical environment, and student behaviors contributed to perceptions of job demands and led to teacher burnout.

Autonomy

Teacher autonomy was identified as a salient variable in 6 of the 17 articles. Collie, Shapka, Perry, and Martin (2015) found that teachers' beliefs about school supports that encourage autonomy played a significant role in TWB. In fact, the authors established that perceived autonomy and relationships with students had the broadest influence across several dimensions of well-being and served to buffer burnout. They asserted that when teachers have increased autonomy and feel that their behaviors at work are self-determined, this promotes a sense of ownership and increased feelings of competence. In this setting, autonomy relates to teachers perceiving that they have some control and ownership over curriculum design, utilization of instructional practices that best meet the needs of their students, support from the leadership to respond to demands in a way that is based on their own expertise, and a voice in school-level decision making.

Feedback

Yildirim (2014) found that feedback focused on effective teaching techniques and positive disciplinary techniques increased teacher well-being. In particular, positive and constructive feedback from supervisors made teachers' feel more appreciated, cooperative, and encouraged them to work together more closely to achieve shared goals.

Leader Attributes

Several different attributes of school leaders were associated with impacting TWB and flourishing. Attributes such as flexibility, effective communication, and general leadership were found to be impactful. In interviewing principals to identify how they describe flourishing in their schools, Cherkowski and Walker (2016) found that attributes

such as creating a school culture where teachers work together to accomplish shared goals and cultivating a learning environment that creates opportunity for play and joyful expressions was especially important to school flourishing.

Climate

Having a positive social climate that is defined by maintaining strong peer relationships, mission consensus, community relations, and a focus on instructional practices was shown to positively impact TWB in several studies. Grayson and Alvarez (2008) demonstrated that positive perceptions of the school climate were closely linked to teacher satisfaction, student-teacher relationships, teacher-administrator relationships, and negatively linked to depersonalization and burnout.

Professional Development/Training

Somewhat surprisingly, the importance of providing teachers with quality professional development and training was explicitly mentioned in only two of the 17 articles. Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) found that effective mentoring programs that provide first-year teachers quality training that is directly applied to their duties was perceived as an antidote to feeling isolated and ineffective. Likewise, Yildrim (2014) established that quality professional development that promotes a school culture of collaborative active learning increased feelings of teacher efficacy and professionalism. A possible reason why professional development was not mentioned in more of the studies as an important factor related to TWB is that it most professional development in schools are not designed to explicitly increase well-being. An auxiliary benefit of the training may be an increase in well-being, but this is not the primary objective. For example, training on how to implement a specific reading program can increase teacher

efficacy and engagement, but teachers might not identify this training as impactful on their overall well-being or flourishing.

Summary of Findings of the Literature Search.

An analysis of the articles in the sampled literature pool and the findings associated with each article highlights the complexity of factors that impact TWB and contribute to flourishing in schools. A brief summary of the findings from each article is included in Table 7 below.

Relationships between other teachers, principals, students and parents seem to be widely accepted as related to well-being, however, a myriad of other factors also impact the perceptions of TWB. Evidence from the literature supports the assertion that some of these factors include teacher supports and resources, teacher autonomy, teaming, collective vision, and teacher efficacy.

A host of factors appear to impact TWB, but some of these factors may be more meaningful or impactful than others depending on how individual teachers are impacted by those factors. For example, at the beginning of a teachers career, relationships with more established and experienced teachers maybe more important than at a different point in his or her career. Likewise, having autonomy and structures that encourage shared decision making maybe more important to a more veteran teacher. These individual perceptions and interpretations of school-wide factors would seem to play a vital role in understanding teacher flourishing and are explored throughout this project.

Table 7

Summary of Findings from the Literature Review

Cite	Summary of Findings
1	Proactive coping had an impact on engagement while reactive coping had an impact on burnout. Personal and job resources have significant effects on TWB.
2	Purpose, passion and play are linked to trusting schools and promote flourishing.
3	Well-being mediated need satisfaction that was associated with job satisfaction. Autonomy predicted need satisfaction and perceptions.
4	Goal Structure of the school predicted teacher self-efficacy and burnout. Goal structure is either mastery orientation or performance orientation.
5	Resources fulfill psychological needs that mediate impact of burnout.
6	Staff affiliation and work pressure related to emotional exhaustion. Mission consensus, interactions, co-operation, and orientation related to accomplishment.
7	Parent/community relations and student-peer relations related to emotional exhaustion. Instructional management related to personal accomplishment. Teacher relationships and supervisor relationship related to depersonalization.
8	Burnout mediated high job demands on ill health. Engagement mediated the effect of job resources on commitment. Burnout mediated lacking resources on reduced engagement.
9	Resilient teachers had a sense of agency, strong support groups, pride in accomplishments, and perceived competence in important work roles.
10	Principal support predicted engagement and disciplinary problems predicted exhaustion. Individual characteristics had more impact than school-level factors.
11	PLC's promoted flourishing: positive emotions, shared meaning, collaboration.
12	Teacher's goal orientation predicted coping strategies. Emotion-focused coping predicted engagement and burnout. Relationship between coping and burnout.
13	Higher PBIS implementation related to reduced emotional exhaustion, increased efficacy and accomplishment. Positive rewards reduced depersonalization.
14	Mentoring, social supports, strong building administrators, proper training, and collaboration all impacted experiences of first-year teachers.
15	Job resources stimulate growth and allow teachers to achieve goals.
16	Job satisfaction related to burnout and indirectly related to school context. Exhaustion most related to time pressure. Accomplishment and depersonalization related to relations with parents and admin.
17	Cooperation, feedback, climate, teaching practices, and climate impact TWB.

Discussion of the Literature Search and Research Questions

Gaps in the Literature

Through my literature review, I identified three gaps in the literature that this research project addresses. First, there are very few studies conducted in the United States related to TWB. In my sample, only three of the 17 articles were conducted in the United States. Of these three, the Ross, Romer, and Horner (2012) article is the only study that sampled a population similar to the teachers in the mid-Willamette valley that I propose to study, which is elementary teachers working in public schools. Even though the diversity of the populations sampled in the literature pool speaks to the universality of TWB across several countries and in both public and private school settings, generalizing findings to my locations of interest could be problematic.

The second gap in the research is methodological. Of the articles selected for this literature review, none of them clearly employed both qualitative and quantitative studies in a sequential approach. The sequential mixed method approach used in this project provides an opportunity to both quantitatively measure school-level factors that impact perceptions of PERMA and give teachers a voice in identifying school-level factors that impact their well-being. Including a qualitative component allows more in-depth data collection on and interpretation of the experiences of individual teachers and may help to increase the descriptive power of the findings. The qualitative method also creates an opportunity for teachers to identify school-level factors that impact well-being that might not be included yet in the research model.

Finally, there is a gap in the research on school-level factors that impact TWB. As

was noted in the Ross, Romer, and Horner (2012) article, much of the research that has been conducted focuses on individual teachers as the unit of analysis. This dissertation seeks to understand the complex interplay between individual teacher and school-level factors, and in this way helps to refocus on flourishing educational communities as the system-level structure of interest, but still reflecting the voice of teachers and of teacher work situated within communities.

Research Questions

This study will address the following research questions:

- **Research Question 1 (RQ1):** Using 2016 data from the Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) survey completed by teachers in 103 Oregon elementary schools, can salient school-level factors for "Flourishing Schools" be empirically validated that align with variables identified in the literature as impactful on teacher well-being (TWB)?
- **Research Question 2 (RQ2):** Using data from qualitative focus groups conducted with teachers working in four elementary schools from one Oregon school district, what school level factors do teachers identify as impacting teacher flourishing?
- **Research Question 3 (RQ3):** Do the school-level factors that impact TWB identified from the 2016 TELL survey align with school level factors that impact teacher flourishing identified by teachers in the focus groups?

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions presented in the last section and better understand how school-level factors impact perceptions of teacher flourishing, I completed a two-stage mixed-methods sequential explanatory design as described previously (Creswell, 2014; Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006):

- In Phase 1 to address the first research question, I analyzed data from the 2016 Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) survey that was completed by 18,266 Oregon public school educators (https://telloregon.org/). This statewide survey was designed to measure educator perceptions of teaching and learning conditions in Oregon public schools. I employed a purposive sample (see description in Sample section) of TELL survey data from schools in 10 different Oregon school districts to identify salient school-level factors that align with the factors identified in my literature review as impactful on teacher well-being (TWB).
- In Phase 2 to address the second research question, I conducted qualitative focus group discussions with teachers in one district to identify, compare, and deepen understanding of the school-level factors that impact TWB and explore how those factors impact perceptions of teacher flourishing locally based on the sample context.
- In Phase 3 to address the third research question, I compared factors identified from the TELL survey in Phase 1 with the factors that were

supported by the focus group data in Phase 2. This analysis included a discussion of where the factors from these two data sets converged as well as areas where they diverged.

A visual display of this sequential research design is included below in Figure 3.

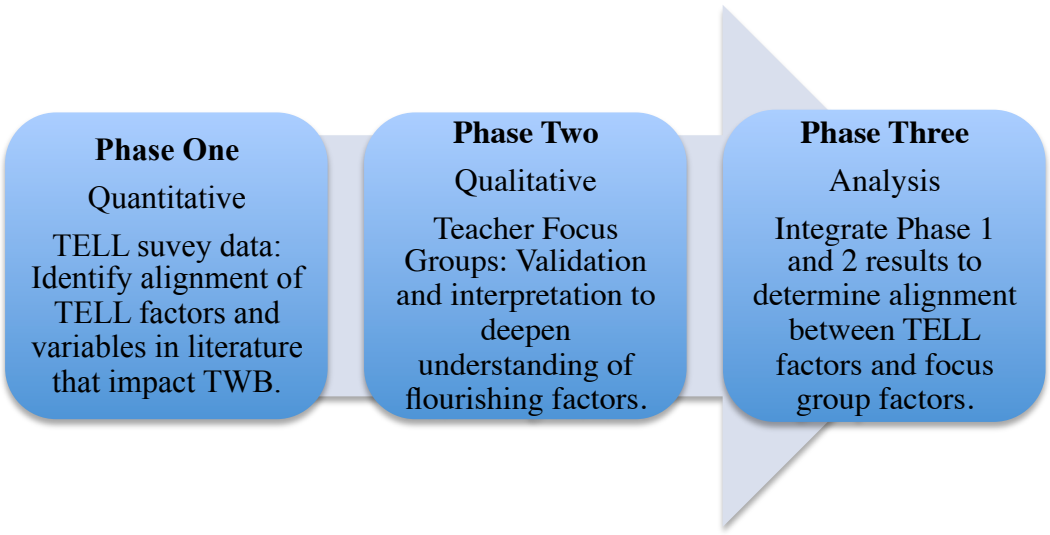

Figure 3. Mixed method sequential research design.

Methodological Overview

Creswell (2014) asserted that the overall purpose of a mixed method sequential design that begins with quantitative data collection and analysis followed by a qualitative data analysis is to have the qualitative data provide a deeper description and explanation of the findings from the quantitative data. For this research project, the quantitative data generated from the TELL survey provided insights into the presence or absence of school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing in the Greater Albany setting. These factors in Phase Two were explored using a qualitative methodology, but the quantitative dimensions identified in the first phase framed the qualitative findings. Using qualitative, more open-ended questions in Phase Two also made it possible capture school factors

that impact TWB that were included on the TELL survey. Integration of the quantitative and qualitative results occur primarily in the analysis and discussion stage, Phase 3 in Figure 3, but the quantitative data also informed both the protocols used for the qualitative focus groups and the identification of participants for the focus groups.

There are several advantages and possible drawbacks to consider when employing this type of mixed-method design. Most importantly for this study, the model provides opportunities for a deeper exploration of the results. Ivankova, Creswell, and Stick (2006) argued that this type of design can be especially important if unique findings arise from the quantitative study that need further explanation in a qualitative setting. As was evidenced by the myriad of variables identified in the literature review, the construct of teacher flourishing is multifaceted and impacted by a host of individual and school-level factors. The mixed method design allowed for both a larger-scale factor analysis drawing a sample of the relatively large and representative TELL survey data as well incorporating input from individual teachers about their interpretation of these factors. The design also creates space for individual teacher voices and perceptions. These individual perceptions were lacking in most of the reviewed literature.

However, there are also drawbacks that need to be accounted for in this research design. These limitations include: difficulties with linking quantitative and qualitative data especially since the participant sample does not directly overlap (Creswell, 2014); the time required to complete these studies (Cameron, 2009); complexity with data displays and explanations (Cameron, 2009); and the blurring of the lines between traditional definitions of validity and reliability between qualitative and quantitative approaches (Gilbert, 2006). The sequential approach is often used at a more generative

stage when ideas are being captured and confirmed, which is the case with the research questions in this project. So even though this type of mixed methods design may add complexity and time, to understand a complex construct like teacher flourishing and to explain how school-level factors impact individual perceptions of teacher flourishing, I believe the flexibility and descriptive power of this model is helpful.

In the following sections I describe in more detail my methodology. Specifically, I describe the following: (a) theoretical and empirical framework; (b) research design; (c) data collection and analysis; and (d) possible limitations of this research design.

Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks guided this work. First, the PERMA model of well-being articulated by Seligman (2011) was presented in the first chapter as an organizing framework for the literature review, and a description of the outcome state of Flourishing. Even though it is not an explanatory model that seeks to isolate and understand specific conditions or attributes that impact flourishing, the PERMA model provides a description of what it looks like to flourish. It is helpful because it provides an operational definition and a theoretical foundation for flourishing. PERMA is the desired outcome of teacher well-being and is easily understood by teachers and researchers alike. The PERMA model was particularly helpful in the teacher focus groups to quickly introduce participants to the concept of flourishing.

Secondly, the Job-Demands Resource Model (J D-R) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) is used to explain how school factors identified by both the quantitative and qualitative phases in this study positively or negatively impact perceptions of teacher flourishing. This theory is widely applied in organizational studies (Bakker & Bal, 2010)

because it provides a theoretical lens for understanding how workers balance the positive aspects of work that contribute to personal growth and accomplishment against the more negative aspects of the workplace that require sustained mental or physical effort. The J D-R model also is important because it can help explain how negative factors that impact teacher well-being can be buffered by positive school resources (Bakker, Hakanen, Demerouti & Xanthopoulou, 2007). A visual representation of the JD-R Model is presented in Figure 4.

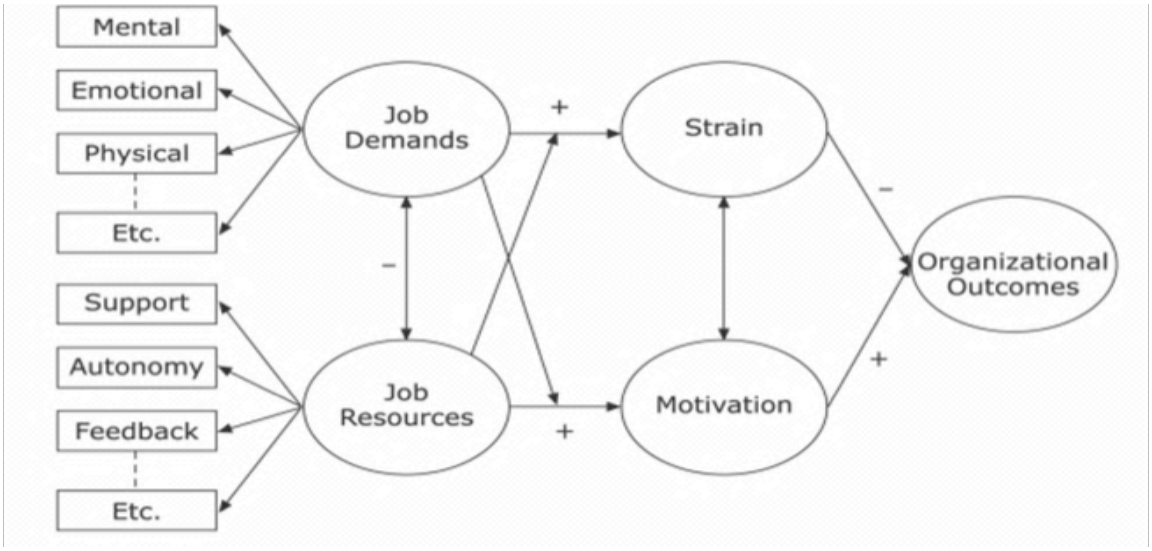

Figure 4. Job-Demands Resources model. Reprinted from *The Job Demands–Resources model: Challenges for future research* by E. Demerouti and A. Bakker, 2011, *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology, 37*(2), Art. #974, Copyright 2011 by Demerouti and Bakker.

Taken together, the PERMA theory of flourishing and the J D-R Model provide a mechanism for better understanding how a variety of school level resources and demands could impact perceptions of teacher flourishing. The PERMA model describes the desired outcome of TWB whereas the J D-R Model is a transactional theory that describes the process of how different factors are considered by individuals to be resources or

demands. However, neither model identifies school factors that specifically impact teacher flourishing, since they are more general models. The review of the literature related to teacher well-being produced a long list of factors and variables that have been shown to impact well-being. In this dissertation I seek to narrow that list by asking teachers in one school district to explain factors that impact their flourishing and align those factors with items on the TELL survey. It is the goal of this research project to use the J D-R model as a framework to explain how teachers process factors and the PERMA model to explain the outcome of TWB. Data from the study will identify the actual factors that impact flourishing, in the case of the study samples.

Research Design

In this section I present a description of the sampling logic, setting, and participants for both phases of this project. Since these phases draw on different populations and employ different sampling logics, I describe each phase separately. Following this explanation of the sampling and setting, I present the unit of analysis and the temporal aspect for this project.

Phase 1: Oregon TELL Survey

Phase 1: Sampling logic. Data from the TELL survey administered in Spring 2016 to educators at 103 elementary schools in Oregon was analyzed in Phase 1. This data set included survey data completed by educators working in 90 schools representing nine different school districts in addition to data from each of the 13 elementary schools in Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS). Since this population frame is based on a set of predetermined characteristics, see next paragraph, that define inclusion in the sample (only school-level data from selected school districts is included), this is considered a

single-stage, purposive sampling technique (Creswell, 2014).

Ten Oregon school districts were included in the sampling frame for the TELL analysis. These 10 districts each had a minimum of 325 educator responses on the 2016 TELL survey and each had at least 10 elementary schools that reported TELL data. To protect educator anonymity, results on the TELL survey were only made public if a minimum of 50% of eligible participants at an individual school completed the survey. Therefore, some districts that would meet this critiera were excluded because they did not have 10 reporting elementary schools. The one school district that met these criteria but was not included in the sample was Portland Public Schools (PPS). PPS was excluded because the district is much larger and organized differently than all other districts in the state. These differences would have made it difficult to compare results with the other schools in the sample.

Table 8

School Districts Included in TELL Analysis

District	Total Students	Educator Response	Eligible Schools	Schools Included
Beaverton SD	40,568	1,970	32	10
Bend-LaPine	17,517	680	14	10
David Douglas	10,800	586	10	10
Gresham Barlow	11,070	479	10	10
Greater Albany	9,399	325	13	13
Hillsboro	20,836	411	12	10
Reynolds	10,400	442	10	10
Salem Kaiser	41,100	1,964	41	10
Springfield	11,045	464	12	10
Tigard-Tualatin	12,799	584	10	10
Total		7,905	164	103

Note: Total student data is based on 2016 Oregon Department of Education fall membership.

To generate similar samples from each school district included in this study, only 10 elementary schools from each individual district were included. Elementary schools in districts with more than 10 eligible schools were assigned a numerical value and a random number generator was used to select individual schools for the sample. For example, Beaverton School District (BSD) had 1,970 educators from 32 schools report results on the 2016 TELL survey. Each of the 32 reporting schools were assigned a number between 1-32. Using the random number generator on the Random.org website, 10 individual schools from BSD were randomly selected to be included in the sample. This same process was replicated to select schools from the Bend-LaPine, Hillsboro, Salem-Kaiser, and Springfield school districts. Babbie (2013) asserted that this process of random sampling enhances the likelihood that the units selected more accurately describe the overall population of interest. Information about the total number of students from each district, the number of educators who responded to the TELL survey, the number of eligible schools from each district, and the number of schools identified is included above in table 8.

Phase 1: Setting and participants. The settings for Phase 1 are 10 relatively large school districts located in 6 different counties throughout Oregon. The sizes of the districts range from 41,100 students in Salem-Keizer to 9,399 students in GAPS. These districts represent the economic, linguistic, and cultural diversity of the state at large. The poverty ratings in each district vary from a high of 76% of students in David Douglas qualifying for free/reduced lunches to 32% of students qualified for free/reduced lunches

in Tigard-Tualatin. The racial diversity of the students in the sample is slightly higher than the overall percentage of students of color throughout the state.

Table 9

Demographic Characteristics of Students in Sampled Districts

District	Total Students	Free/Reduced	Non-white Students
Beaverton	40,568	37%	50%
Bend-LaPine	17,517	41%	17%
David Douglas	10,800	76%	59%
Gresham Barlow	11,070	56%	40%
Greater Albany	9,399	46%	21%
Hillsboro	20,836	44%	52%
Reynolds	10,400	67%	**
Salem Kaiser	41,100	63%	48%
Springfield	11,045	62%	32%
Tigard-Tualatin	12,799	32%	41%

Note: Data for the % of Non-white student in Reynolds District was not publically available.

For the sample, 46% of students in the identified districts are non-white, whereas in the state of Oregon 36% of students are non-white (Oregon Educator Equity Report, 2016). This elevated percentage of non-white students could be related to higher rates of students of color attending the larger, primarily urban/suburban school districts included in this sample compared to the students who attend smaller, more rural districts throughout the state. A summary of the demographic descriptors of these school districts is included in Table 9.

Figure 5 illustrates the geographic location of the sampled school districts. Six of the districts are in the greater Portland metro area and all of the districts with the exception of Bend-LaPine are located in the Willamette Valley. This concentration

reflects the overall population trends in Oregon where the greatest numbers of people live in the greater Portland area and on the west side of the state.

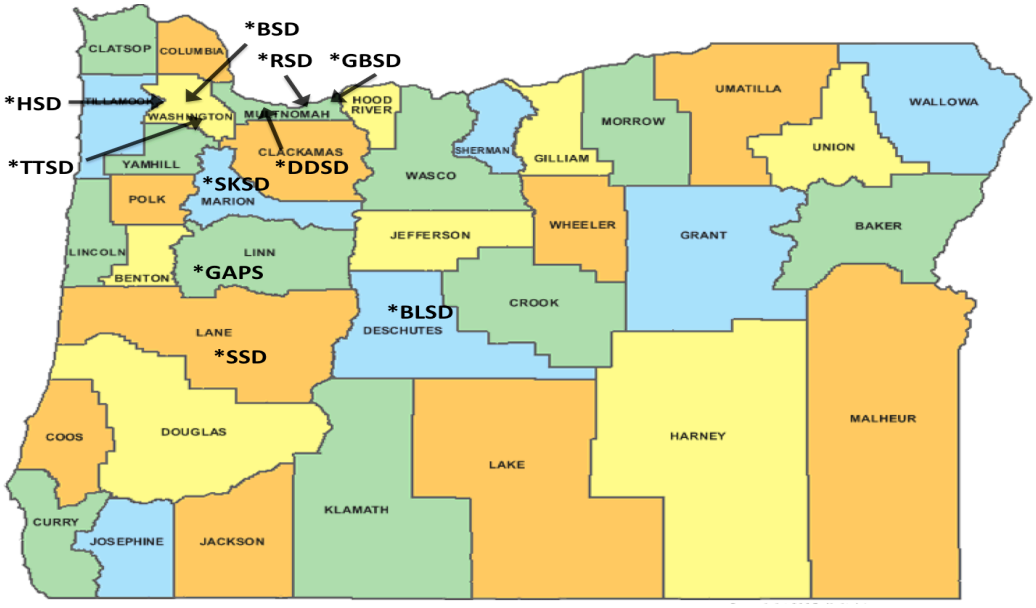

Figure 5. Location of School Districts in TELL Sample. Map of Oregon retrieved on March 10, 2018, from https://www.digital-topo-maps.com/county-map/oregon.shtml Copyright 2005 digital-topo-maps.com.
Note: BSD=Beaverton School District, RSD=Reynolds School District, GBSD=Gresham Barlow School District, HSD=Hillsboro School District, TTSD=Tigard Tualatin School District, DDSD=David Douglas School District, SKSD=Salem Kaiser School District, GAPS=Greater Albany School District, SSD=Springfield School District, BLSD=Bend LaPine School District

Participants for Phase 1 were educators working in one of the 103 schools from the 10 school districts included in the sample. In Oregon, approximately 10% of teachers are non-white. This racial composition is also reflected in the sample of districts included for this study. For example, 10% of teachers in Salem-Keizer are teachers of color, 11% in Tigard-Tualatin, 9% in Greater Albany, and 11% in Hillsboro (Oregon Educator Equity Report, 2016).

Phase 2: Flourishing Focus Groups

Phase 2: Sampling logic. For Phase 2, I selected participants from the GAPS district using a mixed methods "nested" single stage convenience sampling technique (Teddlie & Yu, 2007). This sampling technique incorporates a purposive sampling frame designed to first discover quantitative information about a larger sample (in this setting all elementary schools in GAPS) and then uses that information to create a sampling frame for the qualitative strand (focus groups at individual schools within GAPS).

Greater Albany Public Schools was selected as a convenience sample. As an elementary building principal in GAPS I have unique access to both teachers and schools. I am also very interested in using my position in the district to advocate for the implementation of factors that increase teacher flourishing in all schools. In this fashion, this dissertation is an action research project designed to not only identify factors that impact flourishing, but also encourage more flourishing across the district.

Using averages from the 2016 TELL survey I was able to identify four different elementary schools in GAPS to recruit participants for the focus groups: a high, medium-high, medium, and low scoring school. After sending an introductory email, I attended staff meetings at each of the schools and asked all licensed teachers to participate in a focus group discussion about school factors that impact teacher flourishing at their school. Copies of the introductory and follow-up emails and the script I used to recruit teachers are included in Appendix B. A copy of the participant consent form for the focus groups is included in Appendix C and Appendix D.

Phase 2: Setting and participants. The setting for the qualitative focus groups was GAPS district located in Albany, Oregon. In Fall 2016, GAPS enrolled over 9,200

students and was the 14th largest school district in Oregon (Oregon Statewide Report Card, 2016-17). The GAPS district was formed in 1951 when several smaller school districts merged with the larger Albany school district. The town of Albany has approximately 51,000 people and is located in the central Willamette Valley. Local industry in Albany is largely dependent on farming and manufacturing jobs (City of Albany, Oregon, 2015). Following the national trends, the unemployment rate in Albany peaked at 14.8% in 2009 and has been gradually declining to the current level of 6.5% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). However, many of the jobs that have been added are in the service sector with the number of higher-paying manufacturing jobs in decline for the last 20 years.

GAPS is comprised of 13 elementary schools, four middle schools, one alternative high school, and two comprehensive high schools. The elementary schools is the focus of this study. They range in size from 441 students at South Shore Elementary to 164 students at Tangent Elementary (Oregon Department of Education State Report Card, 2015-16). Information about each school including the number of teachers, total number of students, percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced lunches, and percentage of non-white students is included in Table 10. Even though there are many unique characteristics at each of these schools, there are also several commonalities between them. Every elementary school in the district maintains a functioning Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) that is comprised of classroom teachers and the school principal. These teams drive the professional development at each school and articulate measureable annual goals for the school community. All elementary schools have implemented structures to support a Response to Instruction (RtI) model to guide

instructional decisions for all students. Each school also uses a common reading and math core curriculum, has an intervention block to support struggling learners, and has a school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) system.

Table 10

Demographic Characteristics of Greater Albany Elementary Schools

School	Teachers	Students	Free/Reduced	Non-white Students	Non-white Teachers
Central-Takena	22	319	55%	21%	0%
Clover Ridge (k-2)	16	313	34%	13%	6%
Lafayette	17	320	79%	35%	0%
Liberty	16	347	33%	17%	0%
North Albany	14	301	16%	15%	7%
Oak	15	335	50%	17%	0%
Oak-Fir Grove	20	261	16%	11%	5%
Periwinkle	22	403	57%	36%	4%
South Shore	30	441	78%	69%	38%
Sunrise	27	410	86%	45%	0%
Tangent	11	164	68%	23%	0%
Timber Ridge (3-5)	12	229	46%	18%	3%
Waverly	18	245	80%	45%	12%

Participants for the flourishing focus groups were drawn from four of these elementary schools. The elementary teaching population in GAPS is predominantly white and predominantly female. Ninety-two percent of the teachers are white/non-Hispanic and 93% of the elementary teachers are women. Even though these percentages do not reflect the racial and gender composition of the student population in GAPS, they do reflect overall teacher employment trends in Oregon. According to the 2016 Oregon

Department of Education Equity report (Oregon Depart of Education Equity Report, 2016), 91.5 % of the teaching force in Oregon is white/Non-Hispanic and 91% of elementary teachers are women. The one noticeable difference with the racial composition of teachers in GAPS is at South Shore Elementary. Since this school is dual language and has made an effort to recruit and retain Hispanic teachers, the percentage of non-white teachers is significantly higher.

Units of Analysis

My dissertation has two units of analysis: the school level and the small group level. In Phase 1, the unit of analysis is the school and is based on scores from the 2016 TELL survey. All questions on the TELL survey are directed at the school level and the data are reported at the school level. For example, items related to managing student conduct include the prompts "Students at this school understand expectations for their conduct" and "The faculty work in a school environment that is safe." Individual teacher reports on these measures are included in an averaged score for the school. These averaged scores are made publicly available on the TELL Oregon website (https://telloregon.org/).

In Phase 2, focus group participants were asked to identify school level factors that impact their individual perceptions and experiences of teacher flourishing. Even though the factors themselves are at the school level, the focus group discussions encouraged participants to create a shared understanding of how those factors impact teachers at this particular school. Thus, the focus groups allow for an analysis of the possible linkages between school factors identified on the TELL survey and the focus group members' shared perceptions of teacher flourishing.

Brownell and Smith (1992) suggested that a multilevel analysis like the one employed for this study allows for a deeper understanding of how complex interlocking units within an organization impact educator outcomes and attitudes. Calling on systems theory and ecological modeling, Brownell and Smith asserted that educator outcomes can be best understand when they are placed in a model that considers the macrosystem (state or federal policies), exosystem (school district policies and initiatives), mesosystem (school-level conditions, supports, or structures), and the microsystem (individual teacher or teacher team characteristics, relationships, and classroom structures).

For this dissertation, the focus of analysis was the first two levels of this ecological model: the mesosystem and the microsystem. For this research project, an analysis of the mesosystem includes understanding school-level factors that impact flourishing such as administrator supports, student conduct, teaming, teacher autonomy, etc. The TELL survey employed in Phase 1 targets this level of analysis. The microsystem includes studying personal characteristics, relationships, teacher engagement, and classroom climate. The focus group discussions in Phase 2 focuses on the microsystem and seeks to understand how mesosystem factors impact collective teacher perceptions. This multilevel analysis also allows for understanding how different groups of teachers may interpret the same collection of school-level factors as job demands or resources.

Time Aspect

I employed a cross-sectional analysis for this project. Data for Phase 1 from the 2016 TELL survey that was completed in Spring 2016 were taken as a snapshot (Babbie, 2013) of school conditions that impacted teaching and learning at that point in time. Data

for Phase 2 was gathered at a different point in time (Winter 2018), but an analysis of possible change between these two time frames is not the focus. Babbie (2013) documents that it is common practice in social science research to use a cross-sectional analysis such as this design to explain how a specific phenomenon impacts a population at a particular point in time.

Data Collection and Analysis

In keeping with the sequential, mixed-method design, I collected two sets of data. First, I collected extant data from the 2016 Oregon TELL survey to identify school factors that impacted teaching and learning. I also used this data set to develop protocols for the qualitative follow-up interviews and to identify participants for the qualitative focus groups. Secondly, I used these protocols to conduct focus groups interviews with teachers at four comparison GAPS elementary schools.

In this section I discuss each phase of data collection sequentially, beginning with a description of the TELL survey and how I analyzed the quantitative data. Next, I turn to the qualitative phase of the research project and explain how I employed a modified nominal group technique to structure conversations with groups of teachers, how I collected data from those discussions, and eventually analyzed that data.

Phase 1: Quantitative Survey Data

In this section I present an overview of the Oregon TELL Survey, discuss the psychometric properties of the survey, describe how the survey was administered, and explain how data from the survey was analyzed.

TELL survey description. The New Teacher Center (NTC) developed the Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Survey in 2002. The survey was

originally administered by the North Carolina Teaching Standards Commission to better understand factors contributing to teacher satisfaction and future employment trends. Researchers at NTC incorporated many of the constructs from that original surveys into the Oregon TELL survey. Since 2008, the TELL survey in its current configuration has been administered to 769,000 teachers in 20 states.

Several research projects have been recently conducted using data generated from the TELL survey. Johnson, Kraft, and Papay (2011) used TELL survey data to study how work conditions in Massachusetts predicted teachers' job satisfaction and future career plans. They established that social work conditions such as collegial relationships, principal leadership, and school culture directly impacted teacher ratings of job satisfaction and impacted their plans to continue teaching. Similarly, Ladd (2011) used data from the TELL survey in North Carolina to document that work conditions in schools are highly predictive of teachers' planned movement. She also found that school leadership was the most powerful factor impacting workplace conditions. More recently, Ingersoll, Sirinides, and Dougherty (2017) published a research project using TELL data to better understand the impacts of teacher leadership on student achievement. The authors found that schools with higher levels of both instructional leadership and teacher leadership also had greater levels of student achievement.

In Oregon, the TELL survey was first administered in 2014 and then again in 2016. In 2014, 19,373 respondents accounting for 59% of all Oregon educators completed the survey. In 2016, 18,266 respondents accounting for 54% of educators completed the survey (https://telloregon.org/results/66). For both of these surveys, if an individual school had at least a 50% return rate, the data were made publicly available on

the TELL Oregon Website (https://telloregon.org/results/66). The TELL is also currently being administered (February 2018) for the third time in Oregon.

The 2016 Oregon TELL measured eight core constructs with 84 items related to conditions for teaching and learning: time, facilities and resources, community support and involvement, managing student conduct, teacher leadership and autonomy, school leadership, professional development, and instructional practices and supports. A typical item asked educators to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement such as "There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect at this school." Each question was related specifically to understanding school-level conditions.

Based on the themes that emerged from the literature review discussed in the first chapter that were related to teacher well-being, I sampled items from five of the eight core constructs: student conduct, teacher leadership/autonomy, school leadership, professional development, and instructional supports. By excluding questions from the time, facilities and resources, and community support and involvement domains, this shortened analysis of the survey included a total of 56 items. A summary of items included in this shortened version are listed in Appendix E. A visual model of the factors isolated for this study is included as Figure 6.

Figure 6. TELL Survey factors related to teacher flourishing.

TELL psychometric properties. Validity and reliability for the TELL was established both by external researchers and survey developers at the NTC. For the developers of the TELL, content validity was established through an extensive review of the literature, item-measure correlations, and the fit of the items to model expectations (Clifford, Menon, Gangi, Condon, & Hornung, 2012). The NTC further verified the validity of the instrument by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis to establish the stability of the instrument across survey populations and to group variables with similar characteristics together. This factor analysis was later confirmed by Swanlund (2011) who was hired as an outside researcher to evaluate the psychometric properties of the TELL Survey. Swanlund's confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that the eight TELL dimensions were largely measuring different phenomenon. There was moderate but not strong correlation or overlap between the different dimensions with the highest correlation between the conditions of time and community support (.584) and the lowest correlations between the measurement of leadership and professional development (.124).

Researchers at NTC also established acceptable internal reliability for the

instrument demonstrating coefficients for Cronbach's alpha scores that ranged from 0.82 to 0.96. The 2016 Oregon TELL Survey appears to be a reasonably reliable and valid instrument that has a high degree of theoretical overlap with the themes from the literature review presented in this proposal.

TELL protocol administration. Individual educators at participating schools throughout the state of Oregon completed the TELL survey in February 2016. The actual administration conditions of the survey varied across school districts. Some districts such as Salem-Keizer, David Douglas, Greater Albany, and Bend-LaPine encouraged all teachers to complete the survey and published completion rates for school administrators to ensure a minimum of 50% response rate. Many administrators at these schools devoted a staff meeting to completing the survey. Several districts that promoted the survey in this fashion received data from all elementary schools allowing for comparisons between schools. Other districts such as Eugene 4J and Medford did not place as much emphasis on the survey and had very spotty returns. For example, only 3 of the 17 eligible elementary schools in Eugene 4J received school-level results from the TELL survey, due to low response rates. One of the drawbacks to using extant data such as the TELL survey is the variability in how the instrument was administered at each school. This concern will be discussed below in the limitations section of this chapter. Data from the 103 schools included in the sample is publicly available on the TELL Oregon website (https://telloregon.org/).

TELL data analysis. Data from the sample were analyzed using principle component analysis to conduct a factor study. According to Green and Salkind (2008), a factor study can be used to examine organizing relationships between multiple factors

included in a specific instrument. The analysis can also help to interpret variation and covariation between factors and can help reduce a large number of overlapping measures to a smaller set of variables. When applied to the 56 items from the five categories sampled from the condensed TELL survey, the factor study helped group items together based on the variability in the survey results. This analysis made it possible to begin to identify how collections of individual items grouped together as salient factors and accounted for the most variability in the sample. These salient Flourishing factors were then compared to the variables found in the literature on teacher well-being and the themes that emerged from the qualitative focus groups.

Phase 2: Qualitative Focus Group Data

In this section I outline the steps in the qualitative phase of this project. I first explain the adaptation of the Nominal Group Technique (NGT) that I used to structure the focus groups (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975). Next, I explain how the protocols for the NGT were developed. Finally, I describe how the data was analyzed using a thematic coding process.

Modified nominal group technique. NGT is a structured small group process that is designed to solicit input from a variety of stakeholders about a specific topic (Delbecq, Van de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975). By creating interaction structures that provide time for both individual contributions and group discussions, NGT helps to support relatively equal participation and creates a structure for reaching group consensus (Macphail, 2001). During an NGT focus group, the facilitator gathers information by asking participants to respond to a set of questions or comments that are presented orally to the group. Based on responses generated through this process, the facilitator then asks

group members to categorize or rank order the suggestions of all of the group members. Thus, the process produces both an exhaustive list that gives voice to minority perspectives, and also a consolidated list that is collectively organized by the group.

For this research project, participants were asked to organize their responses into different categories related to dimensions on the TELL survey, but not rank order them by importance or impact. This modification to the NGT protocol allowed each individual factor that is placed in the TELL categories to carry the same level of significance as another factor. Given the very personal nature of factors that impact flourishing, asking participants to rank order the factors based on their relative impact could have made some participants feel like their factor is not as important as others. For example, a single participant in a group might identify student relationships as an important factor that impacts her flourishing and record this factor on her sticky note. Even though they are not articulated by other group members and would most likely not be ranked highly enough to be recorded on a consolidated list, student relationships are nonetheless impactful to her flourishing. Asking participants to organize their factors according the TELL dimensions, but not rank order them, created the opportunity to both analyze the diversity of responses and record the most frequently cited factors.

Advantages and disadvantages of the NGT. One of the advantages of using the NGT process instead of a more open-ended focus group format is that the balance of influence by outspoken individuals in the group were moderated by the interaction structures of the NGT (Macphail, 2013). During the brainstorming and categorizing steps, all voices in the room were heard and all ideas were recorded. During the brainstorming phase, each individual teacher recorded their own ideas on note cards that were

eventually placed on chart paper located around the room. An advantage to this method is that it provided a structure for the group to quickly clarify and organize different factors that might impact flourishing. During the group discussion, individual group members asked clarifying questions to each other to ensure that all group members agreed on the definitions of factors being discussed. For this flourishing study, this process of group sense-making was particularly important because individual teachers could interpret some of the concepts being discussed differently. For example, the notion of experiencing "joy at school" could be related primarily to *positive* emotional feelings for one person, but could also describe a more *meaningful* connection to work by a different person. The NGT structure encouraged participants to come to agreement about these complex constructs.

Another advantage to the modified NGT is that it produced two sets of data: the notes that were placed on the chart packs around the room and the transcripts of the focus group discussions themselves. These two sources of data allowed for both an analysis of what the individual teacher identified as impactful and an analysis of how the group of teachers coalesced around specific themes that impact flourishing at their school. Thus, this method allows for both individual and collective perceptions of flourishing. These two sets of data also make it possible to evaluate if there are similarities or differences between how people think about flourishing as an individual and how they talk about flourishing with a group of colleagues.

One of the disadvantages of the NGT is that the process follows a script that is not as fluid as a grounded interview approach. Whereas the NGT structure makes it easier to compare differences across groups and facilitate the discussion in a similar fashion across

settings, it isn't as responsive as a more open-ended interview process. Another disadvantage is the time it takes to conduct an NGT group restricts the overall number of questions or topics that can be discussed. Each session can take 1-2 hours and only answer a handful of questions because it involves an in-depth discussion of the topic at hand and a process to categorize responses.

NGT protocol administration. After a brief introduction to the study and an explanation of the PERMA model, teachers were asked to brainstorm factors that impact their flourishing and write each factor on an individual sticky note. During this step, participants were asked to not discuss their ideas or engage in conversation with their colleagues. Following the brainstorming step, teachers presented each idea or factor to the group in a round-robin fashion. During this discussion phase participants were encouraged to expand on their sticky notes and ask each other clarifying questions. During the focus group discussions, the comments typically started with an explanation of the sticky note factors, but expanded and broadened during the group discussion. Recording, transcribing, and coding the group discussion allowed for an analysis of themes that emerged during the discussion that were not included on the sticky notes.

Once all factors written on the sticky notes had been discussed, teachers were asked to place each individual note on a chart pack poster that best corresponded to the factor written on the note. Each chart pack poster was titled according to one of the five category of items sampled from the TELL survey: building leadership, teacher leadership, instructional supports and practices, professional development, and student conduct. A sixth poster with the title of "Other Flourishing Factors" was also included to capture factors that did not fit into one of the five TELL categories. Following the

placement of the sticky notes on the TELL category posters, teachers were asked if there are any other factors that might impact flourishing that we didn't discuss. These last factors were briefly discussed and added to the list of factors on the poster.

The NGT was conducted in six steps: 1) introduction of teacher flourishing and a brief explanation of the research project; 2) presentation of the question ("What school-level factors impact teacher flourishing at this school") and encouragement of individual idea generation without group conversations; 3) participant creation of lists of factors that impact flourishing, followed by sharing those factors with the group; 4) group discussion of each flourishing factor; 5) placement of factors on posters related to TELL dimensions; 6) tabulation of factors on each dimension and conclusion. The script I used for the NGT groups is included in Appendix F and a summary of the NGT steps is included in Appendix G.

At the conclusion of the focus groups, I told the teachers that they could send me additional information in an email about any of the topics discussed. This statement was included to give participants who wanted to raise a difficult issue, but did not feel comfortable discussing the issue in the group setting, an opportunity to have their opinion included. Following the focus groups, three teachers sent emails and those email statements were included in the data set that was coded and analyzed for each school.

***NGT data analysis*.** Creswell (2014) outlined several steps that can be followed when analyzing qualitative data. These steps include data collection and organization, coding, representation of data, and data interpretation. His suggestions informed the qualitative data analysis for this study and will be discussed briefly in this section.

First, Creswell asserted that the researcher collect and transcribe interviews, field

notes, and documents from the interviews or focus groups. For this study, data collected included the teacher notes organized according to the TELL dimensions and transcriptions from the focus group discussions. Next, Creswell suggested that the researcher organize the data and prepare it for analysis. This step is designed to give the researcher a general overview the data and reflect on the meaning from a broader purview. For this project, I first collected the 243 teacher notes from all the focus groups in the thematic categories where the participants had placed them. For example, the 59 notes placed on the building leadership poster from each individual focus group were consolidated on one large building leadership poster. To summarize and analyze the group discussions, I first listened to the entire recorded discussions from each focus group session without interruptions and took notes on emergent themes and possible codes. Next, I transcribed each group discussion verbatim and noted chronologically when comments were discussed. I also recorded the time when the comments were made to allow for quick retrieval and deeper analysis of individual comments. As I transcribed the discussion I paused the recording after each statement and quickly included a sentence or phrase to describe that statement. These descriptive phrases that I added were not included in the final transcriptions, but this process allowed me to both create transcriptions of the data, but also become very familiar with the discussions and start thinking about possible themes.

Creswell asserted that coding the data is the next and possibly most involved step when conducting qualitative data analysis. He described coding as the process of organizing data into thematic categories and naming those categories. For the teacher notes, I grouped the sticky notes from each poster into thematic sub-categories that

captured the general theme of the individual notes. For example, on the teacher leadership poster, participants had placed sticky notes related to collaboration, peer feedback, shared resources, relationships, and teacher autonomy. By identifying these sub-categories I was able to count the number of factors related to each overall TELL dimension and count the number of notes related to each sub-categories. The summary of these notes and the corresponding sub-categories will be presented in the next chapter.

I employed a semi-structured open coding system to identify themes from the transcribed focus group discussions. Developing this system involved a multistep process. First, I imported the focus group transcriptions into the MAXQDA:2018 qualitative coding software program. Next, I reread the transcriptions that were loaded into the MAXQDA program to identify general themes that seemed to summarize individual comments. I recorded each of these themes as a code within the MAXQDA program. After creating a list of 208 codes that summarized all of the comments in the transcriptions, I began to consolidate the list of codes into more generalized themes or coding categories. I continued to use this consolidation process until I could no longer capture individual themes under a unified coding category. Following this process I was able to reduce the number of primary codes to 18 power codes with the top six codes accounting for 278 or 60% of the total number of coded sections. Most of these power codes contain subcategories that relate to individual comments in the transcriptions. For example, the category of Administrator Attributes is divided into comments made about administrators being present or involved, friendly or welcoming, flexible, willing to take action, and encouraging open communication.

It is important to note that the recording of the focus group discussions was not

transcribed and analyzed at the individual teacher level. This level of analysis was not considered in order to protect the confidentiality of the focus group participants and was in keeping with Institutional Review Board application. Also, the level of analysis for this research project is the school-level and the group-level. Even though individual interpretations and experiences of flourishing factors are important, the focus groups were designed to solicit information about school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing and lead to shared understanding of those factors. When analyzing and presenting the findings from the focus groups, the number of groups that discuss a specific issue was included in the analysis, but the number of individual teachers who discuss a specific issue was not recorded and was not included in the analysis. Likewise, individual comments from teachers were not associated with demographic descriptors of that specific teacher. Even though restricting the types of conclusions that can be drawn between different groups of teachers (for example between specialists and classroom teachers), this step was taken to protect the anonymity of the focus group participants.

Creswell asserted that data representation is the next step of qualitative data analysis. For this project, themes and contextualized descriptions about teacher flourishing are represented in the next chapter using narrative descriptions, tables, and figures. Finally, Creswell presents an interpretation of the data as the last step in qualitative data analysis. This step includes the researcher drawing meaning from the qualitative data and comparing the findings with prior literature or other sources of data. In the next two chapters, I seek to understand the relationship between the qualitative data generated from the focus groups and the underlying factors that emerged from the TELL survey. I also seek to understand how both of these data sets compare to variables

identified in the literature related to teacher well-being and flourishing.

Limitations to the Methodology

Internal Validity Threats

There are several internal and external threats to validity for this proposal. First, a measurement threat related to the use of extant data collected at different schools needs to be considered when interpreting the TELL data. For example, schools that asked teachers to complete the survey during allotted time at a staff meeting versus requiring the teachers to complete the survey outside of the school day could produce different results. Creswell (2014) asserts that this type of internal validity threat can contribute some limitations to drawing accurate inferences from the data.

Selection bias is another internal validity threat for both phases of this research project. For Phase 1, only schools that had more than 50% of teachers complete the survey have reported data. In some school districts completing the survey was a priority for district leaders and all teachers were encouraged to complete the survey. Other districts did not have this priority. The desire to collect this type of data from teachers and then have the data be made available might have impacted the types of school districts that participated. For Phase 2, another possible selection bias relates to the selection of focus group participants. Since all participants were volunteers and not all teachers at each school participated, only teachers who are more interested in the topic of flourishing participated. These members did represent different grade-levels, departments, and years of service, but they are still volunteers and might not represent the overall school population.

A third threat is an experimenter bias that exists because I work as an administrator in the school district where the focus groups were conducted. The NGT structure used for this study can help guard against implicit bias, but the group of teachers participating in the discussion knew that I am a school principal and colleague. This is especially important to consider because a salient factor on the TELL survey and in the literature on teacher well-being is school leadership and school administration. During the introduction I reassured participants that comments made during the focus group were confidential, but it is important to recognize that my role in the district might impact responses.

External Validity Threats

Creswell (2014) outlined three interaction threats to external validity: selection and treatment, setting and treatment, and history and treatment. All of these threats need to be considered for this project. Interaction of selection and treatment relates to the inability to make generalized statements about a representative population based on responses from a selected number of individuals drawn from that population. Given that I used a non-randomized method to identify districts to include in the TELL analysis, generalizations that apply to all teachers in Oregon were not be made. Also, for the focus groups, a discussion of the factors that participants generate was confined to explaining the experience of teachers at the individual school and not for all teachers in GAPS. Interaction of the setting and treatment related to avoiding making generalizations about settings that were not included in the sample. During the analysis and interpretation I took caution to avoid making statements about schools or teachers in different settings.

Finally, Creswell (2014) discusses the importance of not making generalizations

to past and future events based on data from a specific time-period. This consideration is extremely important for the Flourishing project because school conditions can change substantially from year-to-year. The conclusions generated from this study should be considered isolated snapshots that describe factors that impacted teacher flourishing at a specific school during a specific time period, but may not necessarily explain all considerations of future conditions at this set of schools. Therefore, the recommendations from this study should be related specifically to flourishing as it was perceived by teachers in 2016 for the TELL survey and 2018 for the focus group data.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

As noted in Chapter 1, this dissertation study was designed to answer three research questions, which will be repeated here for clarity.

- **Research Question 1 (RQ1):** Using 2016 data from the Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) survey completed by teachers in 103 Oregon elementary schools, can salient school-level factors for "Flourishing Schools" be empirically validated that align with variables identified in the literature as impactful on teacher well-being (TWB)?
- **Research Question 2 (RQ2):** Using data from qualitative focus groups conducted with teachers working in four elementary schools from one Oregon school district, what school level factors do teachers identify as impacting teacher flourishing?
- **Research Question 3 (RQ3):** Do the school-level factors that impact TWB identified from the 2016 TELL survey align with school level factors that impact teacher flourishing identified by teachers in the focus groups?

I have organized this Results chapter around these questions. The first section presents an overview of the factor analysis from the 2016 TELL survey data. Factors from the TELL were then conceptually linked to variables that were identified in the literature as impactful for teacher well-being. In the next section, data from focus groups with teachers are presented to describe factors that impact flourishing. Finally, the quantitative data from the factor analysis of the TELL survey and the qualitative data from the focus groups are compared to identify areas of alignment and misalignment

between the two data sets. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results for each research question and a preview of the next chapter.

RQ #1: Alignment of TELL Factors and Literature Review Variables

I conducted a principle component analysis (PCA) for factor extraction followed by factor rotation for both the overall TELL survey and of one subset of questions to help consider the underlying factors and interpret whether such factors might conceivably be related to variables in the literature surveyed in Chapter 1. The results of these factor analyses and the alignment with variables from the literature review are discussed in this section.

In order to avoid confusion between different concepts that I discuss throughout this chapter, underlying exploratory factors from both the overall TELL survey and from a subset of items on the TELL survey are referred to as Factors and are capitalized. Variables, factors, resources, conditions, etc. discussed in the literature as impactful on teacher well-being are referred to as literature review Variables and are also capitalized. When discussing a subset of items on the TELL survey that are centered around a specific theme, that collection of items are referred to as a TELL Category. Finally, school-level factors discussed by teachers in the focus groups are referred to as Flourishing Factors.

Factor Study of Overall TELL Survey

To better understand the dimensionality of the 56 items sampled from the TELL survey, I conducted a principal component analysis to determine the number of meaningful components to retain from the data set, reviewed the proportion of variance accounted for in possible solutions, and considered interpretability criterion, followed by

conducting factor rotation using the SPSS maximum likelihood method. PCA is a variable reduction procedure that can be considered when a data set is composed of numerous variables and there may be redundancy, or in other words some common components, among the variables. The factor study was conducted using the adopted SPSS product for statistical analysis included in the coursework for my program, employing the factor study approach from Green and Salkind (2005), in *Using SPSS for Windows and Macintosh: analyzing and understanding data.* As described by Yong and Pearce (2013, p. 79), the broad purpose of an exploratory factor study "is to summarize data so that relationships and patterns can be easily interpreted and understood. It is normally used to regroup variables into a limited set of clusters based on shared variance. Hence, it helps to isolate constructs and concepts."

Yong and Pearce (2013) describe that even though orthogonal rotations (e.g., Varimax and Quartimax) involve uncorrelated factors and oblique rotations (e.g., Direct Oblimin and Promax) involve correlated factors, the researchers report that in reality especially for applied settings in practice, researchers often use more than one extraction and rotation technique based on pragmatic reasoning and seeking some degree of cautious but interpretive value. Especially in multiple methods research, Yong and Pearce (2013) assert that researchers may wish to generate some initial considerations from empirical data to a limited extent and can be employed cautiously both in orthogonal rotations and limited categorical responses, despite the likelihood of correlated indices and less than fully sufficient categories such as here in scales of 1-4. They encourage the interpretation of factor analysis based on rotated factor loadings, rotated eigenvalues, and the scree test. All of these sources of data were analyzed for the

factor analysis in this research project.

Initial descriptive analysis of the 4-point Likert style items prior to the factor study indicated that the sample was not highly skewed (skewness between -1.92 and +.50) with the exception of one item that displayed a skewnesss of -2.384. Given that 55 of the 56 items on the survey were within the acceptable range for skew, all of the questions were retained for analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test returned a value of .85 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was .000 demonstrating reasonable indices for the assumptions of the factor study as described in the Green and Salkind (2005) protocol. Three criteria were used to determine the number of factors to rotate: the scree test, interpretability of the factor solution, and the use of factors with an Eigenvalue greater than 2.0. Note that typically Eigenvalue greater than 1.0 are a common criteria for the exploratory work, here a higher value was selected, in part based on the common characteristics of the scree plot. Based on these criteria, 5 factors were extracted and rotated. The Varimax rotation procedure was employed, see above for cautions regarding correlations, interpretability, and use. The rotated solution, as shown in Table 11, yielded a collection of five interpretable factors that I named: Administrator Support and Decision-Making, Professional Development, Student Conduct, Teacher Autonomy, and Teacher Feedback. Taken together, these 5 factors accounted for 66.74% of the total variance. Each factor and the related items are briefly discussed below.

Factors from the TELL Survey. Factor 1, Administrator Support and Decision-Making, was comprised of 8 items that explained 45% of the variance with factor loadings from .83 to .71. The primary items included in this factor were related to administrators who 1) supported teachers, 2) encouraged trust, and 3) enforced school

rules consistently. The collection of items also described a school community where the school faculty work together to solve problems.

Table 11

Factors after Varimax Rotation: Total Survey Analysis

Factors	Items	Factor Loading				
		1	2	3	4	5
Admin. Support & Decision Making	In this school we take steps to solve problems.	.83				
	There is an atmosphere of trust and respect.	.76				
	The faculty has process for making decisions.	.76				
	The school leadership supports teachers.	.75				
	Teachers can raise issues/concerns.	.75				
	Admin. support efforts to maintain discipline.	.74				
	Admin. consistently enforce rules for conduct.	.74				
	The school team provides effective leadership.	.71				
Prof. Dev.	PD enhances teachers' strategies.		.84			
	PD deepens teacher's content knowledge.		.81			
	PD supports developing formative assessments.		.77			
	PD is evaluated and results are communicated.		.76			
	PD enhances teacher's abilities to improve.		.75			
	In this school, follow up is provided from PD.		.73			
	PD refines teaching practices.		.72			
Student Conduct	Teachers consistently enforce rules for conduct.			.72		
	Students at the school consistently follow rules.			.71		
	Students at this school understand expectations.			.66		
	Policies for conduct are understood by faculty.			.65		
	Teachers require student to work hard.			.62		
Teacher Autonomy	Teachers are relied upon to make decisions.				.83	
	Teachers are trusted to make sound decisions.				.82	
	Teachers are recognized as educational experts.				.69	
	Teachers have autonomy to make decisions.				.65	
	Teachers are encouraged to try new things.				.43	
Teacher Feedback	Procedures for evaluation are consistent.					.78
	Teachers receive feedback to improve.					.60
	Teachers evaluated by well-prepared person.					.59
	Teachers in this school receive feedback.					.52
Eigenvalues		25.2	4.40	3.25	2.53	2.00
Variance explained (%)		45.0	7.84	5.82	4.52	3.57

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin=.85
Barlett's Test of Sphericity: Chi Square=6338: df=1540: p=.000

Factor 2, Professional Development, was comprised of 7 items that explained 7.84% of the variance with factor loadings ranging from .84 to .72. The items included in this factor were related to ongoing professional development that enhanced teachers' abilities to meet student needs and deepen pedagogical knowledge. They describe training that is student-centered, consistently evaluated, and followed up with embedded support.

Factor 3, Student Conduct, consisted of five items and accounted for 5.82%of the total variance with factor loadings ranging from .72 to .62. Items in this factor described teachers' knowledge and enforcement of school rules for student conduct, students' understanding and ability to follow those rules, and teacher expectations that students work hard.

Factor 4, Teacher Autonomy, was comprised of five items and accounted for 4.52 of the variance with factor loadings ranging from .83 to .43. Items grouped within this factor related to teachers being trusted and relied upon to make sound educational decisions about instruction, delivery, student behaviors, and teachers being encouraged to try new things.

Factor 5, Teacher Feedback, was comprised of four items and accounted for 3.57% of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from .78 to .52. These items were related to teachers receiving timely, consistent feedback from a well-trained evaluator with the goal of improving instruction.

Factor Study for Instructional Practices and Supports Dimension

In addition to analyzing the dimensionality of the TELL items sampled for this project, I conducted a factor analysis on each individual category of questions as well. As

I presented in the previous chapter, these five categories of items on the TELL were sampled because they were all represented in the literature as possibly impacting TWB. This included collections of questions related to school leadership, teacher leadership, managing student conduct, professional development and instructional practices and supports. For all of these collections of items, with the exception of instructional practices and supports, over 60% of the variability in each dimension was explained by a single factor with secondary factors returning Eigenvalues under 1.0. Therefore, items associated with these four categories of items were not rotated and analyzed.

Analysis of the scree plot and the corresponding Eigenvalues for items related to instructional practices and supports produced 4 factors that collectively accounted for 64% of the variance. The collection of questions had acceptable symmetry, produced a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of .74, and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at .000, demonstrating that the sample was adequate to perform a factor analysis and rotation. The factors were therefore rotated using a Varimax rotation. The rotated solution, as shown in Table 12, yielded a collection of four interpretable factors: collaborate & innovate, shared knowledge, teacher beliefs, and data driven instruction.

Factors from Instructional Practices and Supports. I named Factor 1 situated within this collection of items Collaborate and Innovate. It was comprised of four items that explained 33% of the variance with factor loadings from .65 to .55. These four items were all related to teachers: 1) working together in collaborative teams to achieve consistency across grade-levels; and 2) encouraging teachers to try new things. Factor 2, that I named Shared Knowledge, was comprised of 3 items that explained 11% of the variance with factor loadings from .80 to .53. Items in this factor described a school

where teachers have knowledge of what students are learning in other classes, how other teachers in the school are presenting information, and how students are being assessed across the school. Factor 3, Teacher Mindset, was comprised of 4 items that explained 11% of the variance with factor loadings ranging from .65 to .48. This factor represented a somewhat unique set of items related to what teachers in a school community believe about student potential and academic rigor; what they believe about their ability to make

Table 12

Factors after Varimax Rotation: Instructional Practices and Supports

Factors	Items	Factor Loading			
		1	2	3	4
Collaborate & Innovate	Teachers work in professional learning communities.	.65			
	Teachers are encouraged to try new things.	.60			
	Provided supports (coaches, PLC's) translate to improvements in instructional practices by teachers.	.59			
	Teachers collaborate to achieve consistency.	.55			
Shared Knowledge	Teachers have knowledge of the content covered and instructional methods used by other teachers.		.80		
	Teachers know what students learn.		.65		
	Teachers collaborate for consistency.		.53		
Teacher Mindset	Teachers believe what is taught makes a difference.			.65	
	Teachers believe every student has potential.			.63	
	Teachers have autonomy to decide about delivery.			.51	
	Teachers require students to work hard.			.48	
Data Driven Instruction	Local assessment data available to impact instruction.				.73
	Teachers use data to inform their instruction.				.62
EigenValues		5.0	1.6	1.6	1.3
Variance explained (%)		33.0	11.0	11.0	9.0

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin= .74
Barlett's Test of Sphericity: Chi Square=608: df=105: p=.000

a difference with their students; and their belief that they have the control in their classrooms to adjust how they deliver materials. Taken together, all of these items appear to capture the mindset of teachers in a school. Factor 4, that I named Data Driven Instruction, was comprised of 2 items that explained 9% of the variance with loadings of .73 and .62. The two items in this factor related to teachers having timely access to student assessment data and their ability to adjust instruction accordingly.

Summary of Alignment of TELL Factors and Literature Review Variables

There is a large degree of conceptual alignment between the factors identified from the overall TELL survey and those that were reviewed in the literature (see Table 13 below). Administrative supports and decision making was the most closely linked and accounted for both the highest amount of variability in the TELL sample (45% of the total variability) and the greatest number of variables drawn from the literature (15% of the total identified variables). This somewhat broad category speaks to the relative impact on teacher well-being and teacher flourishing of an emotionally and physically supportive administrator who empowers teachers to make sound decisions. Providing teachers with physical support resources (coaches, instructional assistants, curriculum) and also emotionally supporting them in their work is another important feature of this category on both the TELL survey and in the literature. Student Conduct, Teacher Autonomy, and Teacher Feedback were also identified as impactful in both the TELL survey and are closely aligned to variables from the literature review.

Of all the TELL factors and literature review variables that were identified, student conduct is the only variable that is positioned as a possible stressor or job demand. Whereas the absence of other factors could negatively impact flourishing,

negative student conduct in and of itself is a job demand. For example, lack of emotional supports or lack of autonomy can impact flourishing, but the presence of negative student conduct and the corresponding lack of well-articulated systems to address students is positioned as a job demand.

Table 13

Alignment of TELL Factors and Literature Review Variables

TELL Factors	**% of variance**	**Linked variables in literature**	**% of total variables**
Administrative Support & Decision Making	45%	Emotional/Physical Supports (admin supports, teacher supports, job resources, training)	15%
Professional Development	7.8%	Professional Development/Training (training, teaching practices)	2%
Student Conduct	5.8%	Student Conduct (student behaviors/discipline)	6%
Teacher Autonomy	4.5%	Autonomy (job control, agency, variety)	9%
Teacher Feedback	3.5%	Feedback (recognition, clarity, expectations)	6%

The alignment between professional development/training factors and variables is not as well established. Accounting for 7.84% of the variance on the TELL survey and representing the 2nd highest factor, professional development and training was only mentioned in two of the articles in the literature pool and accounted for a very small percentage of the overall identified variables (2.3%). This possible discrepancy is discussed in depth in the next chapter, but could partially be related to the TELL survey itself. If professional development questions are included on a survey about teaching conditions, teachers may identify the quality and frequency of professional development

as relatively important. Being prompted to answer questions about this topic may lead to the conclusion that professional development is more impactful than it actually is for teacher flourishing. If not prompted with this set of questions, teachers might not mention professional development nearly as frequently. This speaks to the importance of employing a mixed method design for this complicated construct to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to talk about factors that actually impact their flourishing. Restricting their responses to a forced set of questions might not capture the complexity of teacher well-being.

Table 14

Alignment of Supports and Practices Factors and Literature Review Variables

Supports & Practices Factors	**% of variance**	**Linked variables in literature**	**% of total variables**
Collaborate & Innovate	33%	Teaming (co-operation, collaboration)	6%
Shared Knowledge	11%	Communication	5%
Teacher Mindset	11%	Efficacy (perceived competence, mastery, accomplishment)	10%
Data Driven Instruction	9%	Not supported in literature	0%

As is evident in Table 14 above, there is overall strong alignment between the organizing factors in the instructional and practices category of items and variables found in the literature. The Collaborate and Innovate factor accounted for 33% of the variance in this dimension and the closely aligned category of teaming/collaboration that was identified as impactful variables in 5 of the 17 articles from the literature pool and accounted for 6% of the total variables. Likewise, communication was mentioned in three of the articles reviewed accounting for 5% of the variables studied and the closely related

factor Shared Knowledge about students and assessments accounted for 11% of the variance in this category of items. Teacher Mindset related specifically to beliefs about efficacy, student performance, and achievement was studied in 7 of the 17 articles and found to account for 11% of the variance in this dimension.

The one factor identified from the TELL survey that was not studied in the literature was Data Driven Instruction. Two of the articles did refer to using data in professional learning communities or on grade-level teams, but data driven decision-making was not isolated as a variable in any of the articles included in the literature pool.

The data showed overall strong support for the organizing factors identified from the exploratory factor analysis of the TELL survey and the literature pool, but there are also several variables identified in the literature that were not captured in the TELL factor analysis. For example, relationships with colleagues and students was a frequently studied variable in the literature review and did not appear as an organizing factor on the TELL. Given that relationships are a key feature in the PERMA model, this variable needs to be better understood and is further explored using data from the focus groups. Other variables such as specific work demands, school climate, and the importance of a shared purpose/vision were also not identified from the factor analysis but were present in the literature. These "outlying" factors are closely analyzed using the focus group data in the next section.

In sum, there is strong alignment between many of the factors identified from the factor analysis of the TELL survey and variables identified in the pool of articles included in the literature review. Administrative supports in particular was identified as an important factor in both data sets accounting for 45% of the variance on the TELL

survey and 15% of the total variables identified from the literature review. However, the TELL survey does not capture all of the variables isolated in the literature review. Relationships, work demands, school climate, and a shared vision not being represented as underlying factors on the collection of items sampled from the TELL, but still were identified as impacting TWB in the literature.

In the next section I present the results from the qualitative focus groups that were conducted with teachers working in four different elementary schools. These data provide insights into how teachers actually describe school factors that impact their own flourishing and the flourishing of other teachers in their schools. This section will seek to answer the second research question presented earlier in this chapter.

RQ#2: Qualitative Analysis of Flourishing Factors

I collected two sets of qualitative data to better understand factors that impact teacher flourishing in GAPS. After a brief description of the focus group participants, in the following section I first present data from notes handwritten by teachers during the focus groups. The second set of data was generated from transcriptions of conversations that teachers had during the focus group discussions and the coding of those transcriptions. A summary of the codes related to the focus group conversations with illustrative quotes is presented next. Finally, I compare the two sets of qualitative data and summarize how this data relates to teacher flourishing.

Description of the Qualitative Sample

Thirty-six licensed teachers working in GAPS participated in the five flourishing focus groups that were held at the targeted elementary schools January 2018. As I discussed earlier, these schools were selected for participation based on their 2016 TELL

survey scores. Five focus groups were formed instead of four because one school had too many people volunteer for participation and I decided to have two, more manageable groups instead of one, large group at that school. All the groups ranged in size from four participants to nine participants.

Participants included teachers working in a variety of positions: classroom teachers, specialists (music, art and physical education) teachers, special education teachers, English language development teachers, instructional coaches, and reading teachers. Reflecting the racial and gender composition of the teaching community in GAPS, 35 of the 36 teachers were white and only one participant was male. Approximately one-half of the teachers had worked in numerous schools throughout the district. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from a student teacher who had been at the school for just a few months to a veteran teacher who had been working in the district for 34 years. Even though it did not represent a random sample of the teachers at these four schools because all participants volunteered for participation, the collection of teachers did reflect the diversity of elementary teachers in general working in GAPS.

Analysis of Teacher Flourishing Notes

In each focus group, following some opening remarks about the possible impact of this research and a brief presentation of the PERMA model, focus group participants were asked to handwrite school-level factors that impact their flourishing on sticky notes. They completed this task silently in about 5 minutes with most teachers producing 3-5 sticky notes. After talking about their notes in the focus group setting, teachers were asked to place their notes onto large pieces of paper that were hung around the room with

titles from the TELL dimensions. Teachers placed their notes onto the categories of School Leadership, Teacher Leadership, Instructional Practices and Supports, Student Conduct, and Professional Development. To capture notes that did not into one of these categories, I also created a poster with the heading "Other Flourishing Factors" and asked teachers to place non-categorized notes on this poster.

After all the focus groups were conducted and teachers had placed their notes onto the posters with the TELL dimensions, I organized the notes into general descriptive categories and summarized the number of notes related to each dimension. These categories and the total number of related notes are presented below in table 15.

The School Leadership poster received 59 notes, which was the greatest number of notes for any of the TELL categories. Many teachers mentioned the importance of a building leader who gives actionable feedback, that is both positive and builds on teacher strengths. One note read, "Feedback for growth: hearing how to grow/work better for all students." Another note added that "Feedback is not given just on the surface level: deeper feedback actually changes practice." Closely related to feedback was the role of clear expectations. One teacher wrote, "Understanding the expectations of how I will be evaluated: both for me and the principal." Another teacher noted that having more contact with the principal contributes to a feeling that "the principal has my back." Finally, several teachers identified recognition and affirmation from the principal as an essential component for flourishing. "Feeling encouraged by the principal and feeling like I am part of the school vision," was a sentiment reflected in several of the teacher notes.

The teachers in the focus groups recorded 41 notes related to Teacher Leadership. The greatest numbers of these notes were devoted to teacher leadership and autonomy.

One note read, “having a voice in decisions that impact me,” and another added “having a choice in certain areas of the curriculum, how to teach, adding lessons, and materials.”

Table 15

Summary of Focus Group Notes Related to TELL Dimensions

TELL Dimension	Thematic Sub-Category	# of Notes
School Leadership	Expectations	7
	Being Present/Visible	7
	Supportive	7
	Personal Attributes	8
	Communication	9
	Affirmation/Recognition	10
	Feedback	11
	Total School Leadership	*59*
Teacher Leadership	Shared Resources/Goals	5
	Collaboration/ Peer Support	10
	Relationships	11
	Autonomy/Shared Decisions	15
	Total Teacher Leadership	*41*
Instructional Practices & Supports	Curriculum/Systems	5
	Resources	7
	Time/Planning	9
	Collaboration/Teaming	9
	Total Practices/Supports	*31*
Student Conduct	Behavioral Systems	3
	Teacher Mindset	4
	Supports	6
	Positive Connections	7
	Total Student Conduct	*20*
Professional Development	Teaming	2
	Time for PD	4
	Quality Training	7
	Total Prof. Development	*13*
Other Flourishing Factors	Staff Composition	3
	Parent Contact	3
	Consistency	4
	Health/Stress	5
	Class size/Student Focus	8
	Shared Goals/Prep Time	11
	Staff Functions	10
	School Climate	17
	Staff Relationships	18
	Total Other. Factors	*79*

Another summarized the feelings of several teachers, writing, “I flourish when I have autonomy in my classroom (not micromanaged).” Several teachers also wrote and placed notes related to teacher relationships in this teacher leadership dimension. One note read, “close relationship with grade-level partner.” Another teacher stated “non-competitive relationships with other teachers” and “open-minded staff who are willing to try new things.” Closely related to relationships, was the importance of team and grade-level collaboration included in several statements. Participants noted working on supportive teams with passionate teachers was important to their flourishing at school.

The poster summarizing Instructional Practices and Supports collected 31 notes related to resources and supports that impact teacher flourishing. Similar to the teacher leadership dimension, collaboration and teaming was identified as an important support for teachers. One note said “having someone on staff who you feel safe sharing struggles and feel supported.” Another stated, “collaboration opportunities: time and structure to meet with other staff.” Having resources such as curriculum that is effective and predictable, systems to analyze data, and time to learn new curriculum was also recorded on the teacher notes. Finally, teachers recorded that having common planning and meeting time was important.

Student Conduct and Professional Development posters collected 20 and 13 notes respectively. The student conduct dimension is discussed in the next section because even though teachers did not record as many notes for this dimension as other areas, it was a topic that dominated the focus group discussions. Notes in the professional development dimension captured the importance of training that is “meaningful and research-based.”

Four teachers also wrote that having time to "talk about what we are learning at school" is an important consideration for professional development.

The "Other Flourishing Factors" poster captured more notes than any of the specific TELL dimension posters. Staff relationships and a positive school climate accounted for 35 of the 79 notes on this poster. These notes describe the impact of school communities that are welcoming and supportive, populated by people who love their jobs. One note said, "5 loving languages: words of encouragement, gifts, acts of kindness, quality time, and true affection. These languages impact flourishing and school community." Several noted items reinforced the importance of laughter, smiling faces, co-workers who are joyful, and "friendly staff who take an interest in other people." Staff social functions and activities such as happy hours, potlucks, positive/anonymous notes placed in mailboxes, and parties outside of school were also included as important to teacher flourishing. Shared prep times and lunch times, as well as working consistently at the same grade-level or job category, were also frequently mentioned in these teacher notes.

Even though the teacher notes provide some insights into school factors, perhaps one of the biggest insights was that there were 79 notes that teachers placed on the "other factors" poster illustrates the possibility that the TELL categories explain some, but not all, school conditions that impact flourishing. This finding is similar to the finding in the quantitative analysis (see section above) where the TELL factors did have strong overlap to the variables in the literature, but did not address relationships, shared goals, school climate, and work demands. These same four factors accounted for 58 of the 79 notes placed on the "other factors" poster and provide additional support that more information

is needed to better understand these outlying factors.

Analysis of Focus Group Transcriptions

Transcribed and coded recordings of the focus group discussions produced the second set of data for qualitative analysis. After writing their ideas down on the sticky notes, I asked the focus group participants to verbally discuss the factors that impacted their ability to flourish with the group. During these discussions, both participants and me as the lead researcher would ask clarifying questions and often other participants would expand on the topic or add their opinion. If several teachers had the same or similar factor written on their notes, they were asked to place their notes at the end of the discussion on one of the posters related to TELL dimensions, but not necessarily reintroduce the same theme after it has already been discussed by the group. This process of introducing the theme on the sticky notes, discussing the topic with the group, and then introducing the theme from the next person in the circle continued until all the sticky note factors were discussed.

The transcribed focus group data from the five focus groups produced 463 sections of text. These sections reflected 448 minutes (7 hours and 28 minutes) of focus group discussions that were transcribed and coded using MAXQDA software. Thirty-three primary codes were created to organize the data, with several of these codes being organized by subcodes. For example, the "communication" code was divided into three sub-codes: "communication: parents," "communication: colleagues," and "communication: administrators."

Table 16

Summary of Primary Coding Categories from Focus Groups

Code Category	# of Sections	Item Percentage
Teamwork	52	11%
Student Conduct	51	11%
Relationships	48	10%
Administrator Attributes	46	10%
Autonomy and Shared Decisions	45	9%
Union/District Issues	36	7%
Climate: School	29	6%
School Structures	21	5%
Communication	20	5%
School Supports	20	5%
Feedback/Affirmation	19	4%
Work demands	19	4%
Consistency	16	3%
Professional Development/Training	13	3%
Extracurricular Activities	9	2%
Equity	7	2%
Physical Health	7	2%
Focus Group Value	5	1%
Total	463	100%

Table 16 outlines the primary codes that received the highest number of transcribed comments. Sample quotes from the text for each of these 15 codes is included

in Appendix H, but the top six codes are discussed in-depth below. Added together, the six codes discussed below account for 51% of all the 463 sections of transcribed text that were coded for this analysis.

Teamwork. Staff collaboration, teamwork, sharing resources, and the importance of maintaining consistent teams over time was mentioned in 52 sections and represented 11% of the overall comments. Teachers talked about how working on strong teams can lesson feelings of isolation, reduce workload, capitalize on expertise throughout the building, and help new teachers transition into the profession. Teamwork was also mentioned as a possible buffer against workplace stressors that can lead to burnout and attrition. One teacher said:

> Truly the one and only reason I stayed at [School X] so long was the team I had while I was there. The school was incredibly stressful with high behavioral needs, low academic achievement, and high turnover. By the end of my time there, my team was the one thing that gave me enough energy to come to work each day.

One teacher sent an email following the focus groups that outlined the steps she felt needed to be taken to create functional teams. First, she asserted that teams need time to work together and collaborate. This includes time during the school day, but also working together on the same team for several years. Second, functional teams need to be recognized and celebrated by the principal. Third, teachers need to have a voice on who gets hired and who joins their team. As was mentioned above in the teacher autonomy section, having a voice on hiring decision helps secure buy-in to supporting new team members. Finally, periodically reflecting on what is working with teams and what needs

to be changed can help a team avoid falling into unproductive habits. She asserted that these steps can help ensure that teaming is not only present, but an important aspect of a school community.

Teamwork and collaboration between licensed teachers and classified staff was mentioned in 12 different sections and discussed in three of the five focus groups. Most of the comments reflected the perceived importance of having strong relationships with classified staff and honoring the work they do. One person said, “I feel like there is no difference in my room between the staff members and me. The students just see her as another teacher.” In a different focus group, another teacher commented, “There is strong teamwork with the classified staff…because we need them to help run the school.” However, one of the groups discussed that it can be difficult for licensed teachers to be trained by classified staff who might not have the same training and/or experience as the teachers.

> The dynamic of having SEA's give licensed staff advice at a staff meeting, that is difficult. I've had 20 years in education and have a college degree in this stuff. Someone who hasn't been in education for as long as I have and doesn't even have a college education, I don't know if I can trust your advice and your training. I don't like it that I have these thoughts, but I do.

One of the interesting tensions around teaming that was discussed by three of the focus groups was the need to balance required teaming structures (having teams submit agendas, goals, data, meeting times, etc.) with the desire for teams to be relatively autonomous. Teachers in the focus groups asserted that the too many structures made it difficult to have authentic conversations, but they would also say that some structures are

important. One teacher summarized this tension when she said, "PLC's require a balancing act between having enough direction that everyone comes ready to work and having them be self-directed so that work is meaningful."

Student Conduct. Student conduct accounted for the 2nd highest percent of comments made during the focus groups. The issue of disruptive students and their impacts on teacher flourishing was mentioned in every focus group. 28 individual teachers talked about student conduct and for one of the focus groups, discussions of student behaviors accounted for nearly 40% of the total dialogue. Eighteen teachers commented on the negative impact of student conduct on their own flourishing, but also on the perceived lack of school-level systems to address behaviors. One teacher said,

> I think a really big impact on teacher flourishing is if you have a classroom of really tough kids it is just really hard to feel like you are flourishing. I'm not sure how some teachers in the district do it and keep coming back each day.

Another teacher added,

> For me, having extreme behaviors in the classroom almost makes it impossible for me to flourish. Let alone, how that impacts the entire classroom of students. It is hard to flourish when you are worried about basic safety.

A teacher at different school voiced a similar concern, "No matter how upbeat and positive you are, it still makes it difficult. I feel like I am focusing on one kid who demands a lot of attention while the other 29 kids are getting punished."

Teachers also voiced concerns about a perceived lack of school and district

procedures and supports for students with high behavioral needs. One teacher commented,

> On paper we have a behavior specialist, but she also does reading and we don't have a focus room. Feeling supported by the district when there are large behaviors seems important. I have had behaviors in the past with kids hitting and throwing chairs and we don't get any support.

Another common theme in this category was a frustration with a perceived lack of school-level behavioral support systems across the district. One teacher commented, "Anything the district does to help with difficult students would be supported! Literally anything…It feels like we are constantly running into a brick wall." A teacher in that group added, "we fill out paperwork and jump threw the hoops, but nothing happens." Reflecting a similar frustration, a teacher in a different group said, "I think there are systems for these types of decisions, I just don't know what they are…we are asked to document, document, document, but honestly I don't think anyone even looks at that paperwork."

Several teachers commented that disruptive student behaviors make it difficult to form solid relationships with other students in the classroom and this lack of connection directly impacts flourishing. For example, "I think the hard things with disruptive students is that we struggle to form solid relationships both with that student, but also with the rest of the class because so much attention goes to one person." Another added, "we are relationship people, not finding a way to have a relationship with a student is demoralizing."

Interestingly, one of the few qualitative articles included in the literature review also captured the impact of working with behaviorally challenged students. In that study, Howard and Johnson (2004) described incidents of children physically attacking other children, throwing furniture, punching, kicking, and biting. They found that in these school environments, more successful teachers relied on resiliency strategies to avoid experiencing extreme burnout and stress. Strategies like training on how to respond to violent behaviors, de-personalizing stressful incidents, celebrating staff achievements, creating a culture of empathy, and explicitly teaching socio-emotional learning were helpful to make teachers more resilient. This notion of resiliency is an important one for teacher flourishing and will be discussed in the following chapter.

Relationships. Teachers in all of the focus groups mentioned the importance of establishing and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues, students, administrators, and parents. Of the 48 coded sections related to relationships, 35 of the sections were related to peer relationships. Having solid relationships with colleagues that are supportive, based on trust, and consistent was mentioned as important in all of the focus group discussions. One teacher summarized this sentiment saying, "Having at least one person to really confide in who you trust and know that you can share something personal with them is super important. Having a person who cares for you as a person and you care for them." Another teacher from a different school argued that strong relationships act as a buffer for work place stressors. She said, "When you have strong relationships it eliminates a lot of other things. It eliminates rumors and negativity because people are more connected and more genuinely interested in each other."

According to the teachers in the focus groups, functions that happen outside of the

school day play an important role in helping teachers create and maintain relationships. Activities like bowling, monthly happy hours, book clubs, staff holiday parties, and summer retreats seem to serve an important role for teachers to feel connected and supported at work. One person said, "I appreciate that we spend time with each other outside of school. This creates solid relationships that are not just about being work friends, but also strong friends." However, these outside activities can also create feelings of not being included in the group and this can negatively impact flourishing. After hearing about all of the activities happening outside of school, one teacher said, "I didn't even know that people were getting together!" That same teacher went on to say that the teachers at her school have very tight knit relationships, but it has been hard for her to break into those cliques because she is relatively new. She said this extremely tight community, "allows one person to flourish while it might make another person feel like they are not part of the in-group."

Several participants also mentioned strong teacher relationships as an important facet for a healthy school culture. In response to a comment about the need for strong relationships, one teacher said, "I think part of flourishing is having fun times with staff and laughing together….I like that this staff is really free with their laughter and has a lot of jokes and people don't take themselves too seriously." At a different school, another teacher supported this idea, "…the sign of healthy culture is that you have people who care for you at work. We are all here for each other. We are one team who are all working together for the right reasons." One teacher concluded, "it is hard to flourish if you don't have any friends at work!"

Several school structures that helped foster positive staff relationships were

mentioned in the focus groups. Having a social committee to plan events, a positive behavior team that recognizes students and staff, shared lunch times, classrooms that are located near grade-level partners, "fun" events like assemblies and dress-up days, and having an administrator who models the importance of strong relationships were all mentioned as impactful on teacher flourishing.

Several teachers noted that relationships with students also impact their ability to flourish. A kindergarten teacher in the group said, "It is hard to not want to come to work each day when I get kids hugging me and telling me that they love me before we even start the day." When talking about the importance of student engagement, another person added, "It is fun and exciting to be with kids who want to learn and kids who are engaged in learning." She went on to add that having strong relationships with students makes both learning and teaching more engaging and enjoyable. However, difficulty forming relationships with students who exhibit disruptive behaviors was also mentioned by several teachers as a workplace stressor that inhibits their flourishing.

For teachers, relationships appear to play an important role in their flourishing. Given the inherently relational nature of teaching and the high amount of emotional energy that it takes to teach, having strong relationships with colleagues and students appears to be an important emotional resource that supports flourishing.

Administrator attributes. Reflecting the emphasis on school leadership that was recorded on teacher handwritten notes, teachers had lengthy discussions during the focus groups about principal attributes that impact their ability to flourish. Teachers described the need for principals to be strong communicators with all staff members, present and involved in the school, welcoming to all community members, flexible, and willing to

take action. Their impressions of their current administrators were largely positive and they tended to attribute a lot of teacher flourishing to attributes displayed by their administrators.

> I do think that everything starts at the top. From Jesus to the principal to the teachers it makes a difference! When the principal creates a feeling of positivity and that creates an environment where we all feel positive. The principal creates an overall environment of keeping things positive so people just aren't negative because it is not how we do things at this school.

A teacher at a different school noted,

> I think a welcoming school starts with the administrator. That teachers able to stop and talk to people in the hallway and that are building relationships and that is a good thing. Even the administrator wants to be a piece of the community. Asking questions about your kids and how life is outside of the school. Having an administrator who takes time to really get to know the teachers allows teachers to relate on a deeper level.

A common theme discussed was how the principal can set a positive, fun-loving tone that can help to diminish stress around the school. Teachers described the positive impact of watching principals play with students on the playground, dance at assemblies, organize silly string battles with staff, and just have fun at school:

> Having a principal that is fun definitely helps. They can be brilliant and mindful about what needs to happen…. they can be serious and they understand that what we are doing is important, but they also have a lot of

fun. There is seriousness as well, but principal lightness and joy are also important.

Several teachers also commented on the negative impact of not having a principal who demonstrates these attributes or who has strong relationships with teachers. One teacher commented,

> For me, the one thing that keeps me from feeling like I am flourishing is the lack of connection with the administrator in this school. At this school, I feel that the principal has a lack of interest in what I do and in my work. It feels like in this building the administrator doesn't even want the connection.

At one school in particular, the teachers seemed to flourish in spite of past principals who in their opinion did not successfully build a positive school community. The group discussed how the teachers flourished because they took it upon themselves to support each other by forming stronger relationships with each other, organizing more activities outside of school, and trying to give each other more affirmations and encouragement. For this group, not having a principal actively create a positive culture encouraged staff members to assume more of this responsibility.

Autonomy and shared decisions. Autonomy and opportunities for shared decision-making was the second most common mentioned factor impacting teacher flourishing. One teacher said,

> Having someone trust you as a professional and trust your opinion is important. I had a principal who would always say to our teachers, "You know what needs to be done and you know how to do it, just shut your

door and teach." She made us feel trusted.

Several teachers commented about perceived tension between the need to have district-level agreements related to items such as shared curriculum, schedules, instructional practices, and the desire for teacher autonomy and control. The following quote captures this tension:

> I know expectations are important and I think they are needed in our district, but we also need to have free reign to decide how we are going to meet those expectations. At this school, we are able to work somewhat independently without having to use scripted curriculums that make it impossible to be creative. In this building we are given a lot of autonomy and that allows us to flourish.

A different teacher from that same school said,

> In my opinion, having too many district expectations makes great teachers mediocre and bad teachers even worse. It is almost like the system is trying to make-up for some of the worst teachers, but it ruins teaching for everyone."

Even when autonomy and shared decision-making leads to negative or unanticipated outcomes, teachers still value being involved in the process. One teacher told the following story illustrating this concept:

> I want to say something about this. When we hired my teaching partner last time I had a huge role in helping make the decision. I actually cried when I told our administrator, "she is the one." And then what happened was that she didn't form relationships with anyone, she was her own

> entity. She just didn't fit in our school and it was ultimately not a good situation. It is good to know that even in that negative situation, you know what, I am partially to blame and this decision was partially mine. Yes, this sucks, but I was in the room and we can own the decision differently. When we feel like we are in charge of making some of these decisions, even when it is hard and the decision was the wrong one, it gives me a different feeling about the outcome. If makes you have a bigger role in trying to make it work because it was your decision. It is still hard!

Several teachers also expressed an interest in having more input into training and professional development opportunities that are offered throughout the year. One commented, "I would love more input into the trainings we receive and more choice with what we attend. Not all teachers need the exact same thing." Another person said, "Beginning teachers need different training than more experienced teachers. We are asked to differentiate all the time in our classrooms, but there isn't differentiation with professional development that is offered in the district."

Contract and district issues. Teachers cited perceived issues between the school district leadership and union leadership as a stressor that impacts their ability to flourish. Much of the discussion in this area was devoted to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) that had been negotiated with the teacher's union and the school district that resulted in teachers getting more preparation time during the school day, but not being able to take extra release days. Several teachers commented that not having these extra days impacted their ability to long-range plan with their grade-level teams and restricted their creativity. Three teachers also commented that this MOU communicated to them

that the school district officials did not understand how difficult it is to find time during the day to lesson plan.

> The really big one this year is the lack of planning time taken away from us. We used to have five full days that we could take during the year, and now we are down to two days. There was no communication about this happening and it is very impactful for all of us for this lack of planning time.

For these teachers, discontent with the current contract also led them to express discontent with district leadership. Four teachers in two different focus groups described how the newly ratified MOU and messages that they receive from union leadership makes them not trust district leadership. From their opinion, this mistrust also impacts teacher autonomy. One teacher said,

> Right now it feels like it is us against them and I'm not sure why. It feels like the district doesn't trust me to take care of my students. We've got to make sure that you are doing this, this and this, but it feels like they don't trust us. With this school board and the district leadership it feels like they don't think that.

Another teacher added that it feels like their personal vision for teaching and their motivation to teach do not align with the district vision for teaching and learning.

> Aren't we here for the exact same reason? I want to help every kid, every day. That is something that I really believe and buy into that. I buy in, but I don't know if they know that I do. It feels like we are against each other and I really don't know why.

For teachers who are new to the profession, this tension between district leadership and the teacher's union can be especially stressful. One probationary teacher (hired within the last three years) said that she feels torn between wanting to support the issues being forwarded by the union and fulfilling the duties of her job.

> Now we are getting told to stop and pull back from the union. The union is telling us to start saying "no" to things to document the extra work we are doing to protect ourselves and look out for ourselves. On the other hand we are being told from the school district that we need to answer emails, complete pinnacle, contact parents, attend professional development after school, and do all these other things. These are all important things, but we can't both be loyal to the union and get all these things done…I feel like it is the district versus the union and we are stuck in the middle.

A more veteran teacher added that these district expectations negatively impact teacher flourishing. When talking about professional development that is being offered to teachers outside of the school day, this teacher commented:

> It pisses me off that the district is asking me to choose between being with my family or attending a training for free that allows me to flourish. I need to attend the training to continue to improve because that impacts my effectiveness. Asking us to stay late or work harder because isn't fair. It's an insult to say here, do more with less time and we aren't going to compensate you more.

Even though it was not mentioned in the literature as important or accounted for on the TELL survey, perceived conflicts between the teacher's union and the school

district appear to have a direct impact on teacher flourishing.

Summary of Qualitative Data

Overall, there was general thematic consensus between data generated from the teacher notes and the coded transcripts of the focus group discussions. Student conduct, teacher autonomy and shared decision-making, relationships, administrator attributes, and teamwork were cited as important on the teacher notes and were actively discussed in the focus groups. However, the impact of student conduct was talked about more frequently and passionately in the focus group discussions than was identified from the teacher notes. This could possibly be attributed to the social nature of the focus groups and teacher story-telling about student behaviors that occurred in the past. Also, the impact of perceived conflicts between the school district and the teacher's union was not a common theme raised by the teacher notes, but it was discussed by three of the five focus groups as an important demand that impacts teacher flourishing.

Discrepancy between the teacher notes and the focus group transcripts concerning student conduct and union/contract issues could be related to the nature of having a group discussion versus completing the notes independently without discussion. Talking about student behaviors and perceived conflict between the union and school district appeared to be highly emotional for teachers. Several teachers cried or displayed anger during this part of the focus group discussion. A possible explanation for this emotional response is that most teachers at some point in their career have had difficult or even possibly dangerous students in their classrooms. When teachers come together socially, it is common for them to talk about student behaviors and share stories about what has happened in the past. Even though teachers might not have identified student conduct as

an impactful factor at the outset of the focus group, talking about scenarios with disruptive or dangerous students could bring back memories of these events. The nature of the group discussion in the focus group may encourage teachers to engage in storytelling and overstate the significance of these problems compared to the relative significance raised working independently on the teacher notes.

Also, more extreme student behaviors seem to be becoming more prevalent at all GAPS schools and are therefore impacting more teachers. Similarly, issues of possible conflicts between the union and the district can be emotional and difficult for teachers to discuss unless they feel that they are in a safe and trusting space. One teacher said, "it makes me nervous to even say this out loud, but I really just want to tell the district to stay away from my classrooms, my contract, and let me teach." Participating in a group discussion that is perceived as supportive may help teachers more honestly and opening discuss these difficult topics.

RQ #3: Alignment between TELL Factors and Focus Group Factors

Even though there was relatively strong alignment between school level factors identified by the focus group participants and TELL factors, the relative impact or importance of those factors vary between the two sources of data. The area of greatest correlation was administrative supports and decision-making. Only mentioned as important by a handful of teachers in the focus groups, professional development seemed to play a relatively minor role in teacher flourishing, but it was the second highest factor from the TELL survey. Student conduct was an important topic for all of the focus groups participants and it also accounted for 5.8% of the variance on the TELL survey. For teachers who have students with high behavioral needs in their classrooms, student

conduct seemed to be the single most important factor impacting their ability to flourish. Teacher autonomy, job control, having a sense of agency, and shared decision making was strongly supported in both the TELL survey data and the focus group data. Finally, teacher feedback that includes role clarity, recognition, clear expectations, and strong communication was an impactful factor on both sets of data.

Positive relationships at school, teamwork, and stressors related to contract issues were also mentioned in the focus groups, but not identified on the TELL survey. In general, the TELL survey captures some, but not all, of the factors that teachers identified in the focus groups as impactful for teacher flourishing. The focus groups produced a much more diverse list of factors than the TELL Survey. This longer list of factors was reflected in the literature as well.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter I first present a summary of findings for each research question. Following this brief summary, I present how this research project contributes to the literature on teacher well-being and the Job Demands-Resources model. Next, I discuss the limitations of the mixed methods research design and how those limitations frame the interpretations of the findings. Finally, I conclude with implications for future research and implications for practice.

Summary of Findings

RQ1: Alignment between TELL Factors and Variables in the Literature

Overall, variables identified in the literature as impactful on teacher well-being and the underlying factors on the TELL survey were aligned. For example, factors related to administrative supports, professional development, student conduct, teacher autonomy, and teacher feedback supported as impactful in the literature were also found to be important to teacher flourishing. However, this overlap is not entirely surprising given the wide range of variables identified in the literature. The long list of variables identified in the literature review makes it highly unlikely that the factor analysis of the TELL survey would not find some overlap.

The biggest discrepancy between the TELL factors and the literature variables seems to be the relative impact of professional development on work conditions. The factor analysis of the TELL survey produced professional development as one of the factors that accounted for the second highest amount of variance on the survey but the literature found professional development/training to be a relatively minor factor. The

significance of professional development on teacher flourishing is discussed later in this chapter.

RQ2: Qualitative Analysis of Flourishing Factors

Student conduct, teacher autonomy and shared decision-making, relationships, administrator attributes, teamwork, and union/contract issues were the top flourishing factors identified by teachers as impactful on their flourishing. Of these factors, teacher autonomy, relationships, positive administrator attributes and teamwork could all be considered job resources that help teachers flourish. Student conduct and union/contract issues could be considered job demands that negatively impact teacher flourishing. The implications for these findings and how they relate to the Job Demands-Resources model and inform the academic literature will be discussed in the following section.

RQ3: Alignment between TELL Factors and Focus Group Factors

With the exception of the professional development factor, there was alignment between flourishing factors identified by teachers in the focus groups and TELL factors identified by the exploratory factor analysis. Administrator attributes and leadership, student conduct, teacher autonomy and shared decision-making, and teacher feedback were all supported by both the qualitative and quantitative data. However, the relative impact or magnitude of those factors was not consistent between the two data sets. Based on the teacher focus group data, it appears that student conduct, perceived teacher autonomy, and relationships are particularly important to teacher flourishing, Even though it was measured by several items on the TELL, the factor analysis did not capture the relative impact of these factors. In addition, teachers in the focus groups identified teamwork/collaboration and union/contract issues as also impacting teacher flourishing.

These factors were not accounted for on the TELL analysis.

Triangulation Across Data Sets

Patton (1999) asserted that thematic triangulation across different sources of data is one of the advantages of a mixed-methods design. For this research project, there was substantial triangulation between the literature review variables, factors identified from the TELL survey, and school-level factors discussed by teachers in the focus groups. Table 17 below summarizes this overlap. Administrator attributes, teaming/collaboration, and teacher autonomy were factors or variables present across all the data sets. Relationships with colleagues, parents, and students was the most commonly cited variable from the literature review and was also a common theme in the focus group discussions. Student conduct was discussed in only two of the articles from the literature, but was identified as impactful by teachers in the focus groups and was also a factor identified from the TELL survey. Likewise, the importance of consistent and actionable feedback was present in both the literature review and the TELL factor analysis. Work demands such as workload and pressure were closely related to union/contract issues and were a common theme in the focus group discussions and the literature review.

Table 17

Triangulation of Flourishing Factors Across Data Sets

Flourishing Factors Data Triangulation			
	Literature Review	TELL Survey Factors	Focus Group Factors
Administrator Attributes & Supports	X	X	X
Teaming	X	X	X
Teacher Autonomy	X	X	X
Relationships	X		X
Work Demands	X		X
Teacher Feedback		X	X

Contributions to Theory and Literature

Contributions to Job-Demands Resources Theory

The Job-Demands Resources Model (JD-R) (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011) provides a theoretical and empirical model for understanding how individual teachers balance workplace demands and resources when striving to flourish. According to this model, when provided with sufficient resources teachers have increased well-being and engagement but excessive demands can lead to exhaustion and burnout. A common critique of JD-R is that it is an open, descriptive model rather than a predictive model that identifies a generalized set of resources or demands that can universally be applied to all settings (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). The descriptive power of the JD-R adds to its flexibility and adaptability, but limits the generalizability of the findings across settings.

The JD-R encourages researchers to identify a long list of possible factors that impact burnout or engagement without necessarily prioritizing these factors. The literature review for this dissertation is a good example of the large collection of factors that can be produced by this model.

In a recent review of the JD-R model, Schaufeli & Taris (2014) asserted that engagement/burnout interventions are most successful if they are tailored to address important workplace demands or resources in specific environments. They argue that JD-R can provide a framework for understanding how demands and resources in general are balanced by employees, but they assert that more research is needed to better understand how salient factors impact individual employees working in specific settings. Thus, this dissertation adds to the body of literature about potent school-level factors that teachers balance when striving to flourish.

Even though the JD-R helps explain how teachers balance different factors, one of the important findings of this research project is that not all factors have the same impact. In particular, negative student behaviors seem to be a particularly powerful job demand that when present makes it difficult for teachers to flourish. As was mentioned in the results section, student behaviors were discussed in all the focus groups and accounted for the second most frequently mentioned flourishing factor. One teacher summed up this impact when she said, "It is hard to even think about flourishing when you are nervous about getting hit or stabbed with a pencil by a student." When talking about a particularly extreme student, another teacher said, "I constantly worry about the safety of the other children in my class and can't even really think about flourishing."

From this perspective, job resources such as positive relationships and teaming

cannot outweigh the relative impact of a single job demand. Instead of thinking about resources and demands as equally impactful, it appears that teachers think about them as hierarchical. Basic safety is a fundamental concern for both the teachers and their students. If this safety is jeopardized, it is impossible for them to flourish. This finding has implications both for the JD-R theory, but also implications for practice when trying to prioritize which factors to implement for the greatest impact on teacher flourishing.

Another finding from this study is that the JD-R does not seem to capture the fluidity of how teachers perceive factors that impact their flourishing. Instead of neatly categorizing a factor as a resource or demand, teachers seem to think about individual factors on a continuum. For example, several teachers mentioned the importance of increasing teacher autonomy and shared decision making when creating conditions for flourishing. However, in those same focus groups, teachers also discussed how too much autonomy can lead to a feeling of isolation and too much shared decision making can hamper the ability to take necessary action. Likewise, teachers expressed the need for more collaboration, but also noted that too much collaboration can restrict creativity. The JD-R model assumes that individual factors are relatively constant when viewed as a resource or demand, but in practice, the same factor taken to different degrees could be both a resource and a demand.

Contributions to Literature

This study contributes to the research in teacher well-being in several ways. First, by using a mixed methods design, this dissertation utilizes data from teachers working in 103 schools across the state of Oregon and includes input from a collection of teachers in one school district. A similar research design was not implemented by any of the authors

included in the literature review. Even though more time and resource intensive than a pure quantitative or qualitative design, this mixed method allows for a deeper understanding of both school factors that were present in the larger sample of schools and how those factors are interpreted by individual groups of teachers. Given the complex and highly personal nature of the concept of flourishing, including teacher voice and individual perspectives proved insightful and helpful when interpreting the data.

This research project also contributes to the research on teacher well-being in the United States and specifically in the state of Oregon. As was reviewed in the literature sample, much of the research on teacher flourishing and the conditions that impact teacher well-being has been conducted in Western Europe and Australia. By applying the principles of positive psychology and the PERMA model to the school setting, factors that impact teacher flourishing in the United States can be better understood.

Finally, with the focus on school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing, this research project increases understanding about the complex interplay between individual teacher flourishing and school-level factors. Even though this project was designed to isolate school-level factors (not focusing on district factors or individual teacher factors) it was quickly evident that these factors do not exist independent of each other. They are all interconnected systems that need to be considered in relation to each other. Personal attributes such as emotional stability, orientation toward conflict, and general positivity interact with school-level factors such as shared decision-making structures and collaborative teaming to impact the ability of individual teachers to flourish. This implies that tailoring interventions and factors for specific teachers working in specific settings will have the most impact. A generalized list of factors and variables is helpful, but

differentiated application of those factors to a specific community of teachers (or even to specific teachers within the same community) will ultimately have the most impact on teacher flourishing.

Limitations

The study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. Limitations for the quantitative phase of the data collection and analysis will be discussed first followed by a discussion of the limitations of the qualitative dataset.

Quantitative Data Limitations

First, a possible sampling bias needs to be considered because the schools included in the TELL factor analysis included only a sub-section of Oregon elementary schools. All of these schools were located within relatively large districts (each district had more than 10 elementary schools that reported data) and most of these districts are located in the Willamette Valley or near Portland. This sampling reduces the ability to generalize the results to other schools around the state. Also, only focusing on elementary schools restricts the ability to generalize to middle and high school teachers. Whereas the need to flourish and the desire to flourish could be similar across levels, the school conditions that encourage flourishing at a high school versus an elementary school could also be very different. By creating a sampling frame that focuses on elementary school teachers, the descriptive power was increased because of similarities across schools, but it also restricts the ability to generalize to other schools.

Second, construct validity needs to be considered due to inclusion of most, but not all categories of questions on the TELL. In order to reduce the overall number of items on the TELL and increase the alignment to variables identified in the literature review,

only 5 categories of questions were included in the sample. I purposefully did not include questions related to Community Support & Involvement, Facilities & Resources, and Use of Time. Most of the focus group data and the literature review largely supported the exclusion of these questions, but several focus group members mentioned the use of time dimension as a possibly important factor. Excluding these questions could have restricted the internal validity of the instrument because the abbreviated instrument might not have captured an important factor that could have been shown to impact flourishing. However, reducing the number of items based on both the PERMA theory and prior research findings made it possible to better align the findings of this study with the academic literature in positive psychology.

Third, since not all teachers around the state completed the TELL survey in 2016 and schools that did not have a 50% response rate did not have data reported and therefore could not be included in this sample, there is a self-response bias with this data set. For the 2016 survey, 18,266 educators completed the TELL, representing slightly over 54% of all possible respondents (https://telloregon.org/uploads/File/TELL_crossstate_2011to2016.pdf). It appears that communicating to building administrators that the survey is important makes a difference on the response rates. District leadership in districts like Beaverton, Bend-LaPine, and Greater Albany communicated that the data would be used by the district to better understand teaching conditions and encouraged all building principals to find time during a staff meeting or planning period to have teachers take the survey. It could be that this encouragement resulted in districts that are already concerned about school conditions for teacher flourishing completed the survey at a higher rate than districts that are not as

concerned about these conditions.

Qualitative Data Limitations

Patton (1999) asserted that with qualitative research, the credibility of the researcher must first be examined and reported as a possible limitation. Patton argued that during qualitative data collection and interpretation, what the researcher pays attention to and brings forward as important is based on their own perspective and experience. Similarly, Creswell (2014) asserted that researcher bias exists in all qualitative studies and is a limitation that should be considered and presented to the reader because the researcher's interpretation of findings is always shaped by her/his background and experience.

When interpreting the results of the focus group discussions, it is important to note that I am a school administrator in the Greater Albany School District where the focus groups took place. Prior to beginning the focus groups I made my role clear to the sampled teachers so they could make an informed choice about participation and my position in the district probably shaped what was discussed. On one hand, this district experience could have helped me more accurately interpret the findings based on my intimate knowledge of this school system. Also, participants might have felt comfortable sharing insights because I am a member of the district community; they might also believe that I can help initiate change in the district because I have some positional authority. On the other hand, my role in the district could have skewed both what was said in the focus groups and my interpretation of the findings. Even though I tried hard to ensure the confidentiality of the participants both in reporting the data and interpreting the findings, my position in the district could have impacted the discussions.

Another important factor to consider when interpreting the data is that the Greater Albany School District was undergoing a change in district office leadership as the focus groups were being conducted. This transition was very public and involved allegations of perceived conflicts and tension between the superintendent and the teachers union (Moody, 2018). This unique circumstance may have heightened perceptions about the negative impact of perceived conflict between the school district and the teachers union.

An additional possible limitation is related to the categorization the teacher notes into the TELL dimensions that followed each teacher focus group. Instead of having teachers brainstorm and name their own categories for the teacher notes, due to time constraints I asked them to place the notes into categories related to the TELL dimensions (i.e. school leadership, teacher leadership, instructional supports, etc.). This modified nominal group technique helped with data interpretation and made it possible for the focus groups to conclude in about 1 hour, but it also might have forced the teachers to place the notes in categories that didn't completely capture their ideas.

Self-selection bias with the teacher focus groups is another limitation to consider. Given the structure of the focus groups and limited resources, I was not able to interview teachers at every school in the district. In addition, all of the teachers at the sampled schools were invited to participate, but of the 68 teachers who work at the four schools, only 36 teachers participated in the focus groups. Moreover, the numbers of participants were not evenly distributed across the schools. At one school in particular, nearly all of the licensed teachers participated in the focus groups whereas at a different school, only five out of 22 teachers participated. Even though the overall sample did contain a cross section of teachers with varying years of experience, job assignments, and years in the

district, it was a self-selected sample that might not represent all opinions held by teachers in the district.

The self-selection bias could have also impacted which teachers at the sampled schools volunteered to participate. In general, teachers who feel strongly about flourishing (either positively or negatively) could have been overrepresented in the focus groups. For example, if a teacher has had negative interactions with other teachers or the administrator in a school community, they may feel passionately that this has impacted their flourishing. They might be more willing to volunteer for the focus group because they are looking for a place to share their grievances and get support. On the other hand, people who consider themselves to be highly flourishing might also be drawn to participate. In this way, the focus group data could represent the upper and lower extremes about this topic found in the GAPS community.

A final limitation to consider is the social nature of the focus group. Even though the modified nominal group technique that started with note taking followed by a group discussion was implemented to encourage equal participation, not all focus group members participated equally in the discussion. All members had the opportunity to share their factors with the group, but the ensuing discussions may disproportionately represent the perspective of a few members in each focus group. This social nature of the focus group could partially account for the difference between the factors generated during the group discussions and those that were identified by individual teachers before the discussion occurred. The social nature of the group also could have contributed to more of a group consensus around different topics or factors as the conversation unfolded. For example, in response to a person in the group mentioning the importance of collaborative

relationships during one of the focus group discussions a teacher exclaimed, “How did I not think to mention my awesome teammate! She is definitely the most important thing that impacts my flourishing!” Even though the group discussion helped her clarify the importance of this factor, she did not identify this factor on her own. Thus, teachers were both reporting their feelings about factors that impact flourishing, but also possibly forming new opinions throughout the discussion.

Suggestions for Future Research

The issue of teacher resiliency is an important concept to better understand when studying teacher flourishing. Even though school-level factors and school conditions do impact flourishing, some teachers seem able to flourish even when resources are not available. This line of research is important because not all schools have the same demands. Schools with high numbers of students in poverty resulting in more student mobility and the school serving more a social-work function in the community (providing clothing, food, and basic necessities) present a different set of demands than schools that do not have students living in poverty. This line of research is especially important because it can be more difficult to retain teachers working in schools with more students who are impacted by poverty. Understanding what factors or personal attributes help teachers buffer workplace stressors could inform hiring practices and the implementation of factors in these schools that are critical to enhance flourishing and increase retention.

Another area for future research concerns conditions that impact administrator flourishing. Like teachers, building administrators experience high levels of stress and conditions for burnout. As was evident across all the sources of data, administrator attributes and support systems are important when creating school communities that

support flourishing for teachers and students. If administrators are not flourishing, it could be more difficult for them to implement school structures that allow others to flourish.

A third area for future research would be to use the data set from the TELL survey to conduct a longitudinal analysis of school conditions for teacher flourishing across state of Oregon. The TELL survey has produced a unique data set that is publically available for analysis and interpretation. In 2014, 19,373 Oregon educators completed the survey, 18,266 educators completed the survey in 2016, and 19,556 educators completed the survey in February 2018. This longitudinal data set creates opportunities to identify schools or districts that have maintained conduction's for flourishing over time. This longitudinal data set also makes it possible to understand how factors like a change in school leadership, high staff turn-over, or the state-wide adoption of impactful policies (like the adoption of the Common Core State Standards) might impact teacher flourishing over time. This rich data set would also make it possible to compare teacher well-being in different settings such as rural versus urban schools, Title 1 versus non-Title 1 schools, and larger versus smaller schools.

A fourth area for future research would be to study the relationship between instructional supports that are identified by district and building leadership and how those supports are actually perceived by teachers. In several of the focus group comments, teachers mentioned a perceived lack of overall supports particularly related to student conduct. This was especially prevalent in focus group discussions from the two non-T1 school communities that in the past have not had as many students with extreme behaviors. Even though these supports are funded at the district level, they are not

perceived as being well implemented by the teachers. It would appear that there is an implementation gap between the stated supports at the district level and the lived supports at the classroom level. Research into implementation science could be helpful to better understand and address this gap.

A final area for future research would be to study the link between teacher flourishing and student well-being. One of the assumptions underlying this project is that teachers who are deeply engaged and find their work meaningful are able to better create classroom environments where students also flourish. This linkage needs to be better understood and established.

Implications for Practice

The implications for practice are broken into three levels: 1) implications for district officials and union leadership; 2) implications for building administrators; and 3) implications for teachers. Each of these sets of implications and related suggested actions are drawn from the quantitative and qualitative data used for this dissertation.

Implications for District Officials and Union Leadership

A common theme expressed by teachers in three of the five focus groups was anxiety about perceived conflicts between the school district and the teachers union. This anxiety seemed to be more acute for teachers who are relatively new to the profession or the district. One of these young teachers said, “It is not that the actual teaching is stressful, it is worrying about the politics of teaching that is stressful.” Another teacher in the group added, “we hear one thing from the union and another thing from the district and we are caught in the middle.” Perceived conflict between the union and the district appears to have a direct impact on teacher flourishing, especially the flourishing of

younger teachers. Teachers were also concerned about a lack of shared vision between the teaching staff, teachers union, and the school district.

These comments demonstrate the importance of articulating a shared vision that includes teacher voice and aligns the vision of the teachers union and the district leadership. Teachers want to believe that their work is meaningful, appreciated, and in-line with a district vision that is supported by the teachers union. Conflicts between the union and the district may be magnified during bargaining or contract negotiations. Emphasizing the differences and instead of finding common ground may be an effective bargaining technique, but it can also have long-term impacts on the culture of the district. Possible areas of collaboration and shared purpose between the union and district include presenting quality professional development that increases teacher effectiveness, working together to recruit and retain teachers of color, and increasing shared decision-making across the district.

Another issue for district leaders to consider is that flourishing can be more difficult in some buildings than in others. Equal funding for all schools and equal supports may not be sufficient to encourage flourishing across the district. For example, two of the schools included in the qualitative sample were T1 schools (each with over 70% of students receiving free or reduced lunches) and two were non-T1 schools. Overall, teachers from the T1 schools discussed more extreme student behaviors, the need for mental health services for students and families, the stress of worrying about students living in unsafe environments, the lack of parent involvement, and more student mobility. They also discussed the impact of high teacher turn-over as people leave the school or profession because of the related stress. In the non-T1 schools, the demands

placed on teachers were fewer and related more to demanding parents and not feeling supported by district leadership.

Interestingly, several teachers from the non-T1 schools recognized this difference. One of the teachers in the focus groups had recently transferred from a school with a large percentage of students living in poverty to her current assignment at a school with fewer students in poverty. She observed,

> The difference between this school and my previous school is that you don't go home exhausted from your work and you aren't going home to lay in bed and worry about the safety of your students. There were so many days that I would go home and tell my husband that I did 30% teaching and 70% social work. The kids needed food, shoes, love, comfort, and then they also needed education. It is all those other things that make working in those schools so difficult.

Another teacher in this discussion added, "I know the people here would kill me for saying this, but I think those schools need more resources and support to have their teachers flourish compared to schools like this one." She added, "30 students in a classroom at this school is really different than 30 students at my previous school."

In providing guidance to district leaders on how to retain effective teachers, Darling-Hammond (2003) outlined how work conditions such as limited resources for teaching, input on decisions, and administrative supports negative impact teacher retention. She argued that the high attrition of teachers working in lower-income neighborhoods is substantially influenced by poor working conditions in these schools. Addition resources at these schools are essential to retain experienced teachers and create

conditions where all teachers can flourish. When funding district-wide supports, schools that have more students in poverty may require supports such as school counselors, additional behavior specialists, lower class sizes, family liaison programs, and additional mentorship for newer teachers. These supports and additional resources would help create the conditions for teacher flourishing and offset some of the demands of working in higher poverty schools.

Implications for Building Leaders

Based on the data from the TELL survey, the literature review, and the focus groups transcripts, it appears that building leaders in elementary schools have an important role to play in creating conditions that promote teacher flourishing. Administrator leadership attributes, finding time for teaming, encouraging teacher autonomy, creating strong relationships with teachers, and helping teachers negotiate work demands are all factors that were present in the data and all in the purview of the building administrator.

The teachers' image of the building leader who can effectively implement school-level factors that promote teacher flourishing was complex and at times contradictory. For example, teachers voiced the desire to have unified structures for behavioral expectations, teaming structures, clear expectations for work performance, and well-structured staff meetings. However, they also expressed the need to have autonomy when setting up their classrooms and more independence when meeting with their grade-level teams. Thus, teachers appear to believe that the effective building leader is a person who can balance the need for school-wide structures with the need for teacher autonomy. Similarly, several teachers commented on the importance of having a principal who is a

strong and active communicator. However, other teachers talked about the negative impact of getting too many emails and having too many meetings. Again, it would appear that the effective building leader is a person who can balance the need for strong communication with the need to respect teachers' time.

According to the data generated from this study, there are many actions that building administrators can take to create the conditions for teacher flourishing. However, before taking steps to implement these actions, building administrators would be well served to talk with teachers about their flourishing and use their feedback to guide the principal's action. Several of the teachers who participated in the focus groups expressed excitement about having the opportunity to talk with an administrator about school factors that impact flourishing at their school. One person said, "it feels great that you are engaging with us and actually taking the time to ask us these questions." In an email following one of the focus groups another teacher commented, "I have been teaching for over 30 years and no-one has never asked me these things." It could be that having an open discussion about flourishing can be an important first step for a school community.

After talking with teachers, several actions should be considered that could create the conditions for teacher flourishing. All of these action steps where mentioned by teachers in the focus groups as impactful on teacher flourishing and most of them are also supported by the research literature. When appropriate, citations for reference and further information are included with the action steps. These actions could include, but are not limited to, the following list:

- Articulate a school-wide vibrant and shared vision for teaching and learning.

Reinforce this vision throughout the school year and only adopt new initiatives that forward this vision. Restrict the instructional focus to a few powerful strategies and give teachers autonomy on how to implement those strategies (Cleary, Morgan, & Marzano, 2017).

- Closely examine the TELL data to better understand teacher perceptions of work conditions. Comparing the 2014, 2016, and 2018 allows for an understanding of how these perceptions might have changed over time (https://newteachercenter.org/approach-old/teaching-empowering-leading-and-learning-tell/).
- Be physically present and approachable during busy times during the school day, particularly during arrival, dismissal, passing periods, lunches, etc.
- Implement authentic shared decision-making structures with teachers (Ingersoll, Sirinides, & Dougherty, 2018).
- Limit after-school meetings and do not send excessive communication (especially on the weekend or over breaks).
- Give specific, actionable feedback to teachers that reinforces the school-wide vision (Feldman, 2016).
- Celebrate student achievement and teacher accomplishments. Create systems for publically acknowledging the success of individual teachers and encourage teachers to celebrate each other (Ross, Romer, & Horner, 2012).
- Clarify the role of behavior support teams and how teachers can access additional support resources. Provide training on how to implement best practices for students with extreme behavior needs that includes training on

trauma-informed pedagogy (Sousers & Hall, 2016)

- Encourage teachers to take ownership of how they design and implement lessons to meet the common core state standards (Sparks & Malkus, 2015).
- Schedule common lunch periods and planning periods for all teachers. This is especially important for grade-level teams and teachers who share students.
- Hire additional supports or teaching assistants during busy or stressful times.
- Work with staff to design and tailor professional development opportunities and ongoing trainings that address their needs.
- Promote wellness activities with teachers such as physical fitness clubs at school, keeping gratitude journals, and stress reduction techniques (Healthy Schools Campaign, 2012)

Although the actions listed above could increase flourishing, the data also showed that individual attributes of the building leader are also important. During the focus groups the teachers discussed the importance of having a building leader who establishes strong, trusting relationships with teachers and students. They also found that working for an administrator who is flexible and willing to take feedback from teachers and parents is also helpful. Several teachers discussed the importance of having a building administrator who is friendly and quick to laugh. One teacher said, "we need an administrator who knows what we are doing is serious and important, but who can also laugh with us when things get stressful." Having an administrator who is a strong communicator and is willing to take action was also mentioned in the focus groups.

Overall, a powerful conclusion from this study is that building administrators play an important role with teacher flourishing. At the elementary level this is typically one

individual who carries a lot of responsibility for creating a flourishing school community. In joking about the importance of this role, one teacher in a focus group said, "I do think that these things (school flourishing factors) start at the top. From Jesus to the principal to us! When the principal is optimistic and positive, it makes a difference for the entire school."

Implications for Teachers

A key question for teachers is "who owns the conditions for teacher flourishing in a school?" Even though the focus of this dissertation was on school-level factors that impact teacher flourishing, several teachers commented on the importance of teachers having agency for their own flourishing. One teacher said, "We haven't always had strong principals or positive schools, but the rest of us have flourished even though those factors weren't there. We just decided that we wanted to support each other and we flourished."

One of the most important steps a school community can take to increase flourishing may be to encourage teachers to take their own steps to increase flourishing. The data from this project demonstrates that some teachers need daily contact with a colleague to flourish. Others need to take a walk at lunch or to laugh with their students. Having time to deeply read curriculum and create lessons that have a seamless flow allows other teachers to flourish. It would seem that the first step in creating a community of flourishing teachers may be to encourage the teachers to think about what conditions impact their flourishing and then work with other teachers to co-create a supportive school environment. This research project has demonstrated that there are important school factors that can encourage teacher flourishing in a school community, but each

individual teacher creates the conditions in their own life for flourishing.

Research Dissemination

The findings from this research project will be shared with several different audiences. First, I will share the results with district leadership in the Greater Albany School District. This will include presentations to school board members, the district administrative cabinet, the elementary administrators team, and the Greater Albany Education Association leadership team. The findings will also be presented to school leaders and administrators at the Spring 2018 Confederations of Oregon State Administrators conference. Finally, the findings will be shared with the Greater Albany Public School teachers who participated in the focus groups. It is my hope that these presentations will encourage school leaders and teachers across the state of Oregon to begin or continue discussions about how to accelerate flourishing in their own districts, schools, and classrooms.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH ARTICLES IN LITERATURE REVIEW

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APPENDIX B

INITIAL EMAIL WITH POSSIBLE NGT PARTICIPANTS

Dear (First name of teacher),

Hello! My name is Kraig Sproles. I am the principal at South Shore Elementary and I am also a doctoral student at the University of Oregon.

Your input is needed to help us identify school factors that might impact your ability to flourish as a teacher. Working together, the school district and the Greater Albany Education Association (GAEA) are committed to creating schools where both students and staff flourish by forming positive relationships, are engaged in meaningful work, and collectively celebrate achievements. Ultimately, we believe that flourishing teachers make it possible to create schools where students also flourish.

I am writing to ask you to consider participating in a focus group that I am conducting at {insert name of school} to get your insights on teacher flourishing. I will be conducting similar focus groups at several other schools across the district. Later this week I will be attending a staff meeting to talk about this research project and answer any of your questions.

The focus group will take about 1 hour to complete and we will be meeting in the school library. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and all of your responses will be kept confidential. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses in any reports of this data.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact me directly at (541) 967-4604 or reply to this email. You could also contact the faculty advisor for this research is Kathleen Scalise at kscalise@uoregon.edu or Research Compliance Services at ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu.

I look forward to seeing you in a few days and working together with each of you to create flourishing schools.

Sincerely,

Kraig Sproles

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL WITH POSSIBLE NGT PARTICIPANTS

Dear (First name of teacher),

Hello Again!

Two days ago I attended a staff meeting at your school to talk about an important research project that is being conducted in our school district. This project is designed to inform district and union leadership about school-level factors that create the conditions for teacher flourishing.

A focus group discussion with teachers at {insert school name} will be conducted in the next few weeks to get your insights into factors that impact teacher flourishing. If you would like to participate in this discussion, but didn't have an opportunity to sign the interest form at the meeting, please reply to this email.

The focus group will take about 1 hour to complete and we will be meeting in the school library. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary and all of your responses will be kept confidential. No personally identifiable information will be associated with your responses in any reports of this data.

If you have any questions or concerns about this survey, please contact me directly at (541) 967-4604 or reply to this email. You could also contact the faculty advisor for this research is Kathleen Scalise at kscalise@uoregon.edu or Research Compliance Services at ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu.

I look forward to hearing your insights on this important topic and working together with each of you to create flourishing schools.

Sincerely,

Kraig Sproles

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

The Flourishing School: School-Level Factors that Impact Teacher Flourishing
Focus group participant consent form

Primary Investigator: Kraig Sproles
University of Oregon: Department of Education Methodology, Policy, and Leadership

You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted to better understand school-level conditions that impact your ability to flourish as a teacher. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you are a licensed teacher working at an elementary school in Greater Albany. **We ask that you read this form and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to participate in this study.**

The purpose of this study is to better understand factors that impact teacher flourishing. This research will be used by the school district and the Greater Albany Education Association to work together to encourage flourishing schools. Ultimately, we believe that implementing school structures that encourage teachers to form positive relationships, find their work meaningful, and collectively celebrate achievements make it possible to create schools where students also flourish. Focus groups will be conducted at several other elementary schools across the district.

If you agree to participate in this study, we would ask you to join us for a focus group discussion with other teachers from your school. The focus groups will take place in the library and should take approximately one hour.

This study does not have any identified risks or benefits. Snacks and drinks will be provided for the focus group participants, but no other form of compensation will be offered. There is no cost for you to participate in this research study.

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we may publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify any of the participants. To ensure accuracy, the focus group discussions will be recorded using a digital device. These recordings will be transcribed and coded and stored in a password-protected file. These recordings will be erased following completion of this project in Spring, 2018. Access to research records will be limited to the primary investigator and his faculty advisor.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. If you choose not to participate, it will not affect your current or future relations with the school district or the University of Oregon. You are free to withdraw from the focus group at any time, for whatever reason. You will be given a copy of this form for your records and future reference.

The primary researcher conducting this study is Kraig Sproles. For questions or more information concerning this research you make contact him directly at (503) 453-6130 or kraig.sproles@gmail.com. The faculty advisor for this project is Kathleen Scalise, kscalise@uoregon.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact: Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon, (541) 346-2510 or ResearchCompliance@uoregon.edu.

The Flourishing School: School Factors that Impact Teacher Flourishing

Focus group participant consent form

Statement of Consent:

I have read the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions. I give my consent to participate in this study. I have received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

_____

Study Participant (Print Name)

_____

Study Participant (Signature) Date

APPENDIX E

ABBREVIATED VERSION OF THE OREGON TELL CONSTRUCTS AND ITEMS

Construct	#	Items
Managing Student Conduct	7	• School administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct. • Policies and procedures about student conduct are clearly understood by the faculty. • School administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom. • Students at this school understand expectations for their conduct. • Students at this school follow rules of conduct. • The faculty works in a school environment that is safe. • Teachers consistently enforce rules for student conduct.
Teacher Leadership	7	• Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction. • Teachers are relied upon to make decisions about educational issues. • Teachers are recognized as educational experts. • Teachers are effective leaders in this school. • In this school we take steps to solve problems. • The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions. • Teachers are encouraged to participate in school leadership roles
School Leadership	11	• There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in this school. (RL) • Teachers feel comfortable raising issues that are important to them. (RL) • The school leadership consistently supports teachers. (RL) • The faculty and leadership have a shared vision. (RL) • The faculty are recognized for accomplishments. (RL) • The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent. (PE) • Teacher performance is assessed objectively. (PE) • Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching. (PE) • The school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning. (PE) • Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction. (PE) • The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.

Professional Development	12	• Professional development enhances teachers' ability to implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student learning needs. • Professional development enhances teachers' abilities to improve student learning. • Professional development deepens teachers' content knowledge. • Professional development provides ongoing opportunities for teachers to work with colleagues to refine teaching practices. • In this school, follow-up is provided from professional development. • Professional development is evaluated and results are communicated to teachers. • Professional development is differentiated to meet the needs of individual teachers. • Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice. • Professional learning opportunities are aligned with the school's improvement plan. • Professional development offerings are data driven. • Sufficient resources are available for professional development in my school. • An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development
Instructional Practices and Support	11	• Teachers collaborate to achieve consistency on how student work is assessed. (CC) • Teachers have knowledge of the content covered and instructional methods used by other teachers at this school. (CC) • Teachers know what students learn in each of their classes. (CC) • Teachers work in professional learning communities or cluster groups to develop and align instructional practices. (CC) • Provided supports (i.e., instructional coaching, professional learning communities, etc.) translate to improvements in instructional practices by teachers. (CC) • Teachers believe what is taught will make a difference in students' lives. (TE) • Teachers believe almost every student has the potential to do well on assignments. (TE) • Teachers require students to work hard. (TE) • Teachers have autonomy to make decisions about instructional delivery (i.e., pacing, materials and pedagogy). (PA) • Teachers are encouraged to try new things to improve instruction. (PA) • Teachers are assigned classes that maximize their likelihood of success with students. (PA)

Table Notes: CC=Community Citizenship, TE=Teacher Expectations, PA=Professional Autonomy, PE=Performance and Evaluation, RL=Rapport with Leadership

APPENDIX F

NGT FOCUS GROUP SCRIPT

Good afternoon. My name is Kraig Sproles and I am a doctoral student at the University of Oregon. I am also an elementary school administrator here in the Greater Albany school district. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me about conditions at your school that impact teacher flourishing.

I am meeting with groups of teachers at several different schools to gather teachers' perceptions about school conditions that impact teacher well-being. Your insights will be included in my dissertation and will also be shared with both the Greater Albany administrative team and the Greater Albany Education Association leadership team. It is my goal that we can work together to create school communities in Albany that encourage teacher flourishing. You were invited to participate because as teachers in the school district you have unique insights and experiences on this important topic.

You've probably noticed the microphone on the table. I'm recording this session because I don't want to miss any of your comments and I can't write fast enough to get them all down. During the focus group we will be on a first name basis, but I won't use any names in the summaries I share with the school district or in my dissertation. I also will not be identifying specific comments related to individual schools.

We will follow a specific process to structure this discussion. The process is designed to give everyone a chance to have their voice heard and to also encourage the group to come to consensus about factors that impact teacher flourishing. For each question you will first be asked to record your ideas on one of the sticky notes located on the table in front of you. Please just record one main idea on each note. You may need several notes for each question. After you record your ideas, each person will have an opportunity to share their idea and place their note on one of the posters around the room.

During this process, there are no wrong answers but rather differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said.

After we have discussed each question that I have, you will be given an opportunity to brainstorm factors that impact teacher flourishing that might not have been captured by the questions.

Well, let's begin. I've placed name cards on the table in front of you to help me remember everyone's name.

APPENDIX G

NGT STEPS

Participants: Select a group of 6-10 participants. (if more than 10 participants, consider dividing into two groups).

Supplies: Depending on the group size, you will need several U-shaped tables each with 4-5 chairs. For each table, include the following:

--Chart paper for each table	--Collection of markers
--Pens/Pencils and paper	--Masking tape and 3"x5" cards

Opening Statement: This statement clarifies member roles and group objectives, and should include: a warm welcome, a statement of the importance of the task, a mention of the importance of each member's contribution, and an indication of how the group's output will be used.

Five Step Process to Conduct NGT

1. Generating Ideas: The moderator presents the question or problem to the group in written form and reads the question to the group. The moderator directs participants to write ideas in phrases or statements and to work silently and independently.

2. Recording Ideas: Group members engage in a round-robin feedback session to concisely record each idea (without debate at this point). The moderator writes an idea from a group member on a flip chart that is visible to the entire group, and proceeds to ask for another idea from the next group member, and so on. Proceed until all members' ideas have been documented.

3. Discussing Ideas: Each recorded idea is then discussed to determine clarity and importance. For each idea, the moderator asks, "Are there any questions or comments group members would like to make about the item?" The creator of the idea is not obliged to clarify or explain the item; any member of the group can play that role.

4. Organization of Ideas: The moderator creates a tally sheet on the flip chart with numbers down the left-hand side of the chart, which correspond to the ideas from the round-robin. The moderator collects all the cards from the participants and asks one group member to read the idea number and number of points allocated to each one, while the moderator records and then adds the scores on the tally sheet.

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE QUOTES FROM THE 15 MOST FREQUENT CODES

Code Category	Sample Focus Group Quotes
Teamwork	I do wish we had more time to meet with the other grade-level teachers. Having that time to talk vertically with other teachers is something that I think would be valuable, but we don't do that. For me staff collaboration is a huge part of flourishing. I feel that I can ask anyone in the building questions and they come to me with questions as well. In the past, I have worked in places that aren't as tight knit.
Student Conduct	I think a really big impact on teacher flourishing is if you have a classroom of really tough kids it is just really hard to feel like you are flourishing. I'm not sure how some teachers in the district do it and keep coming back each day ready to go. No matter how upbeat and positive you are, it still makes it difficult for everyone. I feel like I am focusing on 1 kid who demands a lot of attention while the other 29 kids are getting punished. I don't feel like we have a system in place that works well for these students
Relationships	Because I'm in the modular, I feel like I am not a part of the staff and feel like I am not a part of the building. I feel like I am not in the loop on what is happening. When you have strong relationships it eliminates a lot of other things. It eliminates rumors and negativity because people are more connected and more genuinely interested in each other.
Administrator Attributes	I appreciate that we have a principal in this building who spends time in classrooms, but in a non-evaluative way. She is there to support you and do whatever you need at that time. The principal is often in the cafeteria during lunch and tries to make a relationship with them. Since they have a relationship with him there is less anxiety when he needs to talk with them about serious stuff.
Autonomy and Shared Decisions	The expectations are important, but we also have free reign to decide how we are going to meet those expectations. At this school, we are able to work somewhat independently without having to use scripted curriculums that make it impossible to be creative. In this building we are given a lot of autonomy. Dictating what is taught by the school district impacts my flourishing. It is almost like an insult to your professionalism when you are told that you need to blindly follow this schedule.

Union/District Issues	There was a misconception that we weren't using the planning time, but we were actually using it all the time. At times it wasn't that we weren't taking the planning time, it was that we couldn't take the time because subs didn't show up or stay for the whole day. If I could keep the district office and the union away from me and my contract and my classroom, that would be great. I just don't feel like we are moving in the same direction.
Climate: School	People greet each other in the hallway and are truly kind to each other. They are welcoming and kind to new people in the building. We have a very welcoming community. The Principal creates an overall environment of keeping things positive so people just aren't negative because it is not how we do things at this school.
School Structures	We don't seem to have a well-running system to dealing with students when they escalate. I think understanding the system and the process helps mentally what we need to endure to be able to see the purpose of the end game. Having a clearly defined process that teachers can understand why they are completing the paperwork seems important.
Communication	I'm nervous about dealing with parents and families. I'm nervous about not having support from other people about dealing with difficult children and communicating that to parents. Not only recognition, but also being able to reach out to other teachers about how they are working with specific students and what is working well.
School Supports	One thing that I thing would help is enough adult staff to help with the load of running the school. Some of the SEA's are stretched so thin they cannot even take a breath. Having a staff support person for my classroom has also been super helpful. Having another adult who can help and support students in the classroom. They are actually assigned to a specific student from SpEd, but the SEA can help out in general.
Feedback and Affirmation	Positive feedback and having staff recognize each other is super important. In the past it has been more formal and systematic, whereas now it feels like it isn't happening as much. I'm all about the positive. That people are seeing what I'm doing and giving me feedback about it going well or how it is having an impact.

Work demands	Just to be able to plan a lesson and figure out what you need to do, it takes hours and hours to deconstruct the lesson. Teachers don't have time to deeply focus on the lessons because they have so much to plan and prepare each day. I work 6 days a week, I take off Saturdays, but I still have to work It seems like I can never put in enough time.
Consistency	The target continually is moving and we don't have time to get really good at anything. I know that things change and this happens, but right now I am so overwhelmed. The district is constantly changing the focus. Being at the same grade-level for a while really makes a difference. Being able to teach the same thing for a chunk of time really makes a difference because I have time to get good at something.
Professional Development and Training	Ongoing training is super important. I like to know what I am doing and that I'm growing in my job. I have been supported by the school district and the system they have in place in the district has worked wonderfully for me. To be able to flourish in the classroom after 15 years I need to be learning new stuff, new techniques, new things. I don't want to be that teacher who just does the same things over and over.
Extracurricular Activities	I find that at this school we are constantly doing things that are special and different than the regular stuff. Things like Battle of the books, field trips, kindness week, grade-level projects, etc.…make a difference for kids. These special projects make me excited to come to school each day. They make it memorable for me as well and it is fun to think about what we are doing next.
Equity	I had a heart for the kids in poverty. I enjoyed teaching them. I enjoyed their families. I liked feeling like I was making a difference. But the constant reminder that you're not good enough wore me down. It is just not the same feeling at this school. SES makes a difference. What works at one school might not work at all schools. Instructional techniques and curriculum doesn't work the same with every school.
Physical Health	Being physically healthy. When I get stressed and my blood pressure goes up, I can barely function. Last year the stress couple with my physical health really impacts my ability to flourish. I have gotten some extra sleep and have tried to make sure I am getting sleep. It sounds simple, but I feel much better at work.

Focus Group Value	We appreciate that you are engaging with us and asking more and really trying to understand our experience. We appreciate that you want to hear from teachers about these issues. Thanks for taking on this topic. It's an important one that often gets overlooked. It is nice that someone is taking the time to get our input and really listen to our experiences. In 22 years of education, I have never had an administrator do this before.

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