Teacher Engagement in Central European International Schools

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11-2019

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Doctorate of Education Program

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College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Transformational Leadership

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2019

Abstract

Employee engagement is a growing area of interest that organizational leaders are increasingly recognizing as central to organizational success. In an increasingly competitive market, international schools must also consider the importance of employee engagement. Current research on international schools include studies which focus on retention and turnover issues, yet research on teacher engagement in international schools is nonexistent, leaving a gap in the literature. This study followed an interpretive phenomenological analysis approach to investigate teacher engagement in Central Europe. A qualitative design utilized semistructured interviews to understand the lived experiences of 11 international school teachers and develop an understanding of the phenomenon of teacher engagement in international schools. Purposeful sampling was applied, and specific criteria was used in recruiting to target tenured individuals more embedded in their lives and not intending to leave their school in the near future. Data from interview transcripts identified six superordinate themes related to teacher engagement: personal values, communication, leadership presence, relationship and community building, tools and processes, and professional consideration. Three key findings of the study that can inform leadership training and professional development include: (a) personal values drive teachers' engagement in the classroom, (b) teachers want interaction with leadership, and (c) leadership has a direct influence on teacher's work and organizational engagement. The implication of these findings suggest that school leaders should be proactive in interacting with teachers to support classroom and organizational engagement.

Keywords: engagement, teacher engagement, disengagement, international school teacher, international schools, Europe, leadership engagement practices, lived experiences, interpretive phenomenological analysis.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family for all the love and support they provided on my long journey.

Acknowledgements

There is no doubt that there are many people that I wish to acknowledge and extend my gratitude for their support in my journey through the entire doctoral candidacy. First and foremost, I am thankful for the support and encouragement of my greatest advocate, and partner in marriage, Rhonda. Her confidence, care, and acceptance of this journey made it possible to overcome times of challenge, feelings of frustration, and long hours of course work and research. I am thrilled to be able to grant her the gift of the program completion.

This program provided me the opportunity to interact with many individuals who have contributed to my journey. As a reluctant writer, I certainly appreciated the support from my peers who were enrolled in all my courses. These peers were able to share their perspectives and writing styles encouraged me along the way. I would especially like to thank two fellow candidates, Cheri Dunford and Christena Villarreal, who truly provided a sense of team work, support, and care during our courses and research development. A further special thank you goes to my colleague Ann Brainard Simone for her interest and support in proofreading and editing.

To my chair, Dr. William Boozang, I truly offer a huge thank you for motivating me when I needed it, responding when I had questions, and encouraging me to take it step by step and not try to get it exactly perfect the first time around. Your availability to meet on short notice and manage the time difference between the U.S. and Italy reduced the occasional build-up of stress and anxiety. Your encouragement, program experience, and positivity about my direction and progress kept me moving forward.

Special thanks are given to Dr. Catherine Gniewek and Dr. Matthew Basham, committee members for supporting my research. As noted above, I am a reluctant writer and your feedback and questions allowed me to provide clarity and focus to my writing and reporting on my

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research. Thank you for the accepting the challenge of reviewing, analyzing, commenting, and providing suggestions on the multiple revisions of each chapter. I am truly appreciative of your candid feedback and patience.

Additional thanks is owed to the participants of my study. Although I cannot name them, it is clear and obvious that I would not have succeeded without their support in volunteering to be interviewed and taking the time to read and check their interview transcripts for accuracy.

Finally, to Dr. Jan Jewett, a mentor and instructor in the Master in Education program that I was enrolled so many years ago. During a meeting at the end of my Master program, Dr. Jewett said to me, "Maybe one day it will be Dr. Leonetti." I replied, "Maybe" but I did not believe it. This is not the reason I began the doctoral program, though I do admit that throughout the program I felt that comment, as innocent and passing as it seemed, meant I had what it takes. Coupled with the support of those above I have reached the end.

Thank you to all those mentioned above as you all have been a part of my academic success.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Organizational leaders increasingly see employee engagement as being central to organizational success, and there is a growing body of research on the subject (Crawford, 2010; Gallup Inc, n.d.; Rich, LePine, & Richman, 2006.). Individuals are considered to be engaged when they are simultaneously physically, cognitively, and emotionally connected to their work (Kahn, 1990). Combined, these aspects draw an employee into their work to the extent that they are undertaking their role beyond the expected basic requirements, for their benefit, as well as, for the benefit of the organization. Despite the growth of engagement research within large corporate organizations and other industries, engagement research focusing on international school teachers is absent.

Employees who experience disengagement tend to demonstrate diminished organizational commitment and involvement with their job (Bakker, 2011; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Many international schools are individually operated, private tuition schools (Wiley, 2016), with a governing board of directors, or are run by private owners. In essence, each international school can be considered as an organization, unlike large national public education systems. Therefore, it is important for international school leadership to be aware of the indirect influence of leaders on teachers' engagement at both the classroom level and organizational level.

International school environments provide a unique and challenging setting to explore engagement. Although no one school is exactly like another, international schools do present similarities such as governance structure, staffing, salary, and student population (Willey, 2016). Teachers in these settings tend to be transient, working through short contracts of two or three years (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009) and are often considered 'tourist teachers' (International School Consultancy, 2018). Despite short contracts and higher rates of turnover in teaching staff, there are teachers who endure the first years of teaching

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positions and remain at the same school or in the same position for longer periods, even permanently (International School Consultancy, 2018).

A study of teachers in the United States found teachers who remained at schools or in the same position for 4 to 10 years were more likely to experience disengagement than teachers with shorter years of service (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014). These "second-stage teachers" (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014, p. 231), despite their acquired sense of mastery and autonomy, need additional support to remain engaged. Although this study does not automatically accept transferability of Kirkpatrick and Johnson's findings of teachers in the United States to teachers in international schools, it does identify engagement concerns in later teaching years.

Employees whose engagement levels decrease usually consider two options: quit or stay but be disengaged (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Wiseman, 2017). The more embedded an employee is (having increased connections and ties) in their personal and work life, the greater the chance they will decide to "quit and stay" (Wiseman, 2017, p. 39). Employees who quit and stay diminish the potential effectiveness of the organization. These employees outwardly go through the motions yet are not engaged in their work.

Engagement in this research is understood through Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker's (2002) definition: "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). Following the understanding of this definition, an engaged employee will do more than the required basic duties, be active in a physical demonstration of work, and be involved with work to the extent that time passes quickly or to lose track of time while working (Shuck & Herd, 2012). This study recognized the term engagement to be synonymous with *employee engagement*, *job engagement* and *work engagement*. The literature review in Chapter 2 provides greater details on engagement and antecedents of engagement.

Problem Statement

Current research provided some information on what leadership in international schools can focus on to support retention, yet the problem is that the literature does not provide a complete understanding of work engagement, or the specific leadership practices that lead to disengagement, of international school teachers. This gap in the literature may result in diminished or ineffective actions by international school leadership to get the most and best work from teachers. Disengaged employees create deficiencies in an organization, yet an organization which routinely experiences employee turnover might not readily recognize the remaining shortfall created by those who stay or how to manage teacher engagement effectively.

Nature of the Study

This study used a phenomenological research design to fully understand the lived experiences of international school teachers, relevant to work engagement as influenced by school leadership. The research followed the interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) method. IPA "is a qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences" (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 1). The study of participant experiences yields an opportunity for analysis of leadership engagement practices. Through the use of a phenomenological design, as well as, interviews, this study ultimately deepens the understanding of the lived experiences of international school teachers (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2008).

Research Questions

This study utilized semistructured interviews to explore international school teachers' experiences of work engagement. Two research questions were used to guide this study:

1. How do international school teachers experience engagement?

2. What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers?

Research Objective

This study explored how international school teachers in Switzerland experience engagement in their work. The objective is to describe and interpret the experiences of international school educators in the hope of building an understanding from shared experiences and provide recommendations to international school leadership. This may support training and professional development for international school leadership and international school teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the existing literature by focusing on teacher engagement and disengagement, specifically within international schools. Numerous studies have focused on retention incentives and teacher turnover in international schools (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancuso, Roberts, White, Yoshida, & Weston, 2011; Roberts, Mancuso, & Yoshida, 2010; Weston, 2014). These studies have provided thoughtful insight in terms of what leaders can do to incentivize teachers to stay beyond their initial contracts or what aspects teachers report as influential in deciding to leave a school. Despite this abundance of data, research relevant to teacher engagement in international schools is scarce. By understanding the lived experiences of teachers by leadership, these reflections could be useful in the development and refinement of leadership styles, foster engagement, improve productivity, and ultimately raise the level of teaching and learning in international schools.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this interpretive phenomenological study on the experiences of international school teachers' engagement is predominantly derived from aspects of Bakker and

Demerouti's (2008) work engagement model, and the Jacobs Model for organizational trust (2012).

Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) model highlighted the positive effects between personal and job resources on engagement in relation to high job demands in leader and member interactions and relationships. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) suggested increased job resources such as follows: autonomy, performance feedback, supervisory coaching and mentoring and personal resources using positive attributes as: self-efficacy, positive outlook, self-esteem, growth mind-set that assist in mediating job demands (mental, emotional, physical) and increase employee engagement which further enhances employee performance. The influence of this model on the conceptual framework is drawn from leaders' interactions and relationships with organizational members.

The level of engagement or withdrawal by the employee can be influenced by an employee's level of trust or potential threat in the workplace. The Jacobs Model (2012) identified how fear as a factor connected to member engagement, through leader–member relationships and trust levels. The contribution from this model to the conceptual framework of this study is the trust or distrust dynamic and the effect on relationships between leaders and members that influence engagement.

The conceptual framework begins with job demands as the initiating influence in member engagement. These demands lead to interaction between a leader and a member where quality of the interaction or relationship influences the level of trust perceived by the member. At this point an individual's perceived sense of safety, conscious or unconscious, and level of fear or lack of fear in the relationship influences feelings of trust or distrust. Depending on the level of trust resources are increased or decreased influencing the member's level of engagement and ultimately

job performance. Trusting relationships result in increased resources and engagement, while distrust in relationships results in decreased resources and disengagement.

Definition of Terms

Absorption. This term is defined as being fully engrossed by work activities such that one might lose track of time (Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Actively disengaged. This term is defined as the acting out of one's unhappiness in an effort undermine engaged coworkers (Sorenson & Garman, 2013).

Dedication. This term is defined as the connections employees have to their work emphasized by a sense significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge (Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

Disengaged. This term is defined as when one is essentially checked-out, sleepwalking through their day, putting in time but no energy or passion in their work (Sorenson & Garman, 2013).

Engagement. This term is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al, 2002)

Engaged. This term is defined as the physical and cognitive acts of work accompanied by passion and feeling profound connection to one's company, which drive innovation and move the organization forward (Sorenson & Garman, 2013).

Engagement practices/ leadership engagement practices. This term is defined as the actions employed by leaders that are intended to influence teachers' level of engagement with their work.

Personal resources. This term is defined as the internal resources individuals have to support themselves such as: self-efficacy, positive outlook, self-esteem, growth mind-set (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Shaufeli & Tarris, 2014).

Interpretive phenomenological analysis. This term is defined as a qualitative research approach that is committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

Job resources. This term is defined as the external resources provided to individuals by leadership such as: autonomy, performance feedback, supervisory coaching and mentoring (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Shaufeli & Tarris, 2014).

Job demands. This term is defined as the stresses and strains employees experience on the job such as: mental, emotional, physical (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Shaufeli & Tarris, 2014).

Leader. This term is defined as a person in a leadership or managerial position (Jacobs, 2012).

Leadership. This term is defined as one or more persons responsible for or in charge of, decision making, managing or leading groups or teams, in an international school environment (Mancuso, Roberts, & White, 2010).

Member. This term is defined as an employee (international school teacher) not in a leadership or managerial position (Jacobs, 2012).

Vigor. This term is defined as the physical manifestation of cognitive and emotional engagement, what employees do physically (Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Work engagement. This term is defined as when an individual simultaneously demonstrates physical, cognitive, and emotional connected to their work (Kahn, 1990), entailing doing more than the basic requirements to collect a paycheck.

Assumptions

Assumptions can be understood as a researcher's estimations regarding possible findings (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016). One assumption in this study was that participants would report similar work conditions and leadership influences in relation to experiences of engagement.

However, the potential for reduced similarities in experiences existed, due to a small sample size and possible cultural influences such as norms, expectations, and experiences of both teachers and leaders. A second assumption was that each participant would provide specific evidence through experiences of what actions or behaviors leaders employ that result in increased engagement, disengagement, or active disengagement. Despite the gap in the literature on how international school teachers experience work engagement in relation to leaders, this study commenced with the assumption that leaders are instrumental in keeping teachers engaged in work.

Limitations and Delimitations

Potential weaknesses in a study are denoted as limitations (Simon, 2011). For this interpretive phenomenological study participants were contacted through school directors or school heads via email. This approach had potential limitations. First, disengaged employees might not have volunteered because the request was made by the head or director of the school, it is not a requirement of their job. Second, only engaged participants might have responded and volunteered to participate. This is a potential pathway for the introduction of bias in the data. An additional limitation to the approach, because emails are easily deleted, ignored, or dismissed, many potential participants might have been forgone the opportunity to volunteer. A further limitation of the study was that the connection to participant's national origin and cultural expectations of behavior and interactions between leadership and teachers.

The boundaries of a study are defined by delimitations (Simon, 2011). This study was delimited to 12 teachers from four Council of International Schools organization (CIS) member schools located in Switzerland, which utilized English as the medium of instruction. Further, participants were delimited to current teachers who have been serving in their role for at least four years and not expecting to leave within the next two years.

Scope

The scope of this interpretive phenomenological study is to contact 12 teachers from international schools in Switzerland, with English as the medium of instruction, and belonging to the CIS. Additionally, these participants are expected to meet the criteria of having been in their current position for at least four years, and do not intend to leave their position in the near future (two or more years). The hope is that teachers would be able to relate experiences of engagement from a perspective of increased longevity in their roles, moving beyond the high energy new teacher period) and into a more settled and experienced situation (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014).

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study rests was to rely on its capability to add to the literature on international schools, specifically teacher engagement and how leaders can recognize leadership practices that lead to engagement and those that lead to disengagement. Research provided that teachers who are engaged in work tend to engage students more, leading to positive outcomes in student achievement (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Willey, 2016) and employees who are engaged demonstrate organizational commitment (Bakker, 2011; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). The researcher's intention was to investigate the lived experiences of international school teachers in an effort to provide an understanding of the leadership practices which best support teacher engagement and those that lead to disengagement. The results of this study supported how international school leadership in taking proactive measures in training and professional development for leadership and teachers in practices to build trusting relationships and recognizing how to allow each teacher to perform optimally.

Summary

The growth of international schools around the world has created an increasingly competitive market for expatriate and host country families. Therefore, it is important for

international school leadership to be aware of the indirect influence of leaders on teachers' engagement at both the classroom level and organizational level. The importance of this lies in understanding school leaders are responsible for the motivation and engagement of teachers.

Teachers who are not engaged in work diminish the learning opportunities for students as well as weaken the potential of the organization (Kirkpatrick & Johnson, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Willey, 2016). Additionally, employees who experience disengagement often become less committed to work and the organization (Bakker, 2011; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). In light of this information, it is important for school leaders to understand how teachers experience engagement in their own work. Through this understanding, leaders can develop and refine leadership styles to foster engagement, improve productivity, and ultimately raise the level of teaching and learning in international schools.

Chapter 2 of this phenomenological study provides a review of the current literature associated with engagement and international school research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The study investigated the lived experiences of international school teachers to understand and interpret their perspectives related to work engagement within international school settings. The study had included participants from schools with English as the medium of instruction. The schools that were selected for the study were member schools of the Council of International Schools (CIS) Switzerland. As members of CIS these schools are understood to have similar approaches and missions in supporting international education.

A literature review in an IPA study not only assisted the researcher in identifying any gaps in the literature that could support the need for further research and assist by introducing the readers to the subject being studied by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of current research, and provide a reasonable argument of how their research can add to the existing body of knowledge (Smith et al., 2009).

This chapter explored current literature relevant to the focus of the study. First, an explanation of engagement in organizations was reviewed to develop an understanding of engagement and had included the types and dimensions of engagement. Second, the psychological conditions for individuals deciding to be engaged was presented and further led to a review of the conceptual framework for this study. Third, the review explored the antecedents of engagement that included trust, leadership, and communication. Fourth, the review explored how the current literature on international schools which explores retention, turnover, and meaningful work. Although international school literature does not focus on engagement, some connections to engagement can be suggested. Research specifically focused on international school teacher engagement is not reviewed as literature on the topic was not found by this researcher. The lack of

literature on teacher engagement in international schools suggests a gap exists in the available research on international schools.

Engagement in Organizations

Employee engagement is vital for growth and success of organizations. Engagement research is an increasingly expanding body of knowledge which is of global interest across many fields. Gallup Inc. (n.d.) concisely presented the importance of the issue in the statement "Engaged employees drive innovation and move their workplaces forward. Actively disengaged workers do the opposite" (para. 1). One can understand the growing interest given employee engagement is recognized as a major factor in an organization's success and competitive advantage (Nink, 2013; Rich et al., 2010; Richman, 2006). This understanding can be especially helpful to international school leaders who are interested in in supporting and building relationships with teachers to improve or support teacher engagement and to eliminate or reduce disengagement.

Employee disengagement results in losses which are costly to organizations. Disengaged employees cost the economy over 100 billion dollars annually through lost productivity (Nink, 2013; Richman, 2006). In many organizations, these losses can be seen in production output or through revenue analysis. In the case of international schools, losses can occur in student outcomes and eventually impact the organization's revenue and brand.

Employee engagement is a concern for organizations internationally. Although there are many engaged employees in organizations, research showed they tend to be outnumbered by their disengaged colleagues. Examples include: only 45% of Hong Kong employees identified themselves as extremely productive (Yu & Wang, 2012); actively disengaged German employees increased to 24% in 2012 (Nink, 2013); 19% to 21% of workers are actively disengaged in West Virginia, Nevada, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania (Harter & Adkins, 2017); and 57% of U.S. teachers self-reported as disengaged (Hastings & Agrawal, 2015). Considering the

available research findings, it is logical researchers, organizations, consultants, leaders, and individuals are thirsting for answers for how best to engage employees.

International schools are not immune to effects of disengaged employees. As an organization, an international school deals in a specific market and attempts to gain the greatest share of the market it can to grow and be successful (Bunnell, 2005). For this to happen the school needs engaged teachers helping to build the school brand through marketable outcomes such as student success, something which will not happen if left to disengaged employees.

Engagement defined. Defining employee engagement has its challenges; agreeing on a construct name and defining what it means. First, proposed names include, but are not limited to, employee engagement, job engagement, or work engagement (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Each of these proposed names created further connotations which challenged what name should be given to the concept; the individual (employee), the activity they perform (job), and role in the organization (work).

Second, an understanding of, or feeling of, engagement with work can vary from one employee to another, as well as, from one researcher to the next. Additionally, engagement is entwined with concepts such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment resulting in a definition and meaning which is yet to be unanimously accepted (Saks & Gruman, 2014; Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Multiple definitions of engagement exist in the literature and are comprised of: state of mind, active state of mental engagement, and active physical engagement. Examples include: Christian, Garza, and Slaughter's (2011) offering "relatively enduring state of mind referring to the simultaneous investment of personal energies in the experience of work" (p. 95). Maslach and Leiter's (2008) defined "an energetic state of involvement with personally fulfilling activities that enhance one's sense of professional efficacy" (p. 498). Schaufeli et al. (2002) stated, "a positive,

fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). Kahn's (1990) offering "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (p. 694). Though each is similar to the next, the predominant definitions in academic literature are Kahn's (1990) definition and Schaufeli et al.'s (2002) definition (Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Types of engagement. Two types of engagement are part of every job: employee engagement and work engagement. Employee engagement can be understood in relation to an individual's professional and organizational role while work engagement focuses on the work the individual is performing (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011). Kahn (1990) provided an example within his study which identified professional role and work role differences is found in a particular instance of a windsurfing instructor. In Kahn's (1990) example, the instructor was engaged in the organizational role of being the instructor and supporting the organization yet at the given moment he did not feel like physically teaching and was disengaged with the work associated with instructing a specific group of windsurfers. This example highlights the duality of engagement for employees as organizational members and workers.

Every job has multiple facets requiring individuals' attendance to some degree. Some aspects may be more appealing to employees while others are less so, essentially creating moments of engagement and disengagement. Employees make decisions to engaged and disengage with various aspects of their jobs or organizational role (Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bird et al., 2012; Forsyth, Adams, & Hoy, 2011; Huston et al., 2007; Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014). A good example is found in a study of senior tenured staff, despite being disengaged in some aspects of their jobs like socializing and intellectual exchanges, departmental decision making, and mentoring younger staff, tenured staff often continued to be productive in other areas

of their jobs like publishing articles, teaching, and managing administrative duties (Huston et al., 2007). An understanding gained is that engagement in not constant in all areas of one's work with decreased levels in areas one choses.

Although we might deliberate it is good to always be engaged, Bakker (2011) reminded readers "[e]mployees cannot always be engaged: they need moments of absence and opportunities for recovery" (p. 268). A duality of engagement and disengagement can exist simultaneously between organizational role and work engagement.

Dimensions of engagement. An engaged employ is understood to experience three dimensions of engagement simultaneously. These dimensions are recurrent throughout the definitions of engagement found in a review of the current literature. Engagement is a combination of focused thinking, emotional connection, and personal dedication which results in action toward achieving goals (Bakker, 2011; Rich et al., 2010; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Schaufeli and Bakker's (2004) definition of engagement exemplifies the dimensions of engagement: "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by absorption, dedication, and vigor" (p. 295) also understood respectively as cognitive engagement, emotional engagement, and behavioral engagement.

Cognitive engagement. Cognitive engagement is recognized as absorption in one's work, when an individual's attention is focused on their work to the extent, they possibly lose track of time (Bakker, 2011, Csikszentmihalyi,1990; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Shaufeli and Bakker (2004) posited "Absorption is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work" (p. 295). The dimension of cognitive engagement is the gateway for the employee engagement as it is the point where decisions are made about the psychological dimensions of engagement: meaningfulness, safety, and availability (Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Emotional engagement. Emotional engagement is identified by individuals' dedication in their work and the investment of resources (Bakker, 2011; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). A key component in emotional engagement is the employee's willingness to connect with and be dedicated to their work. Dedication is characterized by a sense significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge (Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004). These characteristics passionately link employees with their work.

Behavioral engagement. Behavioral engagement is not limited to physical movement but can also include concentrated and focused thinking that supports an end result or solution. The "doing action" is also referred to as vigor (Saks and Gruman, 2014; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Saks and Gruman (2014) noted "[v]igor involves high levels of energy and mental resilience while working" (p. 158) while Shuck and Herd (2012) explained behavioral engagement as "the physical manifestation of cognitive and emotional engagement . . . what we actually see employees do" (p. 161). Ultimately, behavioral engagement is the visible action resulting from employee engagement and is accentuated by *vigor* or taking action.

Psychological conditions of engagement. Understanding how individuals decide to become engaged includes a complex inner thought process. Beyond the dimensions of engagement are the psychological conditions of engagement which individuals consider in their readiness to be engaged. Depending on the situation or work at hand people will make decisions to engage with their work. Kahn (1990) proposed individuals make decisions, consciously or unconsciously, to become engaged based on three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. These psychological conditions for individuals' engagement are not fixed and are influenced situationally resulting in various stages of engagement and disengagement (Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Psychological meaningfulness. Psychological meaningfulness is a feeling of getting

something in return for the effort given. Kahn (1990) explained this as intrinsic returns or rewards

for the individual such as self-efficacy, feelings of worth or value in something larger than

themselves, and having a voice. Basically employees are asking, "Is there meaning in this and

what is in it for me?" and wondering why it is important to them. Additionally, psychological

meaningfulness is influenced by three factors: task characteristics (do I like this type of activity),

role characteristics (what identity or status does this have), and work interactions (what needs to be

done and with who; Kahn, 1990).

Psychological safety. Psychological safety is "feeling able to show and employ one's self

without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career" (Kahn, 1990, p. 708). This

idea is connected to the concept of fear in the workplace and keeping employees from working to

their full potential (Hallowell, 2011; Hislop, 2103; Rock, 2008). Safety is a basic need which,

when met, allows individuals to engage freely in other tasks (Herzberg, 1959; Maslow, 1970;

Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Psychological availability. Psychological availability "is the sense of having the physical,

emotional, or psychological resources to personally engage at a particular moment" (Kahn, 1990,

p. 714). Resources can be referred to as job resources such as: autonomy, performance feedback,

supervisory coaching and mentoring, recognition, inherent challenges (Bakker, 2011; Saks &

Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Lack of resources increases

employee stress or demands which can lead to adverse effects on psychological wellbeing and self-

esteem, and disengagement (Okeke & Mtyuda, 2017; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker,

2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012).

The psychological conditions of engagement that individuals consider in their readiness to

be engaged depends on their levels of psychological meaningfulness, safety, and availability, as

well, as the situation they find themselves in at any given time. Understanding how individuals decide to become engaged is explored through the effects of leader–member relationships in the conceptual framework of this study.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study focused on behaviors and actions of leadership which eradicate fear and build trust in relationships with employees which result in increased engagement. Conceptually, fear impedes trust leading to distrust whereas the lack of fear in relationships allows for trust to grow and strengthen relationships, improve efficacy, increase creativity, allow for workers to be engaged, and ultimately improve performance. The framework is derived from Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) work engagement model which identified the positive effect of personal and job resources on engagement in relation to high job demands. With the focus on employee engagement through job resources supported by the interactions or relationship between the leader and member it serves as a good model to focus on engagement.

The Jacobs Model (2012) for organizational trust was also influential in the development of the framework for this study. This model highlights the aspects of trust and threat which influence engagement or withdrawal. Additionally, the model connects the concepts of trust and fear to engagement with a focus on trust as a key component in reducing fear in the leader member relationship. The understanding is reduced fear opens a path for improved interactions and greater trust which results in employee engagement.

The conceptual framework as identified in Figure 1 places job demands as the initiating influence in member engagement. The demands lead to interaction between a leader and a member. The quality of the interaction or relationship influences the level of trust perceived by the member. At this point an individual's perceived sense of safety, conscious or unconscious, and

level of fear or lack of fear in the relationship influences feelings of trust or distrust. Fear manifests

in organizations between the power structures of employees and leaders (Hallowell, 2011).

Additionally, power is a sociocultural influence which can be an underlying agent for

engagement through trust and fear (Hislop, 2013). Ideally acceptable levels of trust are established

and positively influence the level of safety in the relationship leading to increased job resources

and personal resources such as leadership support and recognition and self-efficacy on the part of

the individual. These resources together or independently have a positive effect on engagement

which in turn positively influences job performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Figure 1. Effect of leader–member relationship quality on trust, engagement, and performance.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Antecedents of Engagement

For employees to be engaged with their work some prerequisites need to exist. Three

overarching themes of antecedents are particularly important for employee engagement: trust

(Hallowell, 2011; Jacobs, 2013; Lencioni, 2002; Nass & Yen, 2011; Rich et al., 2010; Tschannen-

Moran & Gareis, 2015a), leadership (Bakker, 2011; Bird, Wang, Watson, & Murray, 2012; Rich et

al., 2010; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012), and

communication (Beslin & Chitra, 2004; Ghamrawi, 2011; Lingenfelter, 2015; Rock, 2008;

Tschannen–Moran, 2009). These antecedents additionally relate to job resources and engagement.

Antecedents of engagement are connected to job resources and job demands and are predictive of employee engagement (Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Rich et al., 2010; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Job and personal resources include: autonomy, supportive leaders and coworkers, feedback, coaching, positive work place climate, recognition, support, job variety, task variety, conscientiousness, positive affect, proactive personality, pride, ownership, and self-efficacy (Bakker, 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Where these job resources are lacking there is the potential for employees to be disengaged. Shuck and Herd (2012) noted the importance of resources to engagement and employee productivity stating "having resources to complete a job are equally as important. When a follower lacks the resources they need to do their job, resentment sets in and employees who had the potential to be a productive team player become frustrated and consequently, less productive" (p. 165). This statement highlights the importance of job resources as antecedents for engagement and the consequential results when they are not present.

Trust

Trust is a key ingredient in leader–member interactions and relationships and the top driver of employee engagement (Jacobs, 2013). "Trust becomes salient when people enter into relationships of interdependence, where the outcomes one desires cannot be met without the involvement and contribution of others" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a). This concept is universal to organizations and can be said to be even more important in educational settings when students are younger and susceptible to the influences of interactions between their teachers and school administration. After all, parents, and administrators, expect teachers will be engaged in their work, and be performing to the best of their ability.

A factor which mitigates trust is fear. Like adult themes and violence on television, fear has become common in our everyday lives and is accepted as the norm. Hallowell (2011) noted

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"[w]e've grown so accustomed to fear that we hardly notice it . . . [f]ear is the great disabler, more dangerous today because it is so wide spread" (p. 89). Employees may be accustomed to it, but it affects their actions at levels both conscious and unconscious. Sources of fear in the workplace vary but are often connected to leader–member relationships aspects such as: disagreeing with leadership, elaborating on true feelings and opinions, fear of being wrong, stepping outside one's comfort zone, retaliation or being labeled (Hallowell, 2011, Nass & Yen, 2011; Rock, 2008). These points suggest the influences of fear can occur for multiple reasons which can affect relationship trust at many points of interaction.

Although fear might not ever be completely removed in organizational structures, learning to recognize other's personalities can help to better understand how to interact with them which can decrease the perceptions of fear (Nass & Yen, 2011). An interpretation of this is as leaders and employees build relationships a sense of understanding of one another's motivations and intentions develops resulting in decreased unknown motivations or fear. Moreover, disconnection increases fear and anxiety while connection can increase feelings of connection, decreased fear, and increase the sense of being valued, all of which support work engagement (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Friedman, 2014; Ghamrawi, 2011; Hallowell, 2011; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Jacobs, 2013; Klein, 2012; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Lencioni, 2002; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b).

Eight intrinsic drivers of trust were identified by Jacobs (2013) which allow individuals to feel safe and have trust allowing for increased engagement: belong and connect, voice and recognition, significance and position, fairness, learn and challenge, choice and autonomy, security and certainty, and purpose. When the trust drivers are not met employees feel unsafe and less collaborative (Jacobs, 2013) which results in disengagement. These drivers support the building of truthful, honest, and open organizational interactions.

Trust allows individuals to feel safe in their relationships and can be recognized as a job resource which can also increase one's personal resource of self-efficacy (Friedman, 2014; Hallowell, 2011; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). These resources are applied to counter job demands. Finding a balance or an abundance of resources can lead to an individual to become engaged in work physically, cognitively, and emotionally (Khan, 1990). Trust is important to and influential on employee engagement.

Trust defined. Trust is identified as a challenge that organizations face when implementing a culture of collaboration and has direct impact on engagement and accountability (Jacobs, 2013; Lencioni, 2002). Individuals who are not open and honest with their leaders or coworkers impede the building of a foundation for which organizational trust can be built (Lencioni, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a).

The concept of trust can vary from one individual to another yet tends to maintain common aspects of vulnerability, risk, reciprocal interactions, and expectations of confidence (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a, 2015b). Kutsyuruba et al. (2016) synthesized a definition of trust which reflects the common aspects:

> the trust phenomenon as the extent to which one engages in a reciprocal interaction
> and a relationship in such a way that there is willingness to be vulnerable to another
> and to assume risk with positive expectations and a degree of confidence that the
> other party will possess some semblance of benevolence, care, competency, honesty,
> openness, reliability, respect, hope, and wisdom. (p. 345)

This definition demonstrates the complexity of trust in a relationship and more importantly it requires effort from both (or all) parties hoping to build a trusting relationship.

Trust facets. Trust is recognized to be a multifaceted construct organized around five aspects or facets: benevolence which relates to care and concern, competence connects with skills

and ability to perform tasks relevant to the position, openness is linked to transparency in a thought and actions as well as willingness to listen to others, honesty highlights integrity and truthfulness, while reliability relates to predictable, dependable, consistent behavior or actions (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). Although each facet is an individual concept, they are connected to each other and influence each other in the meaning of trust as it is constructed between individuals.

The reviewed literature on trust in educational contexts tends to be based on teachers' trust in principals or school leaders. Studies of this nature not only found consistency in similar facets of trust, but also found trust in leadership was influential in teacher engagement and productivity in supporting organizational goals such as actively delivering the curriculum and supporting student needs (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Hanford & Leithwood, 2013; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a, 2015b). Understanding trust has multiple facets allows for a more well-thought-out appraisal of trust in leadership.

Trust facets also hold up from an educational leadership perspective. A study of Canadian school principals' role in creating trusting relationships reported themes comparable to the five facets of trust related by teachers. Themes included: trusting relationships between principals and teachers as well as confidentiality (benevolence), reciprocity of trust (openness), imparting and obtaining trust in decision making and making decisions for the greater good (competence), and honesty and reliability (honesty and reliability; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016). These findings support the universality of trust facets in leader–member relationships.

A concern regarding trust in education is teachers often adopt self-protective positions when there is distrust between teachers and a school's leadership resulting in disengagement (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a).

Additionally, distrust can be contagious, as lack of trust in leadership can lead to lack of trust in colleagues. This can cause a downward spiral in trust and engagement which spreads beyond the intimate two-person relationship. Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2015a) noted the challenge presented in building trusting relationships with employees saying "[t]rustworthy leadership is cultivated over time, through repeated interactions in which behaviors associated with benevolence, honesty, openness, competence, and reliability are enacted" (p. 269). Leaders who attempt to build trusting relationships outside of these parameters may encounter difficulties or failure.

Leadership

Leadership plays a key role in employee engagement (Bakker, 2011; Nink, 2013; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Rich et al., 2010; Shuck & Herd, 2012). As an antecedent of engagement, leadership (Saks & Gruman, 2014) connects with the dimensions of engagement and psychological condition of engagement through the influence leaders can have in motivating employees to be engaged with their work. Shuck and Herd (2012) noted "disengagement in work roles is often related to the perception of poor workplace conditions . . . [due to] feelings of nonsupport from managers and leaders" (pp. 158–159). This statement exemplifies the influence leaders have over employee engagement.

Leadership styles and practices influence employee engagement. Examples include the following leadership characteristics: transformational leadership, empowering leadership, and leader–member exchange (Bakker, 2011; Christian et al., 2011; Jeong, Hsiao, Song, Kim, & Bae, 2016). These types of approaches build intimate trust relationships between leaders and their employees. Transactional leadership supports engagement in a type of leader–member bartering exchange, yet this eventually only recognizes the basic aspects of task completion and engagement also requires components of emotion and cognition not just action (Kahn, 1990; Schaufeli &

Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Bureaucratic leaders also affect employee engagement although often with negative results. They tend to rule with a command-and-control style which often increases distrust and suspicion in those who hold leadership positions (Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Leaders who seek to build trusting relationships are recognized as utilizing their emotional intelligence (EI).

Evidence in the literature exploring connections between leadership theories and employee engagement gives good indications EI in leaders is the bridge to move from transactional leadership to transformational leadership and has a direct positive effect on performance and job satisfaction (Ilyas and Abdullah, 2016) Shuck and Herd (2012) noted "the use of emotional intelligence in this context is a seamless, authentic piece of the leader, not an act leaders use to get results while production numbers are low" (p. 168). Employees with authentic, positive, and supportive supervisor relationships more often experience holistic engagement, physically, affectively, and cognitively (Bird et al., 2012; Jeong et al., 2016; Shuck & Herd, 2012). These aspects of employees' experiences correlate with the dimensions of engagement and psychological conditions of engagement.

Communication

Leaders need to earn trust and can achieve it by communicating openly, honestly, and often. Lack of or infrequent communication begins to build barriers to trust which can eventually affect an entire organization (Beslin & Chitra, 2004). As communication barriers increase trust levels are affected, which further takes its toll on motivation and engagement. Tschannen-Moran (2009) stated "When one is interacting with a distrusted person within an organizational hierarchy—especially if that person holds more power—the goal of communication often becomes the protection of one's interest and the reduction of one's anxiety rather than the accurate

transmission of ideas" (p. 222). Communication at all levels needs to be honest, open, and free of fear.

Communication supports the alignment of trust between leaders and followers. Although communication cannot make people trust each other it can help build an environment where trust can thrive (Beslin & Chitra, 2004). Communication, in educational settings, supported trust in leadership, which in turn improved organizational citizenship behaviors and organizational commitment in teachers (Ghamrawi, 2011; Klein, 2012; Thomsen et al., 2016). Further, when teachers trust their leaders they are more likely to establish lines of communication (Ghamrawi, 2011) creating a cyclical pattern of communication and trust.

Communication establishes a strong connection between leaders and their employees that result in a closer relationship that may incorporate both physically and psychologically attributes. Physical exposure to others builds familiarity through the "mere exposure effect" (Friedman, 2014, p. 107) which, simply explained, suggested people more comfortable with others they have been exposed to previously thus allowing for communication and trust. A similar situation occurs psychologically which diminishes the boundaries of power structures between teachers and those in leadership positions and minimizing the perceived distance between them due to role norms (Ghamrawi, 2011; Thomsen et al., 2016). Engaging in professional dialogues supports trust and willingness to trust others.

International Schools

When it comes to engagement educational organizations are interested in looking to the research on engagement to better understand how to engage employees and increase trust and productivity (Bird et al., 2012; Forsyth et al., 2011; Gray, 2013; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Huston et al., 2007; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Although current literature provides a plethora of studies and research on education and educational institutions the majority is

focused on trust in public and private education in the United States. Less research is readily available on international schools.

International schools tend to be K–12 private tuition-based schools which stand independently, without overview from regional districts, and are free to adopt the method of curriculum delivery, mission, interpretation of how prepare students, and leadership practices they feel best supports their community and beliefs (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Wiley, 2016).

The International School Consultancy Group (ISC; 2015) reported in 2015 there were "7,017 international schools around the world . . . all using English as the language for learning" (par. 1). These types of schools are the focus of this study as they represent unique situations in employment longevity and potential pool of information for understanding leadership influences on teacher engagement in international schools.

Most international teaching contracts are two years in length while administrative contracts range from three to five years thus indicating turnover expectations (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010). Additionally, international teaching can be a means for teachers and administrators to see new places and experience new cultures, focusing more on lived experiences than career dedication. "The high mobility of educators and leaders challenges the stability and continuity of operations at these schools" (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010, p. 628). High mobility of international educators and administration is connected to "wanderlust" (Desroches, 2013), an interest to travel, see, and experience new places was a significant factor in deciding to leave a school. The influence of short contracts and engaging in experiencing new places could surpass engaging in one's work.

Literature on teacher engagement in international schools with English as the medium for teaching and learning is scarce. Predominantly, the literature on international schools is centered on retention incentives and reasons for turnover of teachers in American overseas schools

(Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Roberts, Mancuso, & Yoshida, 2010; Mancuso, Roberts, White, Yoshida, & Weston, 2011; Weston, 2014). In order to find some semblance to the available literature the subcategories of teacher retention and turnover studies were explored.

Two common reasons teachers leave their schools were identified in retention and turnover studies: compensation dissatisfaction (tangible) and leadership issues (nontangible; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014). Deconstructing the latter led to the emergence of engagement related issues such as: communication between teachers and leadership, support from administration, and involvement in decision-making (Desroches, 2013; Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Tanova & Holtom, 2008; Weston, 2014) all of which are connected to leadership styles and practices. These findings suggest the importance of the perceptions teachers have of their relationships and interactions with leadership in deciding to remain or terminate their employment.

Retention, turnover, and engagement in international schools. Literature that is available on international schools often focuses on American overseas schools (AOS) and teacher retention and turnover. This body of research has identified recurring factors which affect retention and turnover: salary/compensation (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014), job embeddedness (Amodio, 2015; Tanova & Holton, 2008), leadership support (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, Roberts et al., 2010; 2009; Weston, 2014), meaningful work (Amodio, 2015; Hardman, 2001; Mancuso et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Wiley, 2016), and relationships (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancuso et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010).

Compensation and benefits are tangible hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1959) in employment negotiations which are easily agreed upon to entice retention (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014). Tangible incentives, such as resigning bonuses, paid flights home, and increases in housing allowances, are immediate and are used to entice teachers to stay an additional year after their initial contract thus initiating a more transactional leader–follower model which does not necessarily promote employee work engagement.

Heads of School are more willing to offer tangible incentives to teachers identified as valuable to achieving the school's mission and who are less embedded in their jobs and more likely to leave their school (Amodio, 2015) suggested that leadership attention and interaction is less important for embedded teachers. Although not substantiated in the literature, this concept could be extended to decreased efforts made by leadership to promote engagement in teachers who have extended employment beyond their first and second contracts either through incentives or leader–member interactions.

Job embeddedness is a factor in voluntary turnover and affects employee engagement. The likelihood of turnover increases as the links or connections one has to their job, activities, and working and living environments begin to decrease (Tanova & Holton, 2008). This relates to employee engagement as the employee makes a shift from work engagement to engagement in job search behavior. Regardless of where the employee's energy or focus turns, the concern is they are no longer engaged in their work. This is a particular challenge for international school educators and institutions in relation to teachers adjusting or settling into the host country culture.

Leadership style and leadership interactions play a role in teacher retention and turn over (Desroches, 2013; Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016; Mancuso et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010) but are considered to be slow in their effectiveness in immediate action to

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retain desirable teachers (Amodio, 2015). Transformational leadership practices are influential in leader–member interactions (Bakker et al., 2011; Christian et al., 2011; Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014) and influence intentions of teachers to stay at a school, more so for engaged and effective teachers. One proposed way to define and measure transformational leadership is through "the level of trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect the leader inspires in followers" (Weston, 2014, p. 26). Though this is not a definitive definition or measurement tool it does align with engagement concepts (Bakker, 2011; Jacobs, 2013; Lencioni, 2002; Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Transformational leadership styles of Heads of School in AOS is significantly associated with teacher retention (Weston, 2014). However, it was not noted to be similar for principals. This does not necessarily mean transformational leadership styles of principals are not influential in interactions with teachers, though it does support an understanding that in international schools Heads of School's decisions, behaviors, and actions are influential in the organization.

Finding meaning in one's work is crucial for employees to be become engaged with their work (Bakker, 2011; Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Teachers in international schools identified avenues for finding meaning in their work through: contributing to the school's mission (Wiley, 2016), being part of a professional culture (Mancuso et al., 2011), supporting a positive workplace climate (Hardman, 2001), having voice in decisions (Amodio, 2015; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009). These aspects support teachers' perceptions of meaning in the work they do and providing incentive to be engaged with their work. Teachers' perceptions of meaning in their work or role influences their decision to stay or look for a new job.

Trust is important in building organizational relationships (Jacobs, 2013; Lencioni, 2002) as is communication (Beslin & Chitra, 2004). Communication in relationship building was the skill leaders with higher EI readily applied in their leadership practices (Northouse, 2016). Developing

relationships allows leaders insight to the motivations of others as well as to identify their strengths, a leadership skill many leaders overlook as a tool to get the most of their employees worth (Hallowell, 2011). The research on international schools identifies relationships and interactions between teachers and leadership as meaningful factors of retention and turnover (Amodio, 2015; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Desroches, 2013; Mancuso et al., 2011; Roberts et al., 2010) yet does not address engagement and productivity or specific details about interactions which build trust.

This section reviewed current literature related to teacher engagement in international schools. Predominantly this literature focuses on retention and turnover based on incentives, leadership styles, meaningfulness, and trust. The literature offers little insight to teacher engagement as it is experienced in international schools. Although retention and turnover concepts align with employee engagement, a gap remains in understanding leadership practices and the influence on international school teachers' work engagement.

Review of Methodological Issues

Review of current research for this study, connected to employee engagement, resulted in an unexpected diversity of research areas including: engagement, trust, leadership, communication, and employee retention and turnover. An attempt was made to collect research from geographically diverse regions as the focus of this study is on engagement of international school teachers, though the review also includes research on engagement and trust from studies in the United States which include educational and non-educational organizations.

Reviewed research from schools in international settings, for the most part, tended to have low response rates as in the case of Amodio's (2015) study of teachers in AOS in Europe 31 of 187, Odland and Ruzicka's (2009) 286 of 3,079, and Mancuso et al.'s (2011) 248 teachers in AOS in all of NESA, or focus on smaller groups such as Chandler's (2010) 26 teachers international

school teachers, Ghamrawi's 51 teachers, and Okeke and Mtyuda's (2017) 12 secondary school teachers.

Surveys generally included Likert style item rating and closed-ended and open-ended questions to allow respondents to provide greater detailed accounts and responses (Chandler, 2010; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Mancuso et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2009) as well as to gain their perspectives. Amodio (2015) used open ended responses from heads of schools to create his closed-ended survey for teachers in which he collected quantitative data. Odland and Ruzicka (2009) implemented a 22-item survey in which 20 of the responses had closed-ended options, as well as, an optional open-ended response while the last two items were solely open-ended responses. Chandler (2010) used a two-tier distribution of his survey on influence of location in retention and turnover, first giving it to four peers and then asking them to distribute it to at least four others.

Fewer studies included more intensive research aspects such as interview and observation. Handford and Leithwood (2013) used interviews and observations to explore trust in U.S. schools; Kahn (1990) interacted as a member of groups observing and interviewing, and reviewing documents to understand employee engagement; Okeke and Mtyuda (2017) used semistructured interviews, observations, and surveys to build a case study of job dissatisfaction in South African teachers; Ghamrawi (2011) used surveys and semistructured interviews to gain the perspectives of Israeli teachers' trust in their schools. The use of multiple methods provides researchers a means to gain a better perspective of what they are researching (Creswell, 2013).

Quantitative research was identified as the second greatest methodology in the literature review for this study. Researchers attempting to reach geographically dispersed groups or smaller focused populations, and seeking to compose "numeric descriptions of trends, attitudes, or opinions" (Creswell, 2013, p. 156), often utilized a quantitative methodology. An influencing

factor could be the size of the potential response rate. Examples include: Deroches (2013) who

attempted to survey AOS teachers in South America, Weston (2014) attempted to survey AOS

teachers in Asia, Adams and Miskell (2016) focused on teachers in a southwestern city, and

Thomsen, et al. (2016) who focused solely on Dutch vocational education teachers. Data collection

included closed-ended responses and Likert-style responses which are easily quantified and

appropriate for ease of data collection and analysis. These studies use quantitative data to rate

items such as influencing factors according to influence on decisions to stay or leave a school in

hierarchical listings.

Synthesis of Research Findings

Defining and understanding factors which influence employee engagement are tasks not

easily accomplished. Engagement is not easily deconstructed and compartmentalized with aspects

being equally influential to all. Although each person has individual and unique needs,

perceptions, desires, and drives employees and leaders alike, the results and findings of the

reviewed literature, despite individuality and uniqueness of teachers, principals, and higher

administration, or their location, revealed there are some generalizations and similarities which

exist in relation to employee engagement could be beneficial to international school leadership in

their efforts to employ an engaged and productive teaching staff. Five themes extracted from the

literature are: engagement, trust, leadership, communication, and retention and turnover.

Employee engagement is key to the success of an organization (Richman, 2006; Rich et al.,

2010; Gallup Inc, n.d.). In the case of international schools, teacher engagement and motivation are

key to the success of the organization but also to the success and achievement of the students.

Employees continuously make decisions about their levels of engagement in relation to different

aspects of their job or role in the organization (Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bird et

al., 2012; Forsyth et al., 2011; Huston et al., 2007; Kahn, 1990; Murakami-Ramalho & Benham,

2010; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Vojtek and Vojtek (2009) posited teachers "are motivated by the fundamental human need to be connected, to belong, and to be loved, recognized, and appreciated" (p. 111). Consideration of the aspects of teacher engagement by leadership could be useful in the development and refining of leadership styles which foster engagement, improve productivity, and ultimately raise the level of teaching and learning in international schools.

Trust is an important factor in building workplace relationships (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Friedman, 2014; Ghamrawi, 2011; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Jacobs, 2013; Klein, 2012; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Lencioni, 2002; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis,2015a) With higher teacher turnover rates and the frequency in which administration changes in international schools (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010) building trusting relationships which ensure psychological safety, and authentically engaging teachers should be at the top of leadership practices in international schools. The importance of this leadership practice, besides diminishing the potential for the growth and spread of distrust, is that it is through trusting relationships with teachers, educational leaders indirectly have an impact on student outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a).

International school leadership requires leaders to engage employees, build trusting relationships, and provide personal and job resources for teachers. Lingenfelter (2015) presented readers with the consideration that "successful school administrators in the future will be leaders of leaders. These administrators will coach the teacher-leaders on the values and goals of the school, and dedicate resources to their development" (p. 38). Interactions and support from leadership play a major role in influencing employees' perceptions of: job satisfaction (Alarcon & Edwards, 2010; Ilyas & Abdullah, 2016; Saks & Gruman, 2014), trust (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a, 2015b), safety (Hallowell, 2011; Hislop, 2103; Kahn, 1990; Rock, 2008), meaningfulness of work (Kahn, 1990), value to the

organization (Kahn, 1990; Rich et al., 2010), psychological availability (Bakker, 2011; Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012) and self-efficacy (Bakker, 2011; Kahn, 1990). Leaders, actions and interactions, were central in the research within all cultural settings. The above mentioned characteristics are additionally recognized as having influence on the level of employees' engagement (Bird, Wang, Watson, & Murray, 2012; Forsyth et al., 2011; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Huston, Norman, & Ambrose, 2007; Kahn, 1990; Thomsen, Karsten, & Oort, 2016; Tschannen-Moran, 2009) and understanding their impact and influence on individuals and groups can provide increased opportunities for individuals in leadership positions to get the most from teachers.

Communication breaks down the barriers and brings people together allowing leaders to earn the trust of their followers through communicating openly, honestly, and often (Beslin & Chitra, 2004; Lingenfelter, 2015). Communication is a central tenet in engaging employees (Kahn, 1990; Rich et al., 2010; Tschannen-Moran, 2009), building trusting relationships (Beslin & Chitra, 2004; Jacobs, 2013; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Lencioni, 2002; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015a, 2015b), and leading others (Bakker, 2011; Bird et al., 2012; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Weston, 2014). Communication is recognized as a vital and inseparable component of the aforementioned responsibilities of leaders needs to be recognized for its importance in creating an engaging and open working environment (Ghamrawi, 2011; Lingenfelter, 2015). A repeated theme identified in the literature on international schools is the importance teachers place on interactions and communication with leadership and administration (Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010). This emphasizes and supports the importance of communication in teacher retention and turnover.

Job engagement in international schools, though not specifically stated in the literature, could be an indicator for leaders' need to be cognizant of in considering retention and turnover of staff. Although the reviewed literature specific to international schools tended to focus on factors which influence teacher retention and turnover, leadership or administration interactions were noted to be influential components in teachers' decisions to stay of leave (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014). The reviewed literature identified researchers' interest in discovering which incentives are most effective in retaining teachers considered as desirable or good for the school (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancusoe et al., 2011; Roberts et al., 2010) yet tended to not address how teachers could be incentivized to be engaged and join those who are considered desirable teachers. Furthermore, leaders are potentially less likely to allocate resources on employees who are more embedded in their jobs and lives than those who are less embedded and likely to leave their job (Amodio, 2015; Tanova and Holton, 2008).

Critique of Previous Research

According to Murakami-Ramalho and Benham (2010) the mobility of teachers and administrators in international teaching environments is a challenge which "challenges the stability and continuity of operations at these schools" (p. 628). To get the maximum output from teachers in international settings leaders need to understand how best to engage and motivate teachers so that the benefits support the teachers, the students, and the organization. The literature reviewed for this study, particularly for international schools, identified mixed methods as the most common method of data collection including the use of qualitative open-ended instruments and quantitative closed-ended surveys incorporated Likert-style responses. These methods are appropriate in for their use in collecting data from geographically diverse subjects (Creswell, 2013) and helped guide the method for this study in addressing individuals in international teaching environments.

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The subject under study is teacher engagement in international schools as influenced by the actions of their leaders and understood and interpreted through lived experiences of international school teachers. The literature reviewed on engagement and trust proved relevant to my study because it supported the connection between leadership styles and trusting relationships to employee engagement (Bird et al., 2012; Forsyth et al., 2011; Gray, 2013; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Huston et al., 2007; Thomsen et al., 2016; Tschannen-Moran, 2009).

The literature from international schools focused mainly on turnover and retention rates of teachers in international settings and the incentives and benefits which influence their decisions yet a common characteristic important to this research was the identified connection of leaders' behaviors and interactions and the influence on retention and turnover. Additionally, literature on international school teachers centered on teachers in American Overseas Schools (AOS) within specific geographical areas such as Europe, East Asia Regional Council of Overseas Schools (EARCOS), and near East South Asia (NESA) and resulted in limited responses despite the size of the population available (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Mancuso et al., 2011; Roberts et al., 2010; Weston, 2014). Despite the similar topics of these studies they were limited by only including ASO in their data collection. To support diversity and validity in this study, data collection endeavored to include participants from Council of International Schools member schools in Central Europe with the potential include expatriate and local hire teachers.

Chapter 2 Summary

Expectations exist on the part of administration and a teacher at the point in time when the teacher is hired. A general scenario finds the teacher is eager to do a good job, work hard, be engaged, and demonstrate organizational commitment. The administration, expecting hard work, dedication, and new ideas, provides supports to the teacher. Every relationship between a leader and follower, regardless of the initial level of engagement experienced, has a potential outcome of

continued employee engagement or to devolve into employee disengagement. Disengaged teachers are more likely to have diminished organizational commitment eventually affecting student achievement. A review of literature revealed five themes which were relevant to this study on teacher engagement in international schools.

1. Employee engagement is not static. Teachers' levels of engagement can fluctuate with varying degree in relation to different aspects of their job or organizational role.

2. Teachers' trust needs to be earned by those in leadership positions. Trusting relationships with leaders allow teachers to feel psychologically safe and increase engagement potential.

3. Leadership actions and styles have a direct impact on teacher engagement.

4. Communication between administration and teachers needs to be open, honest, and frequent. Personal and authentic interactions support teacher engagement.

5. Incentives are offered to retain international school teachers and limit turnover of teachers identified as desirable, yet little discussion is given to increasing teacher engagement levels.

This review of the current literature found a significant gap exists in the research on international school teacher engagement. No studies focusing on international school teacher engagement were identified signifying adequate reason to initiate a study on teacher engagement in international schools. The current study explored how international school teachers experience engagement. Findings from this research may be beneficial to both international school teachers and international school leadership in better understanding teacher engagement experiences in international school settings.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The findings of this research can benefit international school leadership by giving voice to those they hope to actively engage. This methodology chapter provides an overview of the research approach and data collection methods for this study. A justification statement and review of phenomenological research approach provides rationalization for use of IPA. The research plan is presented in the following sections: purpose and design of the study, research population, sampling method, and instrumentation. Following are sections related to data collection, data analysis procedures, limitations, validation, and expected findings. The chapter concludes with ethical issues and a summary of the chapter.

Research Questions

Two research questions were used to guide this study:

1. How do international school teachers experience engagement?

2. What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers?

The inquiry has investigated these questions through IPA (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) using semistructured in-depth interviews. This study has specifically included international school teachers who reflected on teaching experiences within international school settings giving voice to the influence of engagement practices of school leadership. Furthermore, the results of this study added to the existing body of knowledge on employee engagement.

Purpose and Design of the Study

Although there is a tendency for international school teachers to be highly mobile, those who are more embedded in their lives are less likely to leave current jobs despite the level of disengagement being experienced. Wiseman (2017) touched on this issue of employees giving up

and doing the minimum to keep their jobs, referring to it as "quit and stay" (p. 39). In this scenario, the employee has given up, and is disengaged, yet does not leave the organization. They stay, endure the disengagement level, and create a deficit in the organization.

Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) work engagement model identified job resources provided by leadership as predictors of work engagement. Job resources provided by leadership include: autonomy, positive work place climate, job variety, task variety, feedback, coaching, recognition, and support (Saks & Gruman, 2014). When employees experience a lack of needed resources there exists the potential for resentment on the employee's part toward leadership as well as frustration which can lead to a decrease in productivity (Shuck & Herd, 2012, p. 165) and disengagement or to become actively disengaged. In an international school setting this can create negative outcomes including: disruption to the learning process, disadvantages to student outcomes, decreased organizational commitment and engagement. Research has found that the behaviors and interactions school leaders have with teachers influences the level of engagement teachers decide to make toward their jobs (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). Therefore, a phenomenological methodology was used to explore, understand, and interpret the lived experiences of international school teachers as influenced by school leadership.

As identified in the literature review, researchers have yet to agree on a common name or definition for employee engagement, yet those put forward provide similar understandings. Kahn (1990), suggested a physical, cognitive, and emotional connection to one's work, while Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, and Bakker (2002) suggested employees' working mind-set was characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Miller (2014) approached employee engagement as a desired outcome:

> Employee engagement is a desired outcome that occurs when workers feel a heightened
> mental and emotional connection to their jobs, their manager, their coworkers, and/or their

organization and its mission. As a result, they are more dedicated and more willing to apply

voluntary, discretionary effort to their work above and beyond the norm to help their

organization succeed. (p. 4)

Engaged employees demonstrate organizational commitment by doing more than just the bare

minimum to keep their jobs (Miller, 2014).

Phenomenology. Phenomenology seeks to understand human experiences (Sheehan,

2014). Edmond Husserl introduced transcendental phenomenology as a way to describe the

experiences of others (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This approach requires the researcher to

set aside personal opinions, experiences, and presuppositions to be able to clearly understand the

experiences of others (Moustakas, 1994). Smith et al. (2009) associated this with "stepping out of

our everyday experience . . . in order to be able to examine that everyday experience" (p. 12).

Martin Heidegger is known for his work in hermeneutic phenomenology, or interpretive

phenomenology (Smith, et al., 2009). Hermeneutics seeks to determine the intention and meaning

of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). Heidegger understood the importance of a descriptive text

which addressed the phenomena and added ontology, what it means to be, to interpret and give

meaning (Smith et al., 2009). Where transcendental phenomenology places the researcher in a

descriptive role, setting aside personal opinions and experiences, interpretive phenomenology

recognizes and accepts the influences of researcher subjectivity in interpretation of phenomena. In

interpretive phenomenology the researcher is not expected to dismiss or ignore previous

knowledge or personal experiences but to bracket them (identify and acknowledged) and consider

them at the appropriate time in the analysis. Smith et al. (2009) identified researcher influences in

the hermeneutic circle; each new experience or interaction influences how each subsequent

experience is interpreted and understood. From this point of continuous influence of interpreting,

understanding, and influencing the researcher, as well as the participant, is active in creating meaning and interpreting the phenomena.

Smith et al. (2009) believed the position of an IPA researcher is to gain an insider's perspective and to be able to "look at them from a different angle, ask questions and puzzle over things they are saying" (p. 36). The researcher in this study is an international school teacher who possesses knowledge, ideas, and experiences related to engagement practices of leadership. These attributes have been bracketed and called on at appropriate times in the study to understand the experiences of others and develop the essence of the phenomenon. This process was carefully documented to provide the best benefit to the study.

Purpose of the study. The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the experiences of international school teachers in relation to their work engagement and the specific practices of leadership that lead to disengagement. Various studies have focused on retention incentives and teacher turnover in international schools (Amodio, 2015; Desroches, 2013; Roberts, Mancuso, & Yoshida, 2010; Mancuso, Roberts, White, Yoshida, & Weston, 2011; Weston, 2014). Although this researcher noted the topic of leadership support in retention and turnover studies, this researcher found no studies focusing on engagement of teachers in international schools.

This study has contributed to the existing literature by focusing on teacher engagement and disengagement, specifically within international schools. The intention of the study was to discover and understand the experiences of teachers as school leadership applies engagement practices. Leaders believe they know how to support and increase engagement yet teachers' experiences are the ultimate assessment of engagement practices (Kutsyuruba, Walker, & Noonan, 2016). Understanding the lived experiences of teachers by leadership was useful in the development and refining of leadership styles and practices which foster engagement, improve

productivity, build organizational engagement, and ultimately allow individuals to reach their greatest potential.

Results of this study has supported international school leadership in taking proactive measures in leadership training and professional development to build trusting relationships and recognizing how to allow each teacher to perform optimally. Trusting relationships diminish organizational distrust, increase psychological safety, and support student outcomes, all of which can support teacher engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b). This should be an increasing focus by leadership as international schools grow in numbers. English medium international schools increased from 7,017 in 2015 (International School Consultancy, 2015) to over 9,600 in 2018 (International School Consultancy, 2018). In a growing competitive market, school leadership should recognize the importance of maintaining and supporting employee engagement as an integral part of organizational growth, development, and health.

Design of the study. This study used a phenomenological research design to gain insight into the lived experiences of international school teachers relevant to school leadership. Phenomenological study allows researchers to describe a common meaning of the lived experiences of individuals and what they have in common (Creswell, 2013). Central to the phenomenological design is the use of interviews, which provides first-hand accounts that lead to understandings of the importance and principles of experience (Moustakas, 1994).

This study has followed the IPA method. IPA is a qualitative research method designed to examine experiences of individuals and how they make sense of those experiences. (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The study of participant experiences yields an opportunity for analysis of leadership engagement practices. Through the use of a phenomenological design and interviews this study ultimately deepened the understanding of the lived experiences of international school teachers (Booth, Colomb, & Williams, 2008).

The selection of participants from multiple school sites allowed for multiple perspectives that supported the larger picture that emerges from the data (Creswell, 2014). Interviews with participants from various schools has provided additional support in identifying influential aspects related to engagement and leadership practices from teachers' perspectives. The larger picture that emerged from this study was the culmination of the lived experiences, as reported from the collected data, of teacher participants.

Research Population and Sampling Method

The target population of this study consisted of current teachers employed in international schools where English is used as the medium of instruction within Central Europe, who have been in their current position for a minimum of four years, and who did not intend to leave their position in the near future (two or more years). International teaching contracts tend to be two to three years in length (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010) and are occasionally extended an additional year or two (Amodio, 2015). The purpose of the four-year minimum in the selection of interview participants was to focus on individuals who were more embedded in working and living contexts as demonstrated by remaining in a teaching position beyond their initial contract and possible short-term extensions. Schools selected for the study were member schools of the Council of International Schools (CIS) from Switzerland.

Heads of selected international schools had provided access to participants. An email to heads of school (see Appendix B), explained the purpose of the study that accompanied a request to forward an introductory email to teaching staff. The email to teachers included the purpose of the study, criteria for participation, and a link to an online form to enter their contact information for those who volunteer to participate in the interview process.

The nature of phenomenological research was to study those who have experienced a similar event or phenomenon therefore initiating the need to diverge from random sampling or

census style sampling. Phenomenology research sampling traditionally involves purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling which selects participants on the basis of a particular set of attributes (Stringer, 2014). This phenomenological study utilized purposeful sampling when selecting participants for interviews "because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2013, p. 158). Moreover, Smith et al. (2009) identified the usefulness of purposeful sampling as a way to access those who "have insight into a particular experience" (p. 48).

Phenomenological studies tend to use small homogeneous sample sizes (Smith et al., 2009) in hopes of being able to "examine convergence and divergence in some detail" (p. 3) in order to make an interpretive analysis. This study followed this pattern of limited or small sample size. Further, Smith et al. (2009) advised researchers to use a sample size between four and 10 interviews to avoid data saturation. a. A larger sample size was not necessary to provide a greater number of themes. Data saturation, when new data does not provide new themes, is achievable in phenomenology with smaller sample sizes (Creswell, 2013; Charmaz, 2006; Mason, 2010). An example is given by Mason (2010) where a study of 60 individuals resulted in a total 36 themes, 34 of which were identified after the first six participants. The goal of this researcher was to attain 12 participants.

Selected participants will sign a consent form (see Appendix C) that indicated their participation in the study was voluntary and allowed them to withdraw from the study at any time. To maintain participants' confidentiality, the researcher used pseudonyms throughout the study, that used identity data accessible to the researcher, dissertation committee, and Concordia University Institutional Review Board. Due to the geographical distance of participants and the researcher, video conferencing and email correspondence was used to facilitate communication with the researcher.

Instrumentation

This phenomenological study used semistructured interview approached in the style of "responsive interviewing" (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p. xv). During responsive interviewing the interviewer was able to follow responses with further questions based on how participants responded to the initial questions. The goal was to manage the interview as a learning conversation rather than a checklist. Three types of questions, proposed by Rubin and Rubin (2011), was used: main questions, probes, and follow-up. These categories of questions were referred to as the core of responsive interviewing as they guide the interview through the exploration of the research question, support conversation between interviewer and interviewee while drawing out details, and explore emergent ideas and responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). In addition, a short demographic survey was made at the time volunteers are asked to participate (see Appendix D).

Phenomenological research included specific attention to what the participant had experienced in relation to the phenomenon and the situations and contexts which influenced their experiences of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). These aspects were considered in the development of the interview protocol (see Appendix A). The interview protocol addressed six themes derived from the literature review: personal values, leadership, trust and respect, job role/organizational role, communication, and engagement. Protocol items under these themes were created prior to the interviews and served as the framework for the responsive interviewing, as well as, provided consistency in the interview process from one interview to the next. The interview protocol was a newly developed tool and was piloted and the researcher adjusted when needed. Piloting a new tool lends to study validity and trustworthiness in ensuring the data collected is in line with the research (Creswell, 2014).

Researchers in qualitative studies are considered an instrument in the research process (Galletta, 2013; Patton, 2014). Galletta (2013) stated "[a]s the primary instrument, the researcher

extends questions and pursues ideas conveyed in the participants' responses, probes particular statements, and encourages, as well as sometimes shuts down, participants' responses" (p. 104). In this study the researcher was vigilant and mindful of his role an interactive instrument "responsible for creating a climate that the research participant felt comfortable was able to respond honestly and comprehensively" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 114).

Data Collection

Interviews are the principal method of data collection in IPA study (Smith et al., 2009). The importance of interviewing in phenomenological research is being able to identify commonalities of participants' experiences in order to be able to come to a final description that discusses their experience and how they make meaning of it (Creswell, 2013). The interviews in this study was able to serve as the main source of data and provided the opportunity to engage participants and make record of their responses through note taking, recording, and transcription.

The interview protocol contained open-ended questions centered around the topic of engagement. Six themes, derived from the literature review, were explored in the protocol: personal values, leadership, trust and respect, job role/organizational role, communication, and engagement. A semistructured aspect allowed the participants to provide additional thoughts relevant to the topic and lived experiences, as well as, the opportunity for the researcher to further explore where appropriate (Moustakas, 1994; Smith et al., 2009)

IPA "requires a verbatim record of the data collection event" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 73). Interviews were recorded using Rev, a digital voice recorder, and transcribed using Rev's confidential transcription service. Recordings and transcriptions were stored on private, password-protected devices. Copies of transcripts were stored in a safe locked area that is available for future review and approval to provide validity to the documentation for the study. Transcriptions were reviewed, coded, and aligned to reveal commonalities of participants' experiences.

Additional documents included documents or artifacts presented by participants. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) identified documents and artifacts as "ready-made source[s] of data easily accessible to the imaginative and resourceful investigator" (p. 162). Participants were asked to share any artifacts they felt comfortable sharing, or wanted to share, which have a connection to experiences of engagement such as diaries, communications, or documents.

Data Analysis

Familiarity with collected data is imperative in phenomenological research (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994; & Smith et al., 2009). Data analysis in this phenomenological study integrated the six-step process of data analysis suggested by Smith et al. (2009) with Saldaña's (2016) manual coding. The steps include: reading transcripts, rereading transcripts and listening to audio, initial marking or highlighting, coding, then repeating for each participant, and then to look for looking for patterns and themes across all the data (Smith et al., 2009). These steps were divided into two stages: case by case data interaction and looking for patterns across the data set. Steps one through four, aspects which addressed each individual interview, was completed for each interview prior to moving to the next interview. Step five is the transition to the next interview transcript. When all transcripts were analysed separately, the researcher moved to step six, looking for patterns in the data.

Stage one is intended to slow the analysis process down so the researcher is able to focus on each participant's data. In step one the researcher reads through the transcript. Step two the researcher listens to recorded transcripts and rereads transcripts. Rereading transcripts helps the researcher become familiar with the content of the interviews (Smith et al., 2009). In this step bracketing was used to capture and separate this researcher's thoughts, ideas, and initial impressions from each of the transcript analyses (Smith et al., 2009; Creswell, 2013). In the third step the researcher used pre-coding marks such as circling, highlighting, and underlining (Saldaña,

2016). At this point note making began, indicating anything believed to be of importance or found interesting. This researcher attempted to note the language used and the context of experiences in order to understand and identify abstract concepts (Smith et al., 2009).

Initial coding began in step four. Developing emergent themes and searching for connections across emergent themes are revisited in steps three and four, for each individual participant. During these steps, notes and codes are used to begin identifying themes from sections of data and then looking for connections across these themes. This researcher used hand coding and Microsoft Word to organize and identify emergent themes. Step five is the transition to the next transcript, and then steps one through four are repeated for each participant.

The final step, step six, is to look for patterns and themes across all the participants' data. Smith et al. (2009) identified this step as a point where one can see "participants represent unique idiosyncratic instances but also share higher order qualities" (p. 101). A graphic was created at the end of the analysis to show the themes for the participant group (see Table 4).

Limitations and Delimitations

A limitation of the research design was the use of the sampling method. The first limiting aspect was the request to participate and arrive via email. The initial request was sent to school heads with the request to forward on a portion of the original email to their staff and provide a few encouraging words to participate. The problem that occurred was the potential for the head to not forward the email or not encourage participation. Also, there the ease of which electronically delivered tools can be dismissed, deleted, or ignored by potential participants. Jacoby (2015) offered employees who are not engaged tend to meet basic job or work requirements but are less than likely to do more than they are required. Given the criteria for volunteer participants there was the potential for target participants to dismiss the request or to perceive it as an additional task which goes beyond the required job duties or expectations and not participate.

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Another limitation was the connection to the purposeful sampling of phenomenological research and volunteer participants. A potential limitation was only engaged participants respond. Second, those who did volunteer viewed the study with a different lens than those did not volunteer, therefore limited the data collection.

Research population is a delimitation to the design as the study sought out participants only in Switzerland. Language was also a limitation for non-native English speakers who worked at the international schools that was included in the research population. Compounding the inclusion of non-native English speakers are cultural differences in attitudes and expectations. Further, speaking from firsthand experience, international school teachers tend to be very busy and have long days which often include considerable commuting times. Due to teachers' schedules, arranging interviews influenced their participation.

Validation

The credibility of the study is supported through the patterns and themes extracted from the interview data. Supporting documentation such as interview notes, and recorded interviews, and transcriptions supported triangulation of the data. Validity of interviews was made through the process of member checking or participant validation (Creswell, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). After interviews were transcribed, through the use of *Rev*'s confidential online transcription service, participants were emailed copies for verification and validity of the content and transcription. Additionally, participants were sent copies of their coded transcripts and emergent themes from their data for review, adding a second member check of the data.

Establishing trustworthiness of findings is supported by the transferability of findings to similar situations and settings (Statistics Solutions, 2019a). Diversity in the research population added to the trustworthiness of the data findings. Collection of data from multiple international schools reduced the threat of data collection reflecting the influence of leadership practices in one

school. "The trustworthiness of results is the bedrock of high quality qualitative research" (Brit, Scott, Cavers, Campbell, & Walter, 2016, p. 1802). In order for results to be trustworthy, they need to be dependable, meaning consistent and repeatable (Statistics Solutions, 2019b). Establishing dependability of the study involved regular review of the research data to achieve accurate interpretations of participants experiences. Additionally, dependability was further established through repeated member checking. Review and recording of research method used in the study allows for repeatability in the future.

Expected Findings

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the lived experiences of international school teachers relevant to engagement as influenced by school leadership. Individuals are unique, yet similarities exist in the practices and characteristics of leadership styles which lead to increased engagement. This researcher goal was to find common experiences of teachers related to: personal and school values, leadership, trust and respect, job role, communication, and engagement which can support international school leadership in taking proactive measures. This can enhance training and professional development for leadership, and teachers, in practices to build trusting relationships, and recognize how to allow each teacher to achieve their best performance.

This researcher expected to find emotional intelligence on the part of leaders would serve as a mitigating factor in the levels of engagement for teachers. The Institute for Health and Human Potential (2018) defined "EI as the ability to: recognize, understand and manage our own emotions [and] recognize, understand and influence the emotions of others" (par. 2). Additionally, it is expected teachers who experience increased feelings of trust in a relationship with a leader would experience increased engagement. Employees who experience positive relationships with leaders tended to be more engaged physically, affectively, and cognitively (Shuck & Herd, 2012). Results from this study are expected to provide a detailed account of practices which increase engagement.

Ethical Issues

Concordia University Institutional Review Board protocol and requirements were met prior to the initiation of the study. The researcher in this study made efforts to anticipate and address ethical issues in this study. Ethical concerns in research studies include three important principles: respect for people, beneficence, and justice (Adams & Miles, 2013). In this study respect for people was addressed through confidentiality and the use of pseudonyms. Additionally, all participants in this study were consenting adults who voluntarily choose to participate and may decide to discontinue participation at any time during the study. Beneficence, to minimize harm, was addressed as risk to participants is minimized through the use of confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants. Justice was met as all participants received the same survey and were asked the same interview questions. Justice also includes the findings of the study which can be applied by international school leadership to leadership professional development or training programs to improve teacher engagement.

The researcher is a current international teacher who is looking to enter administration. The question of teacher engagement is one of personal interest, having at times experienced varied levels of work engagement in his current role. In relation to conflict of interest, no financial benefits for the researcher, participants, or persons in school leadership positions were proposed, expected, or received in connection to this study. The researcher is not in a position of power or involved with hiring of individuals, therefore having no influence over volunteer participants.

Confidentiality was maintained throughout the duration and completion of the study. Anonymity was achieved through the issuing of a pseudonym to each participant. All notes and paper documents were converted to digital documents and the hard copies destroyed. Consent forms were signed digitally and are stored on the aforementioned external drive. The researcher retains data and records on an external drive locked in a safe within his personal residence. Data is

retained for a period of 3 years after the conclusion of the study, after which it will be erased from the external drive.

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 provided the methodology used in this phenomenological study, addressing the purpose of the study, the design, research population, sampling method, instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, limitations, validation, expected findings, and ethical issues. This researcher adopted the IPA approach, as presented by Smith et al. (2009), to explore work engagement experiences of international school teachers through the research questions:

1. How do international school teachers experience engagement?

2. What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers?

Phenomenology identifies the common themes in the experiences of participants and develops a descriptive interpretive text of the essence of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Personal experiences, knowledge, and ideas of leadership practices, of the researcher, were bracketed to focus on the experiences of participants. The findings from this study revealed patterns and trends in the perceptions of teachers and their experiences which can inform leadership and be used in leadership training and professional development to support and improve teacher engagement and optimal performance.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

This study explored how international school teachers in Central Europe experience work engagement and what leadership practices lead to teacher disengagement. The objective of this research was to describe and interpret the experiences of teachers and to build an understanding from shared experiences in order to provide recommendations that can support training and professional development for international school leadership. A phenomenological approach was used to identify how the participants gave meaning to their experiences of work engagement. As international school teachers tend to work through short contracts and generally have a high rate of turn over (Murakami-Ramalho & Benham, 2010; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009), specific criteria for participants were set in place to focus on teachers who are more embedded in their lives. Participant criteria for the study included: current international school teachers, have been in their role for at least four years, and not expect to leave within the next two years.

Two research questions were used to guide this study of international school teachers' experiences of work engagement:

1. How do international school teachers experience engagement?

2. What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers?

This chapter includes data collection, participant profiles, methodology and data analysis, and a summary of the findings.

Data Collection

In this phenomenological study, participants were interviewed using an interview protocol (see Appendix A), developed around six themes derived from the current literature, as a guide to explore their experiences with work engagement and disengagement. The protocol served as a

device that provided consistency from one participant interview to the next. As the protocol was a newly developed tool, trial interviews were held with colleagues to ensure the protocol was supporting the collection of data as intended. Slight modifications were made to the wording of the protocol after two trials. Following the third trial interview this researcher felt the protocol was ready for use with study participants.

Voice recordings were made from the interviews using the Rev, a digital voice recording application. Following each interview, the recordings were sent for confidential transcription using the Rev transcription service. Returned transcripts were downloaded in Microsoft Word format and sent to participants, via secure email, allowing for opportunities to check for accuracy, include additional information, or redact if needed or requested. Upon approval, transcripts were printed out for initial reading by the researcher. Following the coding of data, participants were securely emailed copies of their marked and coded transcripts, initial themes and corresponding codes, and the final derived themes for a second member checking and validation.

Data collection in this study initially sought to include 12 international school teachers from four different international schools in Switzerland. This researcher hoped to limit potential confounding of cultural influences by only including four Swiss, CIS member, international schools. In these environments, cultural experiences, expectations, and leadership approaches could be similar. Emails were sent to heads of schools explaining the study and asking for their support in distributing a teacher version of the explanation of the study. The teacher version included a link to a survey where they could indicate if they would like to participate in the study. Additionally, the survey requested non-school related email contact information and some demographic information (see Appendix D).

Due to a zero-response rate, additional schools in Switzerland were added to the study. A continued zero-response rate led to the inclusion of CIS international schools in additional Central

European countries including: Germany, Italy, France, and the Netherlands. The decision to include schools from these countries allowed for continued focus in Central Europe. As more than one country would be included, the potential for cultural influences in participant experiences is elevated. Through the selection of CIS member schools, this researcher hoped that similarities of member schools' leadership philosophies, approaches to learning, and school missions would offset potential cultural influences.

In addition, this researcher attempted to utilize social media to broadcast interest in participation by posting announcements of the study on Reddit and LinkedIn, though no responses were generated from these sources. The researcher in this study also reached out to specific individuals from a network of international school teachers, keeping in line with the purposeful sampling method of participant selection.

A total of 11 K–12 international school educators from Central Europe volunteered to be interviewed on their experiences of work engagement—eight females and three males. Interview times ranged from 45 to 90 minutes. Data were collected between the months of April and July. In general, the school year for European international schools is from September to June. The data collection period of this study thusly coincided with the end or near end of the school year for schools in the study; a time, as indicated by email responses from school leaders, when teachers are busy, and schools are often laden with internal communications leading up to the end of the year.

Participant Profiles

All participants were teaching at CIS member schools at the time of the interview. Three participants had prior international school teaching experience before coming to their current school. All participants had four or more years of international school teaching at the same school with three having 16 or more years at the same school. Although all participants self-identified as

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engaged with their job during their interview, there were varying levels of self-reported involvement, or engagement, with committees and activities beyond their teaching role on the initial volunteer survey. Demographic data for participants is expressed in ranges of time to minimize potential participant identification. Table 1 presents a demographic overview of participants.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

	Age	Years Teaching	Years Teaching Internationally	Years at current School	Additional Role in School
Matthew	36–40	7–10	4–6	4–6	Yes
Karen	50+	16+	16+	16+	Yes
Mark	36–40	7–10	4–6	4–6	Yes
Caterina	50+	16+	16+	7–10	Yes
Bethany	31–35	7–10	7–10	7–10	No
Amanda	41–50	7–10	4–6	4–6	Yes
Molly	50+	16+	16+	16+	Yes
Rachel	41–50	16+	11–15	7–10	Yes
Diana	36–40	16+	16+	16+	Yes
Lloyd	36–40	11–15	7–10	7–10	Yes
Mathilde	41–50	16+	4–6	16+	No

Participant 1. Matthew is married and is in the 36–40-year-old age bracket. He has been teaching between seven and 10 years total and teaching internationally for four to six years. During the interview he indicated that the most favorable advantage of teaching internationally is getting to live abroad. Internal drive and personal interest are motivators for Matthew in his teaching, he noted "I understand what I do value, and I do feel that if you are going to try and make an impact on the world, then this is one of the best ways that I know how to do that.

Matthew noted a personal benefit of international teaching over working in a national school system is the diminished level of pressure to stick to a prescribed curriculum that he felt in the international setting compared to national school system in order to make a difference in the lives of students. He described the feeling saying, "I'm not the safety net. I'm not the last thing

that's going to save them . . . *I don't feel that level of pressure*. Whereas when teaching in the national school system . . . there was definitely an increased level of pressure."

Working internationally provides Matthew with a level of autonomy in his work and support from leadership that allows him to engage in his work and try new material and approaches. He highlighted the contrast between his teaching in a national school system, and following strictly prescribed curriculum, and his current school where he has more autonomy in deciding curriculum content and delivery:

> although there's a lot of talk in national school systems about risk taking, you just have to take one look at national curricula, and you can see that there really isn't the opportunity to take any kind of risks when it comes to decisions about what you teach, and how you teach it and things like that.

Referring to leadership support and his autonomy, he explained, "it means you can take risks. And I think that's one thing I would say coming back to the idea of leadership is that, they're very happy to support me taking risks."

Participant 2. Karen is married to a non-teaching spouse, has grown children (not school age), and is in the 50+ age bracket. She is an experienced elementary school teacher. She has previous teaching experience in the United States and has been teaching internationally for 16+ years at the same school.

Although she has an additional role in the elementary school beyond teaching, she self-reported as currently having a poor level of interactions with committees or additional school activities. Communication is important for Karen in her sense of being connected to and in touch with her organization. She said that leadership should be "making sure that the people who are interested know what's happening." When asked how she felt about her connection to the organization she replied, "Not very involved. I feel like, I just come here, and I do my job. I like

the job, I like the kids. But then I just go home. I don't feel like a big part of the organization." Her experience of engagement at the organizational level has changed over time as she noted, "I've had periods with previous directors, where I was much more engaged in a larger picture of the school. And I think that was also maybe because the school was quite a bit smaller. But I think it was also the organizational structure, that was much flatter." Karen described her feeling of organizational engagement during a time when the school was smaller and the organizational structure was flatter and there was no principal, "We worked as a team to decide . . . [it was] very engaging, because you're engaged in every step of the process . . . gave me more of a vision of how all the pieces that go into something [fit]."

Karen's engagement in the classroom varies from her organizational experience. When asked about her engagement in the classroom she said, "I think when I'm in my classroom, and when I'm with the kids, I'm very engaged." Her engagement in the classroom is connected to her personal work ethic and the intrinsic rewards for students. She explained:

> I think my values influence me a lot, in the sense that I have a strong work ethic. And I really like teaching, I find it very creative. And so I put a lot of effort into it. And even when I don't get a lot of extrinsic recognition for it, I get a lot of intrinsic good feeling. And so I continue on.

Participant 3. Mark is in the 36–40-year-old age bracket. He is an experienced middle school and high school teacher. He currently teaches high school level courses. He previously taught in the United States and is in his first international teaching experience. Mark has been teaching for seven to ten years and teaching internationally for four to six years at the same school.

A strong personal work ethic drives Mark to engage with his work. Mark noted that he has had many jobs in his life, before and during teaching, and explained how his values influence him and his engagement in teaching:

I always, always, always take my work seriously even if I don't like it. I do happen to like teaching but I'm not the type of person to just shirk responsibilities, even if I don't care for them for the most part. And I care a lot about the teaching. I care a lot about preparing kids as best as they can be prepared . . . but it just comes from the feeling of satisfaction that I get as well when the students are able to access a subject which is pretty hard for them, or to go further in a subject that they enjoy. I think just as a person, I like to push both myself and I also therefore have very high expectations of students.

Mark does have an additional role in the school, organizing activities for students that, depending on the time of the year, can require a variance of attention from daily to monthly. He feels these experiences build character and empathy in students and enjoys the role but was unsure he would keep the role due to the work load saying, "it's difficult for me to continue with it because it's not something that they give me time for or pay for, for that matter . . . it's a lot of work." When asked about his motivation to stay involved he said, "when . . . I hear . . . I genuinely feel the recognition from the students. There is school recognition, but that doesn't matter to me as much as the students."

Mark self-reported as having an average level of interactions with committees or additional activities, yet during the interview he admitted that he attends very few additional activities, "[a]lmost zero." The reason he provided was his sense of connection to the school. He revealed that his organization does not "foster" feelings in him to put in additional work or hours saying, "Doesn't feel like there's anything special about the organization that I need to go above and beyond for . . . I don't feel extremely connected to the school . . . I don't feel that engagement at all, not from the school" Graduation is one event that he does attend because he teaches senior students and likes to recognize their achievement.

Despite being engaged in his teaching; his organizational engagement was limited. Mark indicated that teaching is his career, but also a job that is balanced by a personal life saying, "I am that type of person who does prefer to do my own thing after hours. But at the same time there is not a very strong feeling of engagement . . . I don't believe that more is the answer."

Participant 4. Caterina is in the 50+ years age bracket. She is an experienced middle school, high school, and IB teacher. Previous teaching includes the United States and international teaching experience in Europe. Her years of teaching experience are in the 16+ years of teaching, 11–15 years teaching internationally, and the last ten years have been at the same school.

Caterina self-reported as having an average level of interactions with committees or additional activities, she has two additional roles beyond her teaching that, depending on the time of the year, can require a variance of attention from two to three times a week to monthly. She expressed her occasional frustration in these roles saying, "It seems like in the leadership team, there is a lack of leadership. That's kind of the feeling you get because it's either too democratic or there is no direction." She indicated that she believed this could be better managed through increased trust and less micromanaging, "You put me in charge, then you can't micromanage me. I mean, I'm not saying not manage me."

Caterina, although self-identified as engaged in her teaching, noted that she felt leadership had diminished her level of organizational engagement, "I'd say that leadership certainly reduced my engagement or my wanting to be engaged more . . . I mean, no one ever asked me, 'Would you do something different?' . . . more in the organization." With her teaching role and the additional non-teaching roles she is connected to, she indicated there is little return from the leadership to motivate her to do more. "I have no justification to put in that extra, in both organization or classroom. I do what makes my job easier. Easier and better, but not because I feel supported by the leadership."

Participant 5. Bethany is in the 31–35-year-old age bracket. She is an elementary teacher with seven to ten years of teaching experience. Previously she has taught in the United States and at the time of the interview was in her first international teaching role.

Bethany self-reported as previously having a poor level of involvement in committees or additional school activities and noted in her interview, "I am shy by nature. I don't like to be in the spotlight." At the time of the interview she did not have an additional role in the school, yet she hoped to run a club for students in the coming school year. She is engaged in her role as a teacher and noted the feeling of engagement can be supported by leadership, but she as a teacher, needs to be the one who is motivated to be engaged, "they could be doing everything on their end, but you have the possibility of turning everything down, and nothing, if you don't find any of that motivating or interesting for yourself."

Bethany expressed that there are challenges to teaching internationally, one of which was establishing herself in her community and a sense of pressure that can be felt in trying to manage everything in her personal life and work life in a limited amount of time. Her answer to struggling with personal issues and work was to be open, honest, and communicate with her leader:

> It's just like you have something going on, and you have to take a day off for X, Y, Z reason. But I communicated everything, and I just let them know exactly what was going on, and I have to take a day here, take a day there. And I feel like they were super supportive.

Participant 6. Amanda is in the 41–50-year-old age bracket. She is an elementary teacher with seven to 10 years of teaching experience. Previously she taught in the United States and, at the time of the interview, she had been teaching at the same international school between four to six years, her first international teaching role.

Personal values influence Amanda's engagement with her work. She values inquiry, education, and learning and takes that into her classroom. "I definitely feel like I've always had a calling towards education, and it's interested me." She is taking classes and doing research which engages her in her personal learning as well as in her teaching.

Amanda has an additional role in the school beyond her teaching responsibilities that requires attention on a monthly basis. Her self-reported level of involvement in committees and additional school activities as 'excellent'. She explained her thoughts on being involved saying, "teachers need to be invested with a lot more responsibility . . . we can only do that by taking action and getting involved . . . we need to hear the voice of teachers."

Participant 7. Molly is 50+ years of age and has a non-teaching spouse. She has previously taught in the states and is an experienced elementary and early childhood teacher, where her specialty was working with and supporting students with special needs. At the time of the interview she has been teaching internationally for 20 years.

Molly identified herself as having a good level of involvement in committees and additional school activities. At the time of the interview she was involved with additional roles, beyond teaching, that required attention daily. She finds pleasure in her work and actively looks for ways to be involved with her organization. When asked how her personal values influence her engagement she responded saying, "I'm absolutely crazy about my job". I actually love working as a teacher. I'm not one of those people that go, Oh, I have to go to work. I'm like, Yeah, I get to go to work." Revealing more, Molly stated, "My husband would say I'm a workaholic." In her defense she explained, "I think you have to work hard for things that you believe in, and I think that the more you put into something, the more you get out of it, so the more rewarding it is." For Molly teaching is not just a job it is her profession and passion.

Molly explained that her engagement benefitted her growth as an individual, "I think the more engaged I am, the more I can grow both personally and professionally. I'm a completely different teacher here in Europe, after 20 years of working with multi-cultural children and faculty, than I ever was in America"

Participant 8. Rachel, a 41–50-year-old female, has over 16 years of elementary teaching experience. She has previously taught in the United States and has been teaching internationally for 11–15 years. At the time of the interview she had been working at her current school for seven. Her previous post was also in Europe.

Trusting, supporting, and leading are leadership attributes that Rachel identified as important for her to be able to build a professional working relationship. She explained, "when you're in a situation where leadership seems to be really kind of controlling you or not trusting you or giving in the way of you moving forward as a professionally, I think that can be very disengaging." In her current position she noted that she feels leadership wants to see her grow professionally and that leadership trusts her and "stays out of the way," meaning they trust her to do the teaching. She elaborated that her school selection is not so much based on location, rather what the school stands for and some sort of philosophical alignment with leadership.

Rachel self-reported an 'excellent' level of involvement in committees and additional school activities on the initial volunteer contact survey. She related her positive efforts to leadership recognizing her interests and strengths, "when they tap me for being involved in certain committees. I mean that is a message of respect." She has an additional role beyond her teaching that requires monthly attention and allows her to use her strengths at an organizational level.

A challenge Rachel faces as a teacher is being introverted. She indicated that unless leadership gets to know her they can make some assumptions:

I'm a more introverted person, reserved person. So, being an elementary school teacher, I

have to really turn it on, which I do. But I turn it on for my classroom, which means I am

not the one hanging out at the water cooler and joking during my break time and so forth.

And, so yeah, I think assumptions can be made based on those sorts of things . . . it

frustrates me

When asked what was one thing she would like leadership to stop doing that influences her

engagement or increases her disengagement, she responded, "Making decisions based on

personalities or personal connections." or building a character around someone based on

assumptions.

Participant 9. Diana, a 41–50-year-old female, has more than 16 years of elementary

teaching experience and has taught in the United States and Europe. At the time of the interview

she had been teaching for over 20 years at the same international school in Europe. She has seen

leadership turnover numerous times from the head of school, high school principal, and elementary

principal.

During the interview Diana tended to base her responses on the current leadership in her

school. She indicated that she felt her school was changing and increasingly being influenced from

a business and marketing perspective. When asked if she felt the values of leadership matched

those of the school her response indicated that she believed some misalignment has occurred

saying, "I feel that at our school this has gone down over the years. I think the community values

have definitely shifted although they are published as the same or even stronger." She further

explained that she felt an increased marketing emphasis was influencing school policy and

practice, and a lack of transparency from administration creates frustration. Her position is the lack

of transparency of motives for decisions keeps others from knowing or understanding why things

are being done, especially when many decisions are made at higher levels, and wishes that they would be honest with her, "Just let me know, I'll work on it. But you need to tell me why."

Diana self-reported as having an excellent level of involvement in committees and additional school activities on the volunteer survey. She has been very active in the school for many years and though she does not always agree with every individual decision, she supports the organization to the best of her ability. Her outlook is positive and she demonstrates a growth mind-set, "I know that I'm not going anywhere . . . this is going to be my school for the next 10 plus years. And so I feel that I need to make the best of this new situation."

Participant 10. Lloyd is in the 36–40-year-old age bracket. His areas of teaching expertise are sports and physical education both of which he has 11–15 years of experience teaching. Lloyd has experience teaching in a national school system and has worked at two at two European international schools. At the time of the interview, Lloyd was teaching elementary physical education.

Lloyd has additional roles beyond his teaching that require his attention from two to three times a week to monthly. He self-reported a 'good' level of involvement in committees and additional school activities. When asked how his personal values influence his engagement he replied, "I think, for me, hard work definitely is one. Setting a good example is another one. And accountability. I think those are the things that drive my engagement at work." Additionally, Lloyd indicated that he knows coworkers and others see him in action modeling positive behaviors and that also helps his engagement.

During the interview Lloyd said he viewed himself as engaged saying, "I just go and do whatever's asked, and then if there's anything else I can do, I do it." Engagement for Lloyd is internally driven and he indicated that leadership does not play a role in his engagement. Referring to his internal personal drive and motivation he stated, "I think that's where my drive and

everything come from, because I don't need anyone external to push me, or to help me out, or anything like that." The interview further revealed that Lloyd is compelled to be engaged with his work in order to support his students, "I think it's the kids, because I think that's the biggest thing. The kids, I think, that's why we're there, and we're working, I think. I enjoy working with the kids."

Participant 11. Mathilde is in the 41–50-year-old age bracket and has been teaching at her school between 11 and 15 years. She has 16+ years of teaching experience, previously taught in a national school system, and teaches language at an international school in Europe. At the time of the interview Mathilde was not participating in any additional roles beyond her teaching.

Mathilde rated herself as having a good level of involvement in committees and additional activities. She views herself as someone who like to be helpful and give support to the best of her ability and within her limits. During the interview she expressed her thoughts about being involved and always being ready to be helpful and supportive regardless of the recipient saying that it is in her nature to be helpful. Despite her eagerness to help others when possible and do more than what is required, Mathilde revealed that she has a limit when it comes to compromising her family time.

Being part of something bigger than herself provides Mathilde with a sense of belonging, value and respect. An intrinsic benefit for her is to feel valued as a part of her organization; someone who is visible, helpful, and reliable. Examples she provided were adding support to the organization by attending music performances, taking part in cultural events, and taking on duties that others do not want. In recognizing her role and demonstrating organizational commitment she added, "Because someone has to do it. And I think that's what the leadership likes. But then I feel in return . . . I get to be treated well, I get to be respected."

Research Methodology and Data Analysis

Following an IPA process (Smith et al., 2009), an initial reading of the transcripts was paired with listening to the voice recording and making pre-coding marks, including underlining and highlighting, as suggested by Saldaña (2016). Manual pre-coding marks in the initial reading were made when the researcher believed or considered the content to be interesting or important, and provided areas to focus on in further reading and review of the transcripts. Whereas initial coding began with simple codes of one or two words, coding in subsequent readings and review of data developed into longer and more detailed codes. This process evolved naturally as the researcher attempted to achieve greater understanding and clarity from the participant data, as Table 2 provides examples of initial simple codes and subsequent detailed codes.

Table 2

Examples of Simple and Detailed Codes

Simple codes	Detailed codes
Communication	Using email to escape dialogue and communication in person
Relationship building	Knowing someone as a person not employee
Transparency	Transparent communication good or bad
Trust	Trust in expertise
Support	Safe to ask for help, supplies, guidance
Respect	Recognize character or disposition like introvert
Presence	Principal MIA

Multiple sessions of data and code reviewing allowed this researcher to develop code tables. Codes from transcripts were compiled based on similarity of meaning, words, and phrases. After the codes were sorted into the code tables they were reviewed again for consideration of possible or potential themes. A preliminary listing of themes from the coded data resulted in ten emergent themes. Table 3 provides a list of the preliminary emergent themes and examples of related codes.

Table 3

Preliminary Emergent Themes from Data and Related Code Examples

Preliminary emergent themes	Code examples
Communication	Lack of feedback/communication
	Transparency in communication – providing reasons, org. knowledge sharing,
	Dialogue – two-way discussion
	Lack of feedback to leaders – opportunities to provide feedback to leadership
Professional Interactions with Leadership	Lack of presence
	Lack of formal observations
	Lack of involvement/knowing what is happening in classes
Relationship and Community Building	Building rapport – Leader/teacher
	Valued in organizational community
Professional Consideration	Trust or lack of trust in ability
	Respect – Recognizing professional and personal status
	Respect for job/role demands
	Value
Job Supports	Autonomy
	Job demands – time, work load, schedule, parents, planning time
	Professional development – PD, coaching, professional discussions
	Workplace environment
Fair Treatment	Perceptions of favorites - nepotism
	Respect for all subjects and teacher groups
	Professional interactions – assumption of character, aggressive behaviors,
	Balanced scheduling
Leader Agency	Mind-set
	Power structure
	Personal/hidden agendas
	Competency
	Follow up
Business vs School	Business/ marketing – market share
	Admissions driven
	Selling a program
Personal Motivation	Personal values drive engagement
	Personal drive to do well
	Love of teaching
	Work ethic
	Modeling
Right Job	Job preference – listened to by leadership, doing the job you want
	Recognizing/knowing strengths – reading people
	Job fit
	Feeling boxed in

Continued review of coded transcripts and code lists for each participant resulted some of the preliminary themes or parts of preliminary themes to be absorbed into others, as in the case of *Leader Agency* and *Fair Treatment*. In the case of *Leader Agency*, the researcher found that through continued review and consideration of the codes, transcripts, and themes, the associated codes could be associated with other themes; power structure and follow up aligned with the superordinate theme *Communication*, as did personal and hidden agendas. Subsequently they aligned with the subordinate themes 2.1, feedback and dialogue and 2.2, knowledge sharing and transparency. Mind-set and all of the preliminary theme *Fair Treatment* could be aligned with the superordinate theme *Professional Consideration*. Additionally, after going back to the transcripts to review specific contexts, the data and codes did not support the development of a theme, as in the case of *Business vs School.* Individual participant code tables and emergent themes were in a continuous cycle of review and revision. The process of reviewing, combining, and compressing resulted in a decrease from ten preliminary themes to a final list of six superordinate themes.

The final analysis includes six superordinate themes. Each of the superordinate themes has two subordinate themes, with the exception of one, *Personal Values*. Superordinate and subordinate themes are presented in Table 4 and are followed by an elaboration of each of the themes.

Table 4

Themes With Descriptions and Sample Quotes

Themes *Superordinate themes in bold*	Description	Sample quote
1. Engagement Through Personal Values	Personal values drive teaching engagement and motivation	"My values influence me a lot. . . . And I really like teaching, I find it very creative. And so I put a lot of effort into it. And even when I don't get a lot of extrinsic recognition for it, I get a lot of intrinsic good feeling. And so I continue on." (Mark)

Table 4 (continued)

Themes With Descriptions and Sample Quotes

Themes *Superordinate themes in bold*	Description	Sample quote
2. Engagement Through Communication		
2.1 Feedback and dialogue	Two-way communication between leadership and teacher	"I think engagement is dialogue, and talking about things, sharing ideas." (Karen)
2.2 Knowledge sharing and transparency	Transparency in communication, providing reasons for decisions made, hidden or personal agendas	"I might become very disengaged if I just get told no, and no have no reason why or how that decision is made or why that position is the way it is and so on." (Matthew)
3. Engagement Through Leadership Presence		
3.1 Leaders being visible	Leaders being visible and physically present around the school and in classrooms	"There's little visits in my classroom. Those are the things I like the most." (Diana)
3.2 Formal observations	Holding formal observations and providing feedback to support teacher development	"upper level administration comes in to formally do an observation two to three times that year. And then, you meet with them to talk about your professional goals" (Amanda)
4. Engagement Through Relationship and Community Building		
4.1 Building rapport	Leaders building rapport with teachers, trusting relationships	"I think that's the sort of thing that is healthy because it breaks down walls to some degree." (Mark)
4.2 Organizational community building	Building a sense of organizational belonging and value in the community	"I don't feel like a big part of the organization." (Karen)

Table 4 (continued)

Themes With Descriptions and Sample Quotes

Themes *Superordinate themes in bold*	Description	Sample quote
5. Engagement Through Tools and Processes	Tools and processes for success	
5.1 Providing supports to meet job demands	Providing supports for demands of teaching role, autonomy in the classroom, Job preference, listened to by leadership, doing the job you want, job fit	"I do feel quite supported, and if anything I need, if there is anything I need, I can ask for it. And I feel like there would be an effort made." (Bethany)
5.2 Professional development	Supporting teachers with PD, coaching, opportunities for professional growth	"The other thing that I think leadership has an influence on that has connected with my engagement or not is professional development." (Rachel)
6. Engagement Through Professional Consideration		
6.1 Perception of favorites	Leadership playing favorites within their staff	"Why do you have favorites? If you look at . . . There's an elementary page of our committees, it's embarrassing. There are two names that are every committee down the line." (Diana)
6.2 Professional and respectful interactions	Assumption of character, leader behaviors, respect for all subjects and teacher groups, recognizing personal and professional status	"I would really like to see much more objective evaluation. So I think that would be respectful, than dealing with someone based on a stereotype that an administrator has of that person." (Karen)

Summary of Research Findings

This study revealed themes relevant to how international school teachers experienced work

engagement. Eleven international school teachers participated in the interview process for this

study. Analysis of the data revealed six superordinate themes: engagement through personal

values; engagement through communication; engagement through leadership presence;

engagement through relationship and community building; engagement through tools and processes; engagement through professional consideration.

Personal values of participants were significant in work engagement in the classroom. Participants indicated their drive and motivation to engage in the classroom was more internally generated than influenced by external factors, for some this included leadership. Personal intrinsic rewards were noted by some participants from their teaching, while others identified gains for students and themselves as positive factors in their engagement.

Participants indicated that communication with leaders has and influence on their engagement. Feedback and dialogue, and knowledge sharing were highlighted by the data. Feedback, two-way communications, and dialogue between leaders and teachers as influential on teacher's engagement. Knowledge sharing by leadership was influential, to some degree on engagement. Knowledge sharing was identified by participants in two main behaviors of leaders: transparency in communication, and hidden or personal agendas. Transparency in communications tended to be connected to understanding processes or reasoning connected to decisions by leadership.

Leadership presence influences engagement. Leaders being visible and present around the school and in classrooms was influential in engagement. Their presence and visibility can send a powerful message to teachers that leadership is aware of the teaching and learning that is taking place, the value of the teacher, and a sense of recognition as an important part of something bigger. Some participants identified the process of formal observations as a means to improve and affirm their engagement through growth of their craft. Others indicated it was a pathway for affirming their teaching and getting recognition; a meter to the implementation of their teaching. A collective response from the data indicated a lack of or inadequate formal observations by leadership.

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Relationship and community building enhances teachers' work engagement. At the individual level, rapport building lead to increased interactions and trusting relationships for some participants. For others, the lack of genuine interest or effort created negative responses. A small group of participants preferred a functional, amicable, working relationship over friendships with leaders. At the organizational level, engagement was influenced through leaders' efforts in building a sense of organizational belonging and value in the community with teachers. Although participants indicated engagement in their teaching role tended to be driven more by their personal values than leadership, organizational engagement was likely to be influenced more by leadership.

Tools and processes for teacher success support work engagement. Supports provided by leadership balance the demands in the role of teaching, allowing teachers to engage in their role in the classroom. Autonomy, job/work load, planning and working time, and individual support are factors that influence teacher engagement. Data from participant interviews indicated professional development, coaching, professional discussions, and other opportunities for professional growth supported or increased work engagement.

Experiences in a professional setting influenced participants work engagement both positively and negatively. Interactions with staff should be fair, balanced, and professional. The data indicated this is not always the case for some participants. In some cases, it was noted that leadership plays favorites within their staff. Professional and respectful interactions are expected by participants from their leadership. Professional recognition and interactions with leaders includes: respect for all subjects and teacher groups, professional interactions, professional consideration, and recognizing personal and professional status.

Presentation of the Data and Results

Superordinate theme 1: Engagement through personal values. The first theme that emerged from the data was teachers' personal values as a driver of engagement in their work. All

participants indicated an alignment of their personal values with their engagement, drive, and motivation in teaching. In several cases, participants described an intrinsic reward they feel in being able to put their values in to action through their work. Others indicated engagement as a means to achieve results in their teaching. Nearly half of participants indicated engagement is personally driven and indicated leadership has minimal influence their teaching engagement.

Several participants framed their teaching engagement in the intrinsic rewards and self-satisfaction derived from putting personal values into action in their work. Mark connected his strong work ethic and fondness of teaching "I really like teaching, I find it very creative. And so I put a lot of effort into it. And even when I don't get a lot of extrinsic recognition for it, I get a lot of intrinsic good feeling." Molly revealed her feelings when she expressed her exuberance for her work as she shared that she is crazy about her job, she loves working as a teacher, and in a light-hearted way believes her husband thinks she is a workaholic. She added, "I think you have to work hard for things that you believe in, and I think that the more you put into something, the more you get out of it, so the more rewarding it is." Caterina, though not specifically stated, indicated a she receives intrinsic rewards from her work saying. "I like my job and I do the best I can." Lloyd's values are reflected in his engagement providing a sense of intrinsic reward through modeling good behaviors. He cited his influencing values, "I think, for me, hard work definitely is one. Setting a good example is another one. And accountability. I think those are the things that drive my engagement at work." For Karen, her intrinsic returns are part of the bigger picture of her role as a teacher and the recognition of what teaching is and its importance, "I think the engagement that I feel with my job is not because of the organization, it's because of the work. It's because of what teaching is. And it's for the students . . . I think teaching is an important job."

Some participants framed their sense of engagement and personal values as achieving results. Results can be realized for students, for the individual teacher, or a combination of the

two. For Matthew, teaching others is a means to making a difference in the lives of others. In reference to teaching and his values, he stated, "I understand what I do value, and I do feel that if you are going to try and make an impact on the world, then this is one of the best ways." Lloyd mirrored the concept of engagement for student outcomes saying, "I think it's the kids, because I think that's the biggest thing. The kids, I think, that's why we're there, and we're working, I think. I enjoy working with the kids." Rachel revealed her internal drive to be engaged is based mostly on "what's happening in the classroom with my students." Diana, too, cited the connection between values, engagement, and student results, yet identified results needed to be in her favor as well, "So in terms of engagement within the classroom, it's only turned it up. It's only made it stronger in that I feel even more devoted to finding ways that work for me and for the children.

Others connected their personal values to results at a professional level that allow them to further their ability to be engaged in their work at optimal capacity. Bethany explained:

I like to do things well. I like to be proud of what I do, so I try not to commit to things that I know that I can't hold up my end. But with what I do know I'm responsible for, I try to do it to the best of my ability, all things considered.

Amanda noted that being engaged helps her personally by having a voice in working towards getting results. "I think a large reason why I try to stay involved so much is because of my belief that there needs to be more teacher [agency], and we need to hear the voice of teachers." Molly, in kind, explained how her values and engagement connect to results. "I also look at it as a way of my own growth. I think the more engaged I am, the more I can grow both personally and professionally."

There were participants who mentioned that they did not feel leadership was influential in their teaching engagement. Participants' personal values in their profession overshadowed any

influence they considered coming from leadership in supporting engagement in their teaching. Mathilde worked on formulating her thoughts about the leadership influence on engagement, "I think the engagement is something . . . I feel that engagement should be . . . driven . . . always by your love for teaching and your students, you should never let leadership ruin what you had there." When asked if engagement is more so generated personally than from leadership input or influences, Mark indicated with a visible affirmative head-nodding and shared that what he does in his teaching is done for the benefit of his students. Rachel echoed Mark's response verbally, "the biggest influencer on my engagement, is not what leadership does."

Karen's and Caterina's responses to leadership influence on their teaching focused on their classroom. Caterina negated leaders' negative effects on her teaching saying, "As a teacher, again, once you close the door, you just . . . I don't think it's making me a teacher that is less engaged with the students because of what they do." Karen's comment minimized leadership influence, "I do believe it's more about my classroom, the teaching, the material, the students, and that engagement is driven much more internally than from an extrinsic source."

Superordinate theme 2: Engagement through communication. All participants indicated that communication with leaders could be influential on engagement. Two subordinate themes evolved through the analysis of the interview data; feedback and dialogue between leaders and teachers, and knowledge sharing by leadership.

Subordinate theme 2.1: Feedback and dialogue. Participants commented on the influence of feedback, two-way communications, and dialogue between leaders and teachers as influential on teacher's engagement. Karen indicated that she felt communication opened pathways for connecting and engaging, "I think engagement is dialogue, and talking about things, sharing ideas." In reference to communicating with her principal she stated, "I would love to have more interaction, more . . . more dialogue." For Bethany, communication with her leaders encourages

her to be more engaged, "to just communicate with them makes me feel like I want to be more engaged, and I want to do better" Referring to a discussion with members of the leadership team, Diana shared how professional dialogue influences her engagement:

> I feel very engaged when I am asked to speak about what I feel that I know about, what I'm so called expert about. When we talk about young children and their learning and their development. I feel very disengaged when then those notions are disregarded.

Matthew explained how feedback and dialogue with leadership created a sense recognition for his efforts and work, "I think that's quite important, is that feedback that you get. It's just like the kids. If you want to catch them doing something good and then praise them and that's it, you feel good about yourself. I think that has quite a bit of an effect on my engagements." He further elaborated on an instance of unexpected authentic praise and its effect within a meeting scenario:

> There were other members of staff there and he was just leaning back and he was chatting, he's like, "You know [Matthew], I really love your displays. I just really do." And he said that to me every [time] we've had a meeting in there. And it's just something that, I feel quite happy about. I mean, he had no idea really that that's having an effect on me. . . I don't think he's thinking about it in any other terms that genuinely he really likes the display. . . I just put them up like that's it. And I just feel like, "Yeah, okay, I'm going to try and carry on doing that." And I look around and I think, "Yeah, I do enjoy working in this room," because it's more interesting but it's nice that somebody noticed. It's the little things.

Rachel noted the encouraging effect of leaders passing on positive comments and compliments. In reference to an evening event at her school she cited, "my Head of School saying something about like, 'So many of your parents walking by tonight were so impressed.' That feels good. That feels nice."

Personalized communications from leaders can provide lasting impressions on teachers. Some participants addressed feelings of engagement from feedback after an interaction with a leader. Molly noted the positive effect of personalized feedback she feels in her engagement when the principal or school director leaves a personal note or message after a drop-in classroom visit. Bethany, too, talked about the effect of after-the-fact feedback:

> if it's just to drop in with no follow up, I have no sense of what it is that they were looking for, what it is that they saw, what it is that they liked or didn't like. So whenever they communicate soon after, I feel like that's always kind of motivating, kind of like what we expect with our kids, to try to give immediate feedback. That's really nice.

Amanda recalled that she has received notes form her leadership at varying times of the year that are not necessarily formal, but do provide a positive result. One example she shared was that occasionally brief notes were left in her teacher mailbox saying "Hey, you're doing a great job." A second example was that her principal took the time to write her a personal note at the end of the school year. She commented, "It was really great for me because it's been a very challenging year." Rachel, in kind, recognized the positive outcome when leaders take the time to personally connect with teachers:

> I think that's [what] mean the most personally, is when you get a real personal communication from someone in leadership. Our leadership is really good at kind of those big blast emails like, "Thank you, teachers for all your time and effort you did for conferences." And it's nice, but it's not as engaging as an actual pat on the back or an actual personal note. . . I can remember a moment this year where it wasn't a scheduled observation or anything but my head of school . . . just dropped in, I was in the middle of a lesson, and let me continue doing my lesson and then later that day sent an email

like, it was so nice. It's always nice to come in, and it really seemed like the kids liked the idea of how you were talking about this in that way. Those are meaningful.

Some participants identified feedback and dialogue as a pathway for growth and look forward to the opportunities to partake in either, or both. Amanda noted feedback was a good way for her to constructively get "pointers or tips" on areas to develop as well as a way to understand what she was doing well, "I needed to know that at least there was something I was doing right." Diana approached feedback as more one direction and expressed her thoughts about the benefit of dialogue between teacher and leader, "There's a potential for a very high engagement and a very interesting reflection and growth and back and forth sharing." Mathilde, despite being a veteran teacher, looks to leadership to provide communication that will help her grow professionally. She explained her point, "I want a professional opinion . . . I want to grow. I want to feel that my leader is better than me and I can learn from my leader [but] if I don't have this feedback"

While participants tended to note the positive aspects of feedback and dialogue, some also considered the less positive aspects. Mathilde looks forward to feedback and input from her leaders, yet when it comes to an observation she wants the communication to be both written and verbal. She shared that she saves all of her observation feedback documents which she reviews to look for pathways to develop in the future. Further, she explained that in the past year her formal observations were not managed as they have been and it is important to her that leadership follow a process. Her concern falls to the lack of a written record for her formal observations which she expressed thusly:

 [I] need the written, nobody cares for words. You need to write stuff up . . . Like, I walk into your classroom and it was a good, you did a good job. It's just something that you write up. Otherwise, I feel [the] write up is like lost in thin air.

Mark expressed that feedback is important to him and that he would like to get some, yet at the time of the interview, he had not yet had any. He commented, "we don't have to communicate too often . . . but the communication coming from administration towards me, I feel like there's just very little and there should be more." Lloyd held that feedback is nice to get and stressed the importance of how it is delivered, in a constructive and useful manner, "I guess it's always nice if you get feedback, and if it's constructive, I think that's the most important thing" Caterina spoke in regard to engagement of leaders in providing feedback:

> if they're not engaged and they don't give you meaningful feedback, then you don't feel
> like improving or growing. It actually would be helpful to have constructive feedback, but I
> don't feel feedback based on 10 minutes of observation are worth my time.

Some participants noted the importance of the how communication interactions are transacted as having an influence on them. Examples from participants include: dealing with power structures, email versus face-to-face communication, and location. Karen expressed the need for open dialogue with her principal. She elaborated on her disengagement if her leader is not open to her:

> So that makes me withdraw, and not say my ideas, or not try to, you know, when . . . and
> this might be coming up in a later question. But when there is something that you're
> working out, and you want to brainstorm lots of different ideas, anything that's contrary to
> the first idea that was put out there by the administrator, is seen as negative, and very
> bristly. Then . . . instead of just being a dialogue, or a brainstorming session, it becomes
> more of an argument. Like, "Oh, but you're not agreeing with me." And it's like, "Well,
> I'm just saying this is another way to think about it."

She further noted that in her interactions with her principal, via email, she takes extra care to approach topics the right way, "rereading and rewording emails" and stated, "So I think in that

case, in general, when I'm dealing with the principal, and for sure it's a very cautious engagement." For Molly, email communication was a way for her principal to limit interactions, "our principal . . . doesn't like confrontation, so she'll resort to things like email communication instead of face-to-face, to let people know about difficult decisions" She finds that "off-putting" and feels the best way leaders can communicate is "face-to-face, when you're talking about difficult things." Amanda identified body language, word choice, and setting as potential influencers on her engagement. She clarified her thoughts saying:

> I think sometimes it's also just the way that somebody communicates. If it's in a way that I feel like that they have a sense of superiority, or something like that. I couldn't really pinpoint how that comes across, but maybe the words they choose, or yeah, maybe their body language. Or it could even be the setting that you meet somebody in. If they bring you into a setting where it's their territory, then you feel like they're in charge.

Subordinate theme 2.2: Knowledge sharing and transparency. Many participants indicated knowledge sharing by leadership as influential, to some degree, on their engagement. Knowledge sharing was identified by participants in two main behaviours of leaders: transparency in communication, and hidden or personal agendas.

When identifying transparency in communications as having some influence on their organizational engagement, participants tended to speak toward understanding processes or reasoning connected to decisions by leadership. Participants did not suggest they felt the lack of knowledge sharing was malicious in nature, rather leaders just did not share all that they knew at a given time in relation to a specific issue, topic, or situation. Diana explained her position on transparency from leadership as key to her trust. When reflecting on the push from leadership to make modifications on curriculum and her role in the organization she stated "Transparency for me, I think is in flashing neon lights above all of this . . . why couldn't you just tell me from the

start . . . just be honest with me." Some participants expressed a decrease in engagement when reasons do not accompany decisions. Amanda shared she felt more engaged when leaders share information and knowledge, and appreciates "when they keep us in the loop, and keep us informed about what's going on." Matthew said that he likes to have greater clarity behind decision making processes, "I might become very disengaged if I just get told no, and no have no reason why or how that decision is made or why that position is the way it is" Mark, too, identified a situation where his leadership was short of providing reasoning, "the answer was just no . . . the answer was very disappointing. It wasn't open. It was a door closing answer."

Transparency also supports sense making and understanding that helps teachers and leaders to be aligned in thinking. Bethany explained her experience saying, "it's harder to be engaged if you don't see a way in which something will benefit you or your students" Karen described the process of reaching out to her principal for an understanding of how a decision for her grade level would be implemented when no explanation or process was given to her. She noted that she, and her colleagues, drafted an email with their questions which resulted in a clarifying email response, yet she confided "But I'm not sure, if [we] hadn't written that email, then we might not have gotten it." Molly noted she had experienced multiple situations in her organizations that left her wondering about how and why decisions were made. She shared, "[there are] decisions that have been made by our administration where I wonder, "What was the process that you went through to make this decision?" One incident shared, by Lloyd, described of the lack of knowledge sharing and transparency of a date change to a school event that created stress for him and negatively influenced the outcome of the event as a charitable fundraiser. For Lloyd, the date change from spring to early in September, the beginning of the school year, influenced how he felt about the activity and the end result of supporting a charity due to the limited time to make families aware of the activity.

Hidden or personal agendas were also identified as influences on engagement by teachers. Molly shared, "administrators that have their own agenda are sometimes disengaging. They come on board and they don't seek to understand the environment that they're working in before they start to make changes." Diana noted one thing she would like her leaders to stop doing is having hidden agendas, "[you] bring me in for meetings but you already have an agenda that you want to get to. Just tell me . . . Lay it out on the table." Mark framed the personal or hidden agenda of leaders as a wedge that increases the division between leaders and teachers, suggesting leadership tends to listen when it is good for them or the school, yet "[w]hen it comes to what's best for the teacher, I feel like there is less" Rachel noted that she felt decisions by leaders in her organization were based more on personal reasons, "decisions are made not so much based on skill or knowledge or qualifications . . . but for varying reasons"

Amanda explained that she found it "demotivating" when leaders have an unshared agenda yet try to give the impression of inclusion in decision making:

> if I get the impression that . . . and this has happened sometimes, when we're told that they want to hear our opinion on something, but they already actually have an idea for how they want things to come out, to end up. Sometimes I've gotten that impression, being that they actually already have a solution, but then they want to give people the impression that . . . and this is more higher-up . . . that they listen to our opinions, but actually a decision has already been made. So, that can be frustrating.

Molly nearly echoed Amanda's point about her frustration of predetermined decisions and solutions made by leadership and would like a direct and honest approach:

> So, if they were going to be making a decision that's truly their decision . . . just make it and tell us. Don't put us through that process of filling out surveys, asking for feedback, and then not using it.

Superordinate theme 3: Engagement through leadership presence. All participants indicated that some form of leadership presence was influential in their engagement. Some participants emphasized leaders being visible and present around the school and in classrooms was influential in engagement. Others identified the process of formal observations as a means to improve and affirm their engagement through growth of their craft.

Subordinate theme 3.1: Leaders being visible. Leaders being visible and physically present around the school and in classrooms has a positive influence on teacher engagement. Their presence and visibility can send a powerful message to teachers that leadership is aware of the teaching and learning that is taking place, the value of the teacher, and a sense of recognition as an important part of something bigger. Amanda noted the presence of leadership leading to a greater feeling of engagement for her saying, "just being present . . . when I feel their presence and I see them and I talk to them a lot, then I feel more engaged." When her leaders drop in for little visits Diana shared that it gives her a good sensation, "Those are the things I like most." The benefit of leadership presence is a positive feeling that leads to increased engagement.

Some participants talked to the lack of leadership presence and what it meant for them. Karen, who self-identified as engaged, noted how the lack of leadership presence influenced her thinking. In reference to leaders' lack of presence she shared, "Sometimes it makes me think like, 'Oh, they don't even know what's going on.' . . . a previous administrator walked around the facility every single day, and knew what was happening. I think that's also an important part of an administrator's job." Leadership presence conveys interest in her and her teaching which supports her engagement. When addressing leader presence, Karen noted that in the past year there was little leadership presence, saying, "this year, really little, very little presence." Further, she explained, "there's not a lot of coming and talking to people" and "There's not a lot of walking around."

Considering the presence of her principal, Caterina elaborated, "certainly distance. You know, [he will] be behind a desk, Certainly not a friendly body language." Bethany, too, commented on the lack of leadership presence in or around classrooms saying, "Once we're in the classrooms, I feel like they aren't in this area too often." Rachel expressed disappointment in her leaderships' lack of follow through on being present for monthly visits saying leadership presence is "absolutely sparse." Caterina said she felt that her principal, due to lack of presence, did not know what was happening in her class, "he doesn't know what I'm doing, he doesn't know what is going on in the class." She expressed, "You don't feel engagement" when leaders pop-in for a short visit, instead she considered it as "just a box they have to check." Diana elaborated on her disappointment in her leaders' presence sharing:

> The thing I want the most and the thing I said for a whole year before we actually on paper began changing the program was, come see it. Come sit with me. Come hang out with the kids. Come see how that works. We do do that. Please come see it. There wasn't a lot of that though. So my biggest professional disappointment in all of this, my true pain, came from knowing that they were throwing so much out the window.

Lloyd noted the lack of leadership presence in the area of the school in which he works saying, "we don't see the leadership team too often . . . they don't come and check in on us a lot" and related that he felt that was both a good thing and a bad thing. Good because it means all is going well, and bad because no one is proposing ways to improve lessons and teaching. Ultimately, Lloyd did say, "It'd be nice to, I think, see . . . for them to have a little more presence." In kind, Mathilde, too, noted the feeling of engagement when leaders have come to her class in the past, yet did not know why they did not come in the past school year, "I don't know. I think they could, they just didn't. Maybe they were too busy, I don't know."

Subordinate theme 3.2: Formal observations. Although nearly every participant addressed the theme of formal observations in connection with leadership presence, the collective responses indicated a lack of or inadequate formal observations by leadership. Many identified formal observations as a means to improve and develop professionally. Others indicated it was a pathway for affirming their teaching and getting recognition; a meter to the implementation of their teaching.

Bethany shared that informal or formal observations increased her "want to be more engaged," yet she expressed frustration with short formal observations, "They can't possibly know . . .they're here for five minutes." Her point was that leaders don't see a full lesson or know what her intentions are in her teaching. Similarly, Caterina expressed similar concerns regarding five minute observations. She expressed her frustration:

> Yeah, like I said, just come and observe me. Give me proper . . . you can't even give me 60 minutes in a year? I know it's a lot of us, but it's a lot of them, right? I'm not saying the principal has to come. My department chair, the coordinator, whoever has that responsibility . . . a proper, formal evaluation. Someone who stays there from the beginning to the end, maybe talk to you before or look at your lesson plan so you know where you're going and what you're trying to achieve. Then at the end of a 60-minute lesson, it would be nice to have an evaluation.

Mark communicated he felt there should be some observation and feedback to him on his teaching, either good or bad. While not specifically expressing an influence on his engagement negatively, he did notice the lack of leadership presence. He noted, "I think it would be nice to get observed on occasion. Get some feedback, whether it's positive, negative or constructive, preferably. That could be nice. That doesn't exist."

Lloyd framed his lack of leadership observations in the capability and expertise of the leaders who are conducting the observations. He explained his point, "Not everyone's going to have the expertise . . . I don't think any of the administration has the experience in that subject." He noted he was starting his seventh year at the school and had only been observed once in his first six years. During the interview he mentioned he felt the lack of observation indicated he was doing a good job, yet he also recognized the lack of observation was also a lack of feedback on how to improve and develop is teaching and the learning of the students. Matthew, too, noted a duality in the lack of observations. In one sense he feels trusted, yet recognizes a "downside" in that he would like to have assurance in his teaching by having "that second pair of eyes" to ensure his teaching is able to meet "an external yardstick" or expectation. Mathilde elaborated that the lack of a formal observation left her not knowing what to think, "I wasn't evaluated. I wasn't given any feedback. So in a way, I don't know if I should feel as we trust you, we know you're doing a good job or we don't care." Diana explained in her interview that when her leaders sent "a three-line survey at the end of the year" in place of being physically present to talk to her, she felt it conveyed a message that leadership was just trying to tick boxes.

Molly and Amanda noted positive aspects of the observation processes in their school. Amanda indicated her principal promoted positive engagement for her by conducting frequent observations and classroom visits with video and positive voiceover commentary throughout the video. For Molly, observation and evaluation provide a path for engagement through developing professionally. She explained that leadership formally observes her two to three times in a year and then meet with her to discuss her professional goals.

Superordinate theme 4: Engagement through relationship and community building. The fourth superordinate theme focuses on participant's experiences of relationship and community building. The theme is then supported by two subordinate themes; relationships with

leaders, and a sense of organizational belonging. Data from the participant interviews revealed triggers that lead to a recognition of engagement or disengagement by teachers at the individual and organizational levels.

Subordinate theme 4.1: Building rapport. All participants, in some fashion, addressed leaders building rapport with teachers and the outcomes of those efforts, or the lack of efforts. Many indicated rapport building lead to increased interactions and trusting relationships. Others insinuated the lack of genuine interest or effort created negative responses. Still, others inferred a functional working relationship is sufficient and friendships with leaders is not needed.

For Matthew, rapport building by his leaders helps him to "feel that no one's taking advantage of" him. His thought was that leaders should create an environment where teachers trust leaders because leaders trust teachers. Matthew elaborated on the effect when his leader builds rapport with him saying:

> I think there is value in engaging with somebody on a human level, not just on a
>
> professional level. So, understanding that they are a human being and caring about them as
>
> a human being, as opposed to just thinking about them in terms of that role as teacher. And
>
> I think that's something which I do find valuable, because then it feels like an authentic
>
> interaction. I feel like I'm talking to a friend of mine, as opposed to talking to my boss.

Mark expressed that he felt rapport building by leaders humanizes teachers in the eyes of leadership. He stated, "I think that the more that administrators maybe conversed a bit, it can harder for them to just treat the person who's teaching in their classroom as just a number." He further explained:

> I think that's the sort of thing that is healthy because it breaks down walls to some degree.
>
> Of course, administration does have to maintain some level of detachment, I imagine in any
>
> organization. But, conversations even if it's something so simple about travels or

mountains or whatever, can just build a little bit of a foundation of familiarity and I think in

that when you have deeper connections, it's harder to not trust one another. And I'm not

saying that these are deep connections, but there's some, even if it's superficial, at least it's

something.

One example Mark provided of superficial conversation that does have some effort behind it, is

when his newly appointed vice principal comes around in the morning and says hello. He

referred to this as "a vacuous hello" but that he did realize the intent behind it in building

rapport. Rachel shared, "leadership is visible and making the rounds, and not making the

rounds to evaluate, but just making the rounds to say, "Hello" or, "How's it going?" And what

not, that certainly helps." Molly, too, noted that her principal makes an effort to interact with

all staff, "She makes rounds. Probably makes rounds as most people would like her to . . . she

does definitely visit all the classrooms." She further related that she has developed a personal

relationship with her principal and that they occasionally meet socially outside of school hours,

something she did not experience in her teaching in American public schools. Amanda's

experience with her leaders and rapport building has resulted in a "positive relationship" in

which she expressed that her leaders were "approachable" allowing for friendly casual

interactions. Connecting her engagement to rapport building, Rachel explained, "I think when

there's more of a personal relationship . . . I think it's easier to kind of put ideas out there and

work together in a different way than when it's just an organizational relationship." Bethany

held that simple behaviors by her leader, such as chatting with her principal at lunch, make her

feel good. Agreeing that the chats are not deep conversations, she stated, "And even though

it's, there's no deep conversations happening, it's just nice to establish some kind of

friendliness and cordiality, I guess."

Relationship building with teachers needs to be genuine and meaningful. Diana shared that she is friendly with her principal. They often arrive at the same time in the morning and greet each other in the parking lot and in the hall ways at school and stated, "I think she knows she can count on me. She's called me before to do quick things and I've always jumped in. No problem." Though there is a working rapport between them, Diana addressed some issues that create a sense of disengagement. She explained that in some interactions with her principal, micro-inequities give her a sense of being patronized. She provided an example she felt was meant to build her up as the one teacher who could accomplish a task. When her principal tells her, "You always have these magical ways." she said she felt it was "condescending because not everything's magical." Further, she added, that the nonverbal cues that are involved in an interaction can cause her to feel disengaged, "when you say that with a fake smile . . . that's a disengagement piece." Caterina indicated a lack of relationship building from leaders created a lack of caring and diminished leader–member interactions. She noted that she would like a greater level of genuine interest from her leadership team:

> So, be more a part, be more interested . . . to honestly just come see me, talk to me, have
> a meeting with me about what I'm doing. You know, offer support or help, or just show
> interest. Just show plain interest and a positive word here and there.

For Caterina, simple, more casual, interactions would support relationships with her leaders such as coming to morning coffee on Fridays, or "bedside manners" questions asking: How things are going? Do you need anything? How can we make your job better? and How is life? Karen believed her leader was not interested in building a relationship with her that included aspects beyond her role at work which, for Karen, are important as they are part of who she is. One example she shared of her principal limiting knowing her personally detailed a conversation where she mentioned accompanying her husband on a visit to the doctor. Her

principal responded by saying she did not want to know anything about it. Karen said the message it sent was, "Okay, this person doesn't want to know anything about me personally."

Lloyd and Mathilde implied a preference for a friendly working relationship over a friendship relationship with their leaders. Lloyd stated, "if I see them in the cafeteria or somewhere else, in a common area, and then there's a check- in, say how's it going, and that's about it." When asked about his relationship with his leaders, he expressed his thoughts saying, "I would say, I would lean more towards that they're my bosses, and that's as far as it goes." Mathilde noted a cultural aspect to the working relationship and rapport building. When asked if she has a friendship with her leaders she responded, "No. I don't. That's very national culture, not to really go beyond the school environment, never like be friends on social media, no. It's a no for me." For her, leaders should promote strong working relationships over friendships, "I'd prefer that type of relation where no joke, come in, get this done. Cause that creates more engagement for me than being all friends."

Subordinate theme 4.2: Organizational community building. Participants' interview responses indicated organizational engagement was influenced through leaders' efforts in building a sense of organizational belonging and value in the community with teachers. Although participants indicated engagement in their teaching role tended to be driven more by their personal values than leadership, organizational engagement was likely to be influenced more by leadership.

Some participants indicated leaders can create distance or separation from the organization. Karen, despite her additional role in the school and being on some committees shared, "I don't feel like a big part of the organization." She framed her recent experiences of being on a committee:

Well, involvement in a committee is something that makes me feel engaged. But then, sometimes I don't feel that the committees are really working committees. They're more

like a reporting committee. So you're on a committee, but you go to a meeting, and all it is, is them telling you what they did.

Here she explains her impression is that leadership organizes committees as a way to promote organizational engagement yet there is not really anything to engage with as the work has been done by leadership and handed to the committee in the end. She noted that she is more engaged when she is involved in every step of the process and has knowledge and a better understanding of the purpose of the committee. Rachel shared a similar experience of committee work that undermined organizational belonging, "It felt like more for the appearance of like, there was a group or a committee but it was really the one person making the decision." Mark, too, despite his additional role of organizing activities, noted that he did not have a strong connection to his school. Speaking of his school's leadership, or administration, he stated, "I don't feel that engagement at all, not from the school, no. . . . But no, I don't feel a very strong feeling of connection to this specific school, no." Caterina, speaking to the idea of being a member of the organization, indicated that leadership behaviors have influenced the way she believes leadership views her value in the organization. She elaborated:

I think it would be nicer if there was a bit more of a personal relationship . . . I don't know why, but you feel like you don't matter. You could be replaced tomorrow morning. Even the way you see colleagues come and go. If someone leaves, unless it's a favorite, you know, close group of friends, you don't see them regret for one minute the person leaving, which tells you there's no engagement. There's no connection. If someone goes, it doesn't matter how good they were, get somebody else.

Diana conveyed an organizational disconnect through a division of her school as two entities; the elementary side and the upper grades. Her comment was, "Right, the inner circle should be all of us in together - staff, faculty . . . all of us because we are all in it together . . . we need to be on the

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same side." Further, she held that if leadership made a greater effort to be open and respectful to teachers the growth of engagement would be exponential.

Other participants highlighted the success of leaders in building organizational community. Amanda identified that leaders are proactive in building organizational community by including teachers in decision making or inviting teachers to participate in solving issues. She shared the example:

> I think the leadership that I have right now at my school, they do reach out to teachers and ask for their opinions, and whenever there's an issue that we want to explore further or a problem that we need to solve, they ask, "Who's interested in having a voice on this? Who wants to come to a little meeting? We're going to talk about it." And so for me, that's motivating. That gets me more engaged because I'd like to share my opinions, and I learn about things.

Further, Amanda elaborated on the effect of leaders creating a culture of exchange and collaboration, noting it increases her respect toward leadership and she gets "the message we can work with each other, and they're not just the ultimate authority." Rachel noted that her organizational engagement was improved when her leadership recognized her strength and passion and asked her to take on a coordinating role allowing her to utilize her strengths at an organizational level. Diana told of how her "engagement was through the roof" when her director noticed her expertise and asked her to be on a task force. Mathilde, also, recognized the influence of leaders on building organizational community by recognizing teachers' strengths. She feels she is recognized for being a helpful person, and as having experience in living in the United States and is often asked by leadership to support new staff. Mathilde feels the recognition by leadership and the help she is able to give supports her in feeling active and engaged in the organization. Respect and value as a person are also key to Mathilde in being engaged in her school community,

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"I like to go beyond. I really do. Especially, if [like] I said, if they respect me and they value me as a person."

Superordinate theme 5. Engagement through tools and processes. Participants identified tools and processes for success to be supportive in maintaining engagement in their work. Two subordinate themes emerged; supports to meet job demands, and professional development.

Subordinate theme 5.1: Providing supports to meet job demands. The provision of supports by leadership to balance the demands of teaching were noted to be important for teachers to be able to be engaged in their role. Autonomy in the classroom, job/work load, planning and working time, and individual support were identified as factors that influence teacher engagement.

Over half of participants connected autonomy in the classroom to engagement in their work. The concept of having a say in what and how curriculum is delivered provides a level of freedom that allows teachers personally engage in their teaching. Matthew connected autonomy in his teaching to increasing student engagement. He felt supported in trying new approaches and said, "I do feel incredibly supported in that front, like didactically because the trust in me is that, she thinks I'm a good teacher." Karen noted that autonomy allows her to feel engaged by being more flexible in attending to the needs of her students because she can make her own decisions. Caterina, too, is able to make decisions in her teaching and shared, "I found my own direction. I know if I'm consistent with what I think is the right thing to do, then I just keep going the way I think is right." Bethany highlighted that autonomy gives her the freedom her to make changes to her teaching for the coming year, "I already see myself envisioning and planning what I want for next year. So I feel like when you're looking ahead, and you're planning, and sorting, and you know, it feels engaging." Lloyd noted, "we can choose which curriculum we want to follow." For

him, autonomy meant that he was able to meet the needs of his students the way he felt worked best.

Some participants elaborated on leaders not recognizing the work load and time required for teaching and how that can affect engagement. When job demands increase and job supports are not available to balance them teachers can become stressed. Caterina addressed the time available during the day to support her teaching and additional role. Considering everything that needs to be done she said, "We don't have any time during the day to concentrate and do plan[s] or study, or half hour, 20 minutes, 15 minutes here and there are not enough to do everything." She went on to include grading which can take a lot of time but is not often thought about. Bethany though that because there is such a difference in jobs between leaders and teachers that they "might not consider, too much, our lack of time." She described a time during the school year when elementary staff was asked to create some documents during a staff meeting, saying she was very disengaged because she did not know why they were creating the documents or how they would be immediately effective or useful in her teaching. A statement shared was, "I guess I felt like I could have used my time in a more productive way for myself, my classroom, my students, my teammates." Lloyd noted his engagement could be positively influenced if he could be stop being assigned to committees, "I have too many other things to be doing. And I think . . . that reduces my engagement a bit."

Leaders were found to be supportive of teacher engagement in offering ad hoc supports to teachers to balance job demands. One important tool for Bethany is accessibility to her leaders when she needs help, "just feeling I can reach out and ask anyone who is an administrator . . . that's something I really appreciate." Bethany shared that the beginning of the school year can be stressful as many things need to be prepared for students. As it was close to the end of the year, her principal told her she could start to prepare and send in materials to their copy department, for the

summer, to begin preparing for the beginning of the coming school year, thus reducing the impending stress of the beginning of the school year. A simple support, yet important and meaningful to Bethany. Amanda noted that one of her leaders is always supportive in helping her with planning her units, offering suggestions and help. Rachel described how leadership supported and built trust with her during a period when she was unable to complete report comments on time due to a personal situation:

> I went through a [personal situation] . . . it was right around the time that report cards were supposed to be written. And this person was all over my case, calling me. I was in the hospital . . . and [this person was] all over my case as far as getting report cards done and that was really disheartening. And it actually took some other people in leadership to say,
>
> "Hey, no. That's not how we operate here. We have to do our best with the circumstances."

Molly, Rachel, Mathilde, Bethany, and Mark each noted the support the received from leadership in managing parent issues and interactions. Mathilde, when addressing parent interactions and leadership support stated, if you ask me . . . the first quality of the leader is always protects the employees." Mark commented, "backing up the teacher 100%, because we have to be a united front and when an administrator does that, that's empowering because then you're really the teacher."

For a few participants, doing the right job was the best way leaders could support their engagement. Mark expanded on his experience, "in the first couple of years here, I was not actually teaching what I wanted to be teaching. And then . . . I started teaching something that I genuinely enjoyed, and my level of engagement in my work rose exponentially." Karen, who is moving into a new position that she applied for in the same area of the school shared, "I think I'll be much more engaged, as far as really feeling engaged across grade levels." Rachel elaborated on

her leadership asking her to take on specific duties said, "when they tap me for being involved in certain committees. I mean that is a message of respect."

Subordinate theme 5.2: Professional development. Data from participant interviews indicated that supporting teachers with professional development, coaching, professional discussions, and other opportunities for professional growth supported or increased work engagement. Matthew shared that leadership indirectly influences his engagement in a positive way by providing professional development. Lloyd, at the time of the interview was enrolled in a graduate program, recognized leaderships role in making professional development available, and gave a simple affirmative statement, "Professional development, I think, is good." Karen noted that she has recently been more engaged in certain curricular areas following a professional development course which was funded by leadership. Bethany related the assistance she received from one of her leaders in finding a professional development course, "She made it so easy for me to just look into this program, submit an application, and I was there for the summer." Amanda enjoys opportunities to engage in professional discussions saying, "I feel the most engaged when I feel knowledgeable, like I can share ideas with other people, and when my curiosity is piqued." Early in her career, Amanda's principal suggested a mentor that she have a mentor, someone to help her develop professionally, she shared that she wished she would have been given that option earlier. From experience, Molly shared, "I think the more engaged I am, the more I can grow both personally and professionally." Knowing this about herself, she cultivates her own leadership skills and asks her principal to give her extra duties. Rachel connected leadership, engagement, and professional development noting that she feels fortunate that her school values professional development and supports her in making her own personal development choices that connect with her professional goals.

Superordinate theme 6. Engagement through professional consideration. The last superordinate theme that emerged from the data was professional consideration. Participants related experiences in a professional setting that influenced their work engagement both positively and negatively. The subordinate themes include perceptions of favorites by leadership, and professional and respectful interactions.

Subordinate theme 6.1: Perception of favorites. Interactions with staff should be fair, balanced, and professional, yet some participants indicated this is not always the case at their school. In some cases, participants noted leadership does play favorites within their staff. The recognition of this by staff can influence overall outlook and organizational engagement. Caterina expressed that she felt there was not a balance in the way employees are treated at her school. She shared her impression, "I think people that stay here longer, I don't think it's just my feeling, but we're certainly second class employees. A lot more caring and attention and pampering seems to be given to new teachers and new staff." She backed up her position by explaining that requests for time off or leaving early on specific days had been denied, but other people were and have been allowed release time. Leaders, in her experiences, are not sticking to the values they say they have when they decide to make exceptions for only some teachers. Lloyd talked to the point of leaders recruiting for committees saying, "it's the same people being asked to be part of this committee, and this committee." Further, he mentioned, "for sure, definitely some people get treated differently than others, and some get treated better, some don't get treated as well. But I would like to believe that they're trying their best." Diana echoed Lloyd's comment regarding leaders shopping for committee members. Her response to nepotism was:

> Playing favorites. I want to gag. If we are all professionals and we are all being hired for being these experts in our fields. And we have waiting lists of people that want to work at our school and we're so lucky and treasured. Why do you have favorites? If you look at . . .

there's . . . [a] page of our committees, it's embarrassing. There are two names that are [in] every committee down the line. And of course it's people that have been here for three years, not people that have been here for 20 years.

Rachel shared that one leader who recently left the school tended to make decisions based on personality or friendship over skill or qualifications. In her thoughts, Rachel believe the leader was looking for people who would "enhance" the leaders light. Karen suggested it was possible that she, and others, were passed over for a promotional opportunity because of a friendship between the Head of School and the person who got the job.

Subordinate theme 6.2: Professional and respectful interactions. All participants touched on facets of professional recognition and interactions with leaders. These facets include: respect for all subjects and teacher groups, professional interactions, professional consideration, and recognizing personal and professional status.

Regardless of subject matter or learning domain, teachers believe their subject is of value and want fair and respectful consideration by leadership. Mark offered praise toward one of his administrators noting his fair and professional approach to all grades and classes. He described and explained his experience:

Administrator X is extremely well organized. Does not approach any subject or any grade level or any class like, [with] anything other than the utmost importance. Whereas there have been sometimes talk of oh, this is an easy subject or that's a hard subject, or this is an easy grade to teach and that's a hard grade to teach . . . And I think that that level of respect is very professional, and transcends very much how administrator X behaves both with students and with teachers and it's a positive.

Lloyd and Mathilde both revealed that they felt their subjects did not receive the same treatment or recognition as core classes. When talking about the lack of his principal stopping by his lessons in

comparison to core subjects Lloyd stated, "I understand that we're not the . . . we're not as important." He further shared "I think all the subjects are equally important . . . I don't think we get some recognition; I'm talking about sports as well. But I don't think it's quite as balanced as it could be." Similar to Lloyd, Mathilde's experience has been that her principal does not place the same value on her subject as core classes, "I feel . . . the focus on my subject has not been very valued . . . I feel the leadership should do a better job toward my subject." She feels that because of this position, a similar impression is adopted by other teachers and departments in the school. An example Mathilde shared was that students often are pulled from her class to complete work for other classes or to do other things. She explained that she felt the principal was sending a message that the class was not as important as other classes, "That is a big message you send out about how little you value that subject, because you're saying I don't care about the subject, they are going to do something else." For Mathilde it is not the single, or few, students who miss the class, rather it is the message.

Professional interactions by leaders have an effect on teachers and engagement. All participants addressed professional interactions during the interview process. Some highlighted positive aspects, others identified situations where there could be improvements. As professionals, they expect to and want to be treated in a professional way. Mark indicated that he appreciates when leaders in his school lead by example and model professional attitudes and behaviors. Further, from his experience, he believed professionalism in leadership leads to respect and trust which benefits all stakeholders from students to administration. Mathilde expressed that a professional approach by her leaders helps her to stay focused, "Very Professional. Like not wasting a second joking around . . . [it is] engaging. Because it gets me on track."

For some participants, being treated in a professional manner supported the growth of trust toward their leaders. Rachel and Bethany both noted that professional interactions with their

leaders allows them to know they can approach leadership for any reason and trust them for help and support. As a professional, Matthew indicated that his leadership treated him in a professional manner creating a relationship of mutual trust and respect which supports his work engagement. Although Caterina implied that her principal does not always model professional interactions with her, she did feel that her vice principal was professional in his interactions with her. She said of him, "Right now we have an assistant principal that I think I can trust . . . I think he's very predictable and consistent. He supports what he does and he's always supportive of teachers, so you know he's always going to have your back." Amanda shared that her principal is professional with her in his interactions and speaks genuinely and honestly to her, supporting her growth and development.

A few participants noted that professional interactions with leaders fell short of being professional. These interactions included behaviors by leaders that teachers found to be less-than professional or disrespectful. Karen related an example of her principal placing blame on Karen and other staff members instead of accepting responsibility. The principal had been notified of the event and was copied on emails yet had forgotten about the event and "made it sound like it was everybody else's fault." For Diana, professional behaviors do not include demeaning language, yelling, and pounding fists on tables. She revealed that her principal had demonstrated these behaviors more than once over the past school year, "Like I said, getting yelled at more than once in the last two years after not having had any problems for 18 years, is just new. She felt that her principal could have demonstrated better emotional control. Lloyd also experienced a less-than professional interaction with his principal. He did not share explicit details, but did reveal his principal was very negative toward him in the discussion:

But the feedback I got back from the principal, I think, led me to be a little bit disengaged, because they were not happy that I had not checked with them first, and it was a very

negative interaction. And I felt a bit disengaged from that point of view, just because I completely understand and see why they were not happy. But at the same time, I wasn't doing it to go behind someone's back, or make someone look bad. I was just doing it because I thought this would be a positive thing to do, and it was seen as a very negative . . . And the communication there was a bit negative . . . Just, it was just very negative. The dialogue was negative, and everything like that.

Simple behaviors by leaders can also be disengaging for teachers as Molly explained about getting a response from someone in leadership. "timely responses, increased engagement, ignoring when you've asked for feedback, or delaying that response, I would say disengage me personally." Caterina related that professional interactions include caring about employees, and indicated she felt "blown off" by leaders. She provided an example, "Then again, I ask you for an appointment, be available, not just blow me off until I find you in the hallway and I run after you while you're going from one place to another. That's not nice." When asked what she would like more of from her leadership, she replied, "Just a sense of caring." Karen expressed her interest in having her leadership follow school protocols as a way to maintain professional interactions. Referring to a missed internal promotional opportunity, she noted that leadership did not contact her to let her know why she did not get the position or notify her prior to announcing the outcome to staff. She felt is showed a lack of respect and ultimately influenced her level of engagement.

For some participants, being treated professionally includes professional consideration, or growing professionally. For Mark, part of growing professionally includes teaching the courses he wants to teach. In response to a teaching schedule that includes classes he would prefer not to teach, he shared, "I feel like sometimes, like I said before that my professional ambition is not respected and that can be very disheartening . . . when I communicate regarding my professional goals . . . I feel like those fall upon deaf ears." Rachel expressed a similar feeling about

professional consideration, "where leadership seems to be really kind of controlling you or not trusting you or giving in the way of you moving forward as a professionally, I think that can be very disengaging."

Several participants elaborated on recognizing personal and professional status as part of professional and respectful interactions. Karen, Rachel, and Diana indicated that they believe their leaders have made assumptions about them without factual data. They all noted this was something they wanted leadership to stop doing and spend the time needed to get to know them. For Diana, who worked with her principal prior to the appointment to principal, said she felt her principal was carrying over previous experiences and expected to have trouble with Diana. Her comment was, "You didn't even give me a chance, where are you getting your information from." Rachel expressed her frustration by explaining:

> I would say, I'm a more introverted person, reserved person. So, being an elementary
> school teacher, I have to really turn it on, which I do. But I turn it on for my classroom,
> which means I am not the one hanging out at the water cooler and joking during my break
> time and so forth. And, so yeah, I think assumptions can be made based on those sorts of
> things that . . . it frustrates me because it sometimes feels like that influences then decisions
> that are made.

Karen shared, "One time I was told, "Oh, you're so negative." Because another person had made a comment, and the assumption was that I had made the comment, because I'm supposedly negative. And I hadn't even made the comment."

Data from the interviews revealed recognition of professional status can influence teachers' engagement in a positive way, while lack of recognition or dismissal can have a negative result. Mathilde noted that her status as a professional supports her engagement. She believes leaders recognize her teaching and efforts to support her school in a positive light and that makes her feel

valued. Molly expressed similar sentiments saying, "I would not be at the level of engagement I am in my current job if I didn't feel I was trusted and respected by. . . Not just our principal though, it goes higher. Our assistant director, our director."

Disengagement can be experienced when leaders forget to or don't consider teacher's status as professionals, ultimately devaluing the teachers. Amanda related an example when she felt disengaged through competition in her school. A competition was put into place by her leadership to reward the teacher who "Tweeted" about the school the most over a period of time. She said, "That really demotivates me, because then you're pitted against your coworkers, and that's not really an environment I want to work in. I want to be able to collaborate and share ideas with each other." For Molly, recognition of her input or feedback sends a message that she is heard and respected. When it is not acknowledged she said she feels disengaged, "It is disengaging when your feedback isn't acknowledged. I'm not saying that they have to follow that feedback or change something, but at least acknowledge that." Karen's shared an example of not having her status as a professional, "Another thing that makes me feel unengaged is . . . is the fact that I haven't been recognized for my upper degree." Diana said she felt "disengaged" and "frustrated" in the situations where her professional status is not recognized and her ideas for teaching are disregarded by leadership.

Chapter 4 Summary

This chapter reviewed the data collection approach for the study, presented participant profiles, reviewed the phenomenological methodology, provided a summary of the findings, and presented data analysis including themes from the data. Analysis of data from the 11 participants in the study revealed six superordinate themes related with how they experienced engagement.

1. Engagement through personal values revealed that participants were motivated to be engaged through their personal values and beliefs.

2. Leadership can influence engagement through communication and dialog.

3. Leadership presence has an influence on engagement.

4. Relationship and community building influences teachers' engagement.

5. Leadership influences engagement through processes and tools.

6. Professional consideration by leadership influences teacher engagement.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Introduction

This study explored the experiences of 11 international school teachers' work engagement and the specific practices of leadership that lead to disengagement. Participants included specialist teachers, early childhood teachers, elementary classroom teachers, middle school teachers, and high school teachers. Each experience was unique to the individual, data extracted from participant interviews revealed similarities that were drawn into six themes on how international school teachers experience engagement in their work.

The purpose of this study was to gain insight into the experiences of international school teachers' lived experiences related to work engagement and the practices of leadership that lead to disengagement. Results of this study provide knowledge that can inform leadership practices and support leadership training and professional development. The importance of this objective is that an international school is to flourish within the market in which they are competing. A goal of an interpretive phenomenological analysis was to add to the current body of knowledge (Smith et al., 2009), which this research does through its contribution to the literature on international schools, specifically addressing the gap in the literature on international school teacher engagement.

While Chapter 4 presented insight on the participants and an analysis of their experiences related to engagement and disengagement, Chapter 5 included a review of methodology, provide a discussion of how participants experienced engagement in their work, discuss specific practices of leadership which create disengagement, and how emergent themes connect to the theoretical framework and current literature. Further, Chapter 5 reviewed limitations related to the study, implications of findings in relation to practice for international school leadership, and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Results

International schools continue to grow in number around the world creating an increasingly competitive market for international education organizations. Leaders of these organizations need to understand how they influence the level of engagement of their teaching staff in the goal of attaining organizational success. This is important because, in an industry with reoccurring turnover and short contracts, international school leadership might not recognize deficiencies in the organization from disengaged employees or how to manage engagement effectively in teachers who remain at the school for extended periods of time. Data from this study provides insight to international school leadership so that they may better understand how teachers experience work engagement. This study's findings may be used to support training and professional development for international school leadership.

The methodology of this study followed a phenomenological approach drawing on participants' data to create an interpretive summary "that discusses the essence of the experience for individuals" (Creswell, 2013, p. 79). Purposeful sampling was selected for this study due to the specific criteria for participants. Participants were a variety of teachers from international schools in Central Europe who had diverse teaching qualifications, taught various age groups, and taught various disciplines. Recruitment was managed via emails to heads of schools, explaining the study and asking them to distribute a teacher's version of the explanation of the study coupled with a link to an initial survey in which potential participants could provide contact information if they wished to be included in the study. Interviews were conducted via skype and in person when possible.

Discussion of the Results

Research questions. Drawing from this study's findings, answers to the two research questions were used to guide this study of international school teachers' experiences of work engagement can be construed. The two research questions are:

1. How do international school teachers experience engagement?

2. What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers?

Question one: How do international school teachers experience engagement? The findings of this study indicated that participants experienced engagement in varying degrees through the superordinate themes derived from the data. Additionally, this research noted a duality in teachers' engagement; engagement at the classroom level (job), and engagement at the organizational level (work).

How international school teachers experience engagement at the classroom level. The data from participants led to an understanding that teachers experience engagement in the classroom based on their own personal values and motivations. Participants noted intrinsic rewards of doing a job well and supporting the learning of children as top drivers for their classroom engagement. Examples include: Mark noting the good feeling he gets from putting in a lot of effort into his teaching, Molly noting the more she puts into her work the more rewarding it is for her, and Karen recognition that what she does is for the children. These examples provide insight to the personal motivations of teachers that drive their engagement in the classroom.

Additionally, inferred from the themes is how leaders influence teachers' experiences of engagement at the classroom level. Participants noted that positive communication or feedback from leaders about what is taking place in their classroom supports their engagement. Amanda, Molly, and Rachel discussed how personal notes from their leaders, after visiting their classrooms, encouraged their engagement in teaching. Connections to superordinate theme three, leadership presence are also evident in the data. Diana expressed that she felt more engaged in her teaching when leadership is present. Similarly, Molly and Amanda communicated that leadership presence in the way of formal and informal observations led to developing professionally and increased

their engagement. Many participants experienced engagement at the classroom level through superordinate theme five, engagement through tools and processes, including autonomy in the classroom, support from leadership, support in planning, support with parent issues, attending professional courses, and having a mentor. Mark, Karen, and Rachel noted how professional consideration supported their engagement at the classroom level by being able to do the right job or teach the subject you want to teach.

   How international school teachers experience engagement at the organizational level. At the organizational level, participants reported experiencing engagement through communication. When leaders were transparent about their motives and shared reasoning for decisions teachers felt more included at a higher level of action than just their classroom. Leadership presence, superordinate theme three, also led to participants experiencing organizational engagement.

   The research data supported that leadership presence provided a sense of interest and care. One example was when Karen noted that leadership presence conveyed interest in her which resulted in increased feelings of value in the organization. A second example was Amanda's sharing that when she sees and talks to individuals in leadership she feels more engaged as a professional. These examples suggest that a feeling of recognition and organizational belonging is created in teachers when they experience interactions with leadership outside of the classroom.

   Participants also noted superordinate theme four, relationship and community building supported their engagement at the organizational level. When leaders made attempts to build rapport and community, participants felt trusted, valued, and connected to something larger than themselves. Karen shared she feels engaged when she is working on a committee, for Amanda, being part of a problem solving team engages her at the organizational level, Rachel noted that when asked to take a coordinating role in a curricular area she has a passion for engaged her at an organizational level.

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Tools and processes, superordinate theme five, was a gateway for teachers to feel engaged at the organizational level. Study data revealed that when leadership provided professional support and development opportunities participants experienced engagement as a professional and part of something greater than their classroom teaching. Tools and processes are a way for leaders to support teachers professionally and from teachers being siloed or compartmentalized as valuable only in the classroom.

Consideration as a professional, subordinate theme six, allowed study participants to be recognized as professionals and experience engagement at a personal and organizational level. Matthew reported that, when his leaders treated him in a professional manner, a relationship of mutual trust and respect developed which led him to experience engagement at the organizational level. When leaders treated participants with professional respect, participants felt valued and recognized in the organization.

Question two: What specific leadership practices lead to disengagement among international school teachers? Findings from this study identified specific practices and actions of individuals in leadership that led to international school teachers' experiences and feelings of disengagement. Participants in the study indicated that they felt their teaching engagement was not influenced by leadership, but that leaders did have an influence on organizational engagement. Specific practice that lead to teacher disengagement are addressed by superordinate theme.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement through communication. Superordinate theme two, engagement through communication, revealed some specific leadership actions noted by participants as disengaging. Data indicated that participants wanted leadership interaction through formal observations and communication in the way of feedback, yet when one does not accompany the other, teachers can experience disengagement. Mathilde noted, that for her, feedback from observations will need to be written in written form. If the leader cannot take the

time to do this for her, it sends a message of lack of interest in her as a professional. Caterina shared a similar concern noting that the lack of meaningful feedback is interpreted as a lack support her growth a professional. Karen identified combative or defensive behaviors in communications with leaders create disengagement for her. She withdraws and does not share ideas when her leader gets "bristly" in communications where Karen attempts to share an alternative perspective from her leader's. The overuse of email to communicate in lieu of face-to-face communications created feelings of disengagement for Molly. Participants also noted disengagement arises from a lack of communication. Mark and Matthew shared that when leaders just say no and do not provide a reason for decisions that were made, they feel a level of disengagement. Lack of knowledge sharing from leadership down also created disengagement. Lloyd and Molly experienced a sense of disengagement through the lack of their leaders not sharing information down to teachers. Leaders who have personal or hidden agendas also created feelings of disengagement in teachers. When teachers are not privy to the motives and intentions of leadership there is the potential for disconnect and disengagement.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement through presence. Leadership presence, theme three, also revealed behaviors that created disengagement. The lack of presence or visibility of leadership conveys a message that leaders are not interested in teachers or what teachers are doing in their classrooms. Mathilde expressed she did not know if her leader not showing up meant they trusted her, or that they didn't care enough to come. Most participants revealed frustration or disappointment in leaders not being present which can lead to disengagement. Caterina expressed how she feels disengaged when leaders cannot find more than ten minutes to observe her. Participants also noted disengagement when leaders say they will come and observe, and then do not follow through with observations.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement through relationship and community building. Superordinate theme four, relationship and community building revealed leadership behaviors that create disengagement with teachers. When leaders are not able to read a relationship adequately, there is potential for disengagement. Diana noted that her leader, in an attempt to be supportive of Diana's abilities, comes across as condescending and when a fake smile is added, she feels disrespected and disengaged. Caterina identified the lack of rapport building disengages her at an organizational level. When leaders only engage certain individuals and ignore others there can be disengagement. For Karen, disengagement comes when her leader only sees her for what she can do in the classroom and disregards her as a person. Karen and Rachel like to support their organizations by participating on committees, yet each reported disengagement when the committee is only for appearance and promotes only the leader's perspective or agenda. Diana reported organizational disengagement in the fact that there is a division of school sections and that school leaders keep them separate.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement through tools and processes. Specific leadership practices that create disengagement and are related to superordinate theme five, tools and processes, were revealed in the data. Caterina identified that when leaders do not provide adequate planning and marking time for teachers on top of their teaching assignment, they are not getting the tools and resources they need to do the job well. Bethany felt that there was too great of a difference in the jobs of leaders and teacher to allow leaders to recognize and respect teachers' workloads. Lloyd echoed Bethany and added that being assigned to committees by leaders without checking with teachers first is disengaging.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement through professional consideration. Specific leadership practices of leaders that create disengagement related to superordinate theme six, professional consideration were divided into two categories: perceptions of favorites, and

professional and respectful interactions. Some participants shared that when leaders demonstrate behaviors suggestive of favoritism amongst staff members, they feel experience a sense of disengagement. Caterina indicated that she felt her leader tended to treat new staff with more care and attention, and in some cases granted time off or approval to leave early to some and not others, including her, thus indicating a perception of favorites. Diana felt that leaders in her school "shop" for committee members who will support and further the leader's cause. A concern is that issues or causes that are put forward are not challenged or checked by alternative views.

Professional and respectful interactions included respecting all subjects and teachers, professional interactions, professional consideration, and recognizing professional status. Specialist teachers in the study indicated that leaders did not view specialist subjects as important as core classes. Lloyd felt this was clearly indicated in the lack of observations and classroom visits by his leaders. Mathilde's concern was that when a leader devalues a subject, there is potential for others in the community to adopt a similar perspective, which ultimately devalues her as a teacher. Karen identified blame placing and refusing to accept responsibility for errors as practices her leader employs and which cause disengagement. Unprofessional interactions were noted to be disengaging for Diana, who reported that on more than one occasion her principal employed demeaning language, yelling, and pounding her fists on the table during interactions with her. Lloyd mirrored Diana's point about unprofessional interactions with his principal, saying of one incident, it was all very negative toward him. Molly shared that when leaders do not provide timely responses she feels ignored and disengaged. Similarly, Caterina identified that being ignored by her leader made her feel like she was being "blown off" which results in frustration and disengagement. When leaders do not follow organizational processes they can create disengagement. Karen noted that her school's director created resentment and disengagement in not following the organization's process for announcing internal promotions. Mark and Karen

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spoke to the disengagement they felt when leaders did not seem to care or consider their personal professional goals noting that they felt leadership was controlling their growth and development. Leadership making assumptions about individuals was noted in the data to be disengaging. Leaders create disengagement when they ignore teachers' professional status. Karen shared that she felt her principal and director created a sense of disengagement in her when they would not recognize her upper degree and minimized it by suggesting it was only a few credits over a master's degree. Amanda related that she felt pitted against other teacher in a Twitter competition initiated by her leader. Her position was that she is a professional and should not have to be placed in a competitive arena against her work colleagues. This created disengagement for her at the organizational level.

Key Findings

Although six superordinate themes emerged from the data, this researcher identified three key findings prominent to international school teachers' engagement:

1. International school teachers experience engagement in their teaching roles through personal values and motivation.

2. Teachers want interaction with their leadership.

3. Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on teacher's work and organizational engagement.

Engagement in teaching roles through personal values. Participants indicated their engagement in teaching was more internally driven than externally motivated. Participants suggested their motivation for teaching derived from a passion and interest in teaching and are engaged because they believe in doing their best. Approximately half of teachers in the study indicated that leadership has minimal influence in their teaching engagement.

A central characteristic of this finding was that teachers are engaged because they value teaching, regardless of what leadership practices or processes are in place. Comments from participants suggested a non-negotiable and non-conditional attitude toward teaching. Examples such as Molly's comment, "I think you have to work hard for the things that you believe in;" Mark's statement, "I really like teaching, I find it very creative;" Karen's remark, "I think teaching is an important job;" and Matthew's position of finding value in making a difference in the lives of others demonstrate the influence of personal values in engaging teachers in their work. Further, these comments were not connected to any mention of leadership influence suggesting a passion for teaching drives engagement more than the framework of leadership that is in place. Participants compartmentalized their teaching engagement in a microcosm, separate from leadership influence, as Caterina implied, she just closes the door and gets on with her teaching. From this finding leaders should recognize the drive and passion of teachers in their work and find ways to recognize, support, and further encourage positive engagement.

For the many of participant's, engagement in teaching was influenced by their drive in providing benefits to the students. Mark shared that his efforts, and any extra effort made was for his students. Lloyd, Diana, Karen, and Matthew also placed student learning high on their purpose for engagement. These teachers, and others, indicated that they enjoy working with children and finding value in something they enjoy doing allows them to be more engaged in their work. This further supports the finding that teachers experience engagement through personal values and minimizes or negates the influence of influence of leadership on teacher's engagement. Bethany's comment of doing her job well and being proud of what she does is consistent with other participant's experiences of engaging with their teaching. The role of leadership is to lead. In consideration of this finding, teachers have the drive and passion and leaders should adopt a

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leading position with teachers, and strive to open paths for teachers that provide further growth and development opportunities allowing teachers to hone their craft.

Teachers want interaction with leadership. Participants in this study revealed their interest in interacting with leadership throughout their interviews. This key finding is interlinked with three of the themes that emerged from the data: engagement through communication, engagement through leadership presence, and engagement through relationship and community building. Each of these themes highlight some aspect of interaction between leadership and teachers.

Teachers want interaction with leadership through communication. Although participants indicated their engagement in teaching was driven internally, the data also indicates there is influence from leadership. Dialogue between leaders and teachers was noted to increase teacher's feelings of engagement, either at a personal level or organizational level, creating positive feelings that could then be carried into classroom teaching. Diana expressed the influence of dialogue with her leadership indicating it helped her feelings of being a professional. Karen, too, noted dialogue supported the professional side of being a teacher, sharing ideas while recognizing the benefit of a professional community. The importance of this aspect is the result of teachers' perceived experience of engagement in a professional community, an organizational level of engagement, which supports engagement in the classroom, job engagement.

Communication points between leaders and teachers can be identified as psychological job supports that sustain or improve teacher engagement through upholding teacher self-efficacy. Teachers want to hear how they are doing from their leader's perspectives. Matthew pointed out that he likes it when he gets positive feedback because it makes him feel good about himself. Lloyd identified feedback from leadership as nice to have when it is given in a constructive and useful way. Bethany, Rachel, and Amanda acknowledged that they liked to get leadership

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feedback as it provided them with a positive feeling of doing their jobs well. These examples show that teachers want to have interactions with their leaders to develop a sense of how they are proceeding in their work, to gain a sense of accomplishment of work done well, and to make them feel valued, leading to an increased sense being important to the organization.

Teachers want interaction with leadership through presence. Teachers experience increased feeling of engagement when leaders are visible and present. Individuals in the study agreed that they want leadership to be visible and purposefully present. Additionally, being present offers increased opportunities for communication. Amanda noted that leadership presence allowed her opportunities to talk with her leaders. General presence and visibility of leadership, most often through drop-in visits and informal observations, were noted in the data as important to teachers, sending a message that conveyed importance, care, and interest.

Leadership presence in the form of formal observations was also important to teachers in supporting their engagement. Having interactions with leadership at a professional level supports teachers in feeling engaged with their profession and provides visibility for areas in which they can set goals and develop as professionals. Taking the time to conduct formal evaluations provides a sense of recognition and importance for teachers. Many teachers noted the importance feedback from formal observations as an important tool to evaluate their work performance. Leadership presence through observations allows teachers to demonstrate their skills and abilities to leaders which allows leaders to see what is taking place in classrooms as well as creates opportunities for professional discussion.

Teachers want interaction with leadership through relationships and community building. Relationships and a sense of community building by leadership were important for all participants in the study. A general consensus in the data found that relationship building supported the development of trust between teachers and leadership. Examples such as Matthew

noted how rapport building diminishes a sense of being taken advantage of by leadership, Mark's position that building rapport breaks down walls and humanizes teachers, and Amanda's growth in respect for leadership through relationship building, demonstrate pathways for community building and strengthening trusting relationships between leaders and teachers. Both perspectives are considered good take away messages for school leaders who wish to engage their teachers.

Though relationship building was noted as important, the types of relationships teachers want with their leaders varied. Though most participants indicated amicable friendly working relationships, only Molly indicated having an interest in having a friendship with her principal. Two participants, Mathilde, and Lloyd, preferred to keep relationships with leaders more confined to work topics. Thus in relationship building, leaders need to be able to recognize what type of relationship teachers expect and want, an outcome that can only be achieved through making an effort to build a relationship.

Teachers want to engage at the organizational level and be connected to a purpose beyond the teaching in their classrooms. Data from participants indicated that common ways to do this was to have an additional role in the school beyond teaching in the classroom or to be on a committee. Engaging at the organizational level allows teachers to interact with each other and leadership in supporting the organization's goals. The benefit in this is teachers are able to be recognized as being aligned with and supportive of the larger efforts of the school that take place outside the classroom. The importance for teachers to have professional recognition and not be compartmentalized as a classroom teacher.

Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on engagement. The findings from this study revealed that how leaders interact and communicate influence teacher engagement. Four of the resulting themes from the data are intertwined in this key finding: engagement through communication, engagement through relationship and

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community building, engagement through tools and processes, and engagement through professional consideration. Multiple venues provided instances of how leadership influenced engagement in each theme.

Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on engagement through communication. Participant data indicated that communication and dialogue between teachers and leadership can increase teacher's feeling of engagement and wanting to be more engage in their work. Leaders should include teachers in what is happening in the organization. Being included provides a sense of connection to the organization. Communication between leaders and teachers, whether in one-to-one interactions or in group settings, allowed teachers to experience organizational or team level engagement; being part of something bigger than themselves. If leaders do not include teachers in dialog at the organizational level, there is a decreased level of belonging and commitment in teachers and in turn a decrease in teacher engagement.

Feedback and dialogue between leadership and teachers also supported teacher's sense of professionalism, personal growth, and engagement. Some key leadership practices, identified in the data, that increased teacher's sense of engagement included: passing positive comments from parents on to teachers, authentic praise and feedback, talking with teachers at a professional level, taking the time to write personal notes or emails, and explaining reasons for decisions. Some participants noted the benefit of communication with leaders filtering down into their classrooms, as teachers felt more engaged at the organizational level, they wanted to do more in their classrooms. The benefit in this is engagement at multiple levels and overall increased organizational commitment.

While subjects in the study were optimistic about the benefit and effect of communication on engagement, they also noted that specific aspects of leaders' communication practices created a

feeling of less engagement at the organizational level. Some participants noted that a lack of communication from leadership leads to feelings of disengagement. Further examples noted from the data included: the overuse of email in lieu of face-to-face communication, leaders not being open to the perspectives of others during discussions, introducing a structure of hierarchy and power, not providing explanations or reasons for decisions, and having hidden or unshared agendas. Leaders therefore need to be cognizant of how they are interacting with teachers in their communications regardless of the type of, or venue of, the communication.

Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on engagement through relationship and community building. Findings from the data in this study revealed that building rapport with teachers increased feelings of engagement at an organizational and community level. Building rapport with teachers was reported to create trust between leaders and teachers allowing for a greater sense of community, diminished hierarchical boundaries, and sense of safety in sharing ideas and thoughts. Many participants indicated that efforts and interactions by leaders to build rapport resulted in positive relationships and increased feelings of organizational engagement. Some study participants identified a positive feeling they get when leaders "make the rounds" to just say hello, suggesting teachers take simple actions into consideration. Additionally, participation in committees and groups also supported teachers' experiences of engagement at the organizational level giving them opportunities to have a voice, demonstrate competence, and be part of something bigger than themselves.

Although relationship and community building efforts from leaders led to increased positive outlooks on teachers' overall organizational belonging and engagement, the study data revealed that some teachers found disingenuous behaviors of leaders can lead to feelings of disengagement. Diana identified that when her leader, on occasion, attempts a communication with her that includes a condescending comment or a "fake smile" she feels less engaged. Instances

such as Karen's principal telling her she does not want to hear about a family matter and Caterina's report of her principal not demonstrating any interest in her send a message of a lack of importance for who they are which results in a decreased sense of engagement and importance in the community. A similar result was noted by some participants when they were asked to join committees and not able to actually support the work to be done as it had already been done by the leader. An impression on teachers was the committee was more for the appearance that many had contributed to the work. From this, leaders need to recognize the importance of authenticity and meaningfulness that teachers want and expect from those in leadership positions.

Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on engagement through tools and processes. When leaders provide access to the right tools and processes teachers are able to engage more in their work. Research data showed that teachers believed job supports, such as autonomy in the classroom, providing adequate planning and non-teaching work time, and the safety to ask for assistance, as well as, have access to paths to develop professionally, like coaching and mentoring, professional courses, and professional discussions were important interaction points to have with their leadership. These aspects minimize roadblocks allowing teachers to have forward movement and engage more fully.

Having the right tools allows teachers to focus on their work. Autonomy in the classroom was noted by more than half of participants as a tool that allowed them to engage with their work in a way that was meaningful to them and for the students being taught. Autonomy, when provided by leadership, frees teachers to engage and be creative in their teaching and diminishes the fear, or concern, of potential reprisal from leadership for not adhering to specific recipes for student learning.

Teaching is an active job that requires teachers to engage with students while they are in class. A job support that school leaders need to provide to balance the job demands of teaching is

non-teaching work time. Caterina exemplified the challenge of finding time during the teaching day to get into a mode of deep thinking, "We don't have any time during the day to concentrate and do plan[s] or study." Teachers need time to plan, prepare, and mark student work. This time is important for teachers in order to be prepared to engage in their teaching and to feel supported enough to be able to be active in additional roles in the organization.

The ability to ask for or seek assistance from leaders allowed teachers to maintain their work engagement by minimizing the demands encountered in teaching. When teachers feel safe to ask for or seek help from leaders the demands of teaching can be abated. Participants noted that asking for support in planning, preparing classroom materials in advance, and managing parents decreased the demands related to their work. This is important because these types of issues can take away from a teacher's ability to be engaged in their work if they are consciously or unconsciously distracted about how and when they will be resolved.

As professionals, teachers want to engage with their leadership through professional development paths. Conversations and building a dialogue at this level provide opportunities for teachers and leaders to gain perspectives of others and incorporate new views into their own ways of thinking and acting. Participant data indicated that teachers want to engage with their leaders to learn from them, to engage in professional discussions, seek mentoring and coaching opportunities, and participate in professional courses. Leadership influences how these opportunities are undertaken in the work environment through organizing staff and team meetings, individual mentoring and coaching sessions, and providing funding for external or internal courses and trainings. This is important because it strengthens the collective organizational understanding for teachers and leaders. Leaders have the opportunity to explain what they want to see in the organization and teachers have the opportunity to demonstrate how they are supporting their own professional goals as well as the organization's goals.

Leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on engagement through professional consideration. The perception of favorites by leaders directly affected how teachers experienced work engagement. Teachers indicated they feel there is an imbalance when leaders behave as if they have favorites. The impression that is perceived by teachers is special consideration by leaders diminishes the value of other teachers, a perception that could be assumed in the school community. Specific leader actions which lead to lower levels of engagement included disproportionate approval for requests for time off, shopping for committee members and selecting "friends" for positions. These actions by leaders create a perception of a tiered staff where some teachers feel disengaged from the organization.

Professional and respectful interactions with leadership influence teacher engagement. Participants indicated this is true at a personal level as well as at an organizational level. At the organizational level, leaders need to treat all subjects as valid and equally important to the development of children. Specialist teachers in the study indicated that they believed leaders did not hold their class to be as important as core classes. This sets a precedence which others in the school and school community are apt to adopt. Leaders need to respect all teaching staff as professional educators and express value in all subjects.

At the personal level participants noted that when they are treated like professionals, they are likely to feel more engaged in organizational work and when they are not treated in a professional manner engagement levels decrease. Recognition of professional status supports engagement and allows teachers to trust their leaders. Teachers expect their superiors to act professionally and model professional behaviors. Specific leadership practices, noted in the data, that caused disengagement included: yelling, pounding fists on tables, repeatedly pulling students from specials, blame placing, not taking responsibility, not providing timely responses, not respecting personal professional goals, not following internal processes, and making assumptions

about teachers. School leaders need to understand how their actions influence engagement of teachers and adopt and model professional interactions at all times.

Relationship to the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was informed by Bakker and Demerouti's (2008) model of job demands and resources (JDR) and Jacobs (2012) model for organizational trust. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) asserted that there is a positive effect on employee engagement when employees are supported with resources that negate the demands of the work that is being done. The emphasis is on employee engagement that is created through job resources which are realized by, and through, the interactions or relationship between the leader and the employee. Jacobs (2012) model for organizational trust is concerned with the aspects of trust and threat and effects of engagement and withdrawal. The relationship of these models and the findings of the research questions is provided.

How international school teachers experience engagement. Participants experienced engagement through the six superordinate themes, five of which relate to job supports leaders can provide to teachers: communication, leadership presence, relationship and community building, tools and processes, and professional consideration. An important component of the JDR model is leadership and what leadership does to support engagement through the interactions and relationships they have with employees. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) noted that a leader can be recognized as a job support. In this sense it is possible to see that any positive actions initiated from the leader can support engagement. Jacobs' (2012) model for organizational trust aligns with the findings related to relationships and interactions between leaders and teachers that build and support trust. The connection of this model to the research is that when trust is experienced by employees they engage more in their work. The five themes noted above can additionally be considered in developing trust between leaders and teachers, when approached positively.

Leadership practices that lead to disengagement. Findings from the study related to how specific leadership practices created disengagement focused on diminished or lack of job supports from leadership and diminished or lack of trust in relationships. Often these concepts are entwined and difficult to separate, as levels in one influences the levels in the other. Figure 1 models the relationship of job demands being met with adequate supports in a leader–member interaction or relationship which influences trust levels. Trust levels then influence the level of resources recognized by individuals which influence engagement levels. Returning to the JDR model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) emphasized how job demands are not balanced with job supports, engagement is likely to be negatively affected. Similarly, when trust is not established distrust, fear, and the level of safety one feels can affect engagement (Jacobs, 2012).

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

This section addresses the findings of the study and how they relate to, and how they can contribute to, the current literature. Four of the six superordinate themes are reviewed include: engagement through personal values, engagement through communication, engagement through relationship and community building, and engagement through tools and processes. Engagement through leadership presence and engagement through professional consideration are not reviewed in connections with current literature as the literature review from chapter two does not include any specific research on leadership presence or professional consideration. Although the theme leadership presence is not actively reviewed, leadership presence can be implied in engagement through communication, and engagement through relationship and community building.

Engagement through personal values. The first superordinate theme to emerge from that data was that teachers believed their engagement in teaching was internally driven and minimally influenced by school leadership. Teachers indicated that they did enjoy teaching and that they are engaged because they wanted to support their students. Data from participants

included Mark enjoying teaching and finding it creative, Molly loving her work as a teacher, and Matthew's finding value in making a difference. These examples are in line with the current literature of finding meaning in one's work is essential for engagement in work to take place (Bakker, 2011; Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Current research also identified three dimensions of engagement: cognitive engagement, when one is absorbed in their work (Bakker, 2011, Csikszentmihalyi,1990; Shuck & Herd, 2012); emotional engagement, when one is dedicated and invests in their work (Bakker, 2011; Csikszentmihalyi,1990; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012), and behavioral engagement, when one is active in their work (Bakker, 2011; Csikszentmihalyi,1990; Shaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). This backs up the current literature on engagement in supporting an understanding of the components of teacher engagement.

This study adopted an understanding of engagement put forward by Schaufeli et al. (2002) where individuals experience "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). From this definition, workers are engaged when they go beyond the basic job duties and do more than what is required (Schaufeli, et al., 2002). A review of the data found that, like every job, a duality of engagement exists for international school teachers; employee engagement and work engagement. Work engagement is the teaching that is being done in the classroom, while employee engagement is the teachers' professional and organizational role. Although participants in this study indicated that they believed they were engaged with their teaching, the data indicated that they were disengaged at the organizational level. Two examples are found in Mark and Karen, both enjoy teaching and each has an additional role beyond teaching, yet they both reported that they did not feel very connected to the organization. This is in line with current engagement literature that indicated employees continuously make choices about the facets of their job and where to engage and where not to

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engage (Bakker, 2011; Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Bird et al., 2012; Forsyth et al., 2011; Huston et al., 2007; Kahn, 1990; Saks & Gruman, 2014). This can contribute to the literature on international schools to help develop an understanding of the duality of engagement of international school teachers.

Engagement through communication. Participants in the study identified communication with leadership as something they wanted. This connects with the fourth theme identified from the literature review, *communication between administration and teachers needs to be open, honest, and frequent.* Personal and authentic interactions support teacher engagement. Data from interviews indicated that feedback and dialogue with leadership supported teachers' engagement. Communication with leaders can provide teachers with a way to meter where they stand professionally, where they can develop further, improve teacher efficacy, provide a sense of accomplishment, and allow teachers to feel valued and important in their work. Existing research identifies a benefit of communication between leaders and their employees as a pathway for leaders to build relationships which allow them identify strengths and support workers to get the most and best work from them (Hallowell, 2011; Northouse, 2016).

Communication is also identified in the existing research as important in building trusting relationships, breaking down barriers, exposing individuals to new perspectives, and can bring leaders and teachers closer both physically and ideologically (Beslin & Chitra, 2004; Friedman, 2014; Ghamrawi, 2011). Some participants in the study indicated that a lack of communication with leadership created a sense of distance and disengagement. Similarly, Beslin & Chitra (2004) found that a lack of or infrequent communication with leadership begins to build barriers between leaders and workers. Diana and Karen identified communication with leaders supported their feelings of professionalism and feeling they were part of a professional community. Providing

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venues for professional dialogue supports engagement at the organizational level for these teachers.

Current literature on international schools identifies relationships and interactions between teachers and leadership as meaningful factors related to retention and turnover rates (Amodio, 2015; Odland & Ruzicka, 2009; Desroches, 2013; Mancuso et al., 2011; Roberts et al., 2010) yet does not address communication and teacher engagement. This study identified leadership communication practices that supported engagement as well as communication practices that teachers identified as disengaging. Leadership practices, identified in the data, that increased teacher's sense of engagement included: passing positive comments from parents on to teachers, authentic praise and feedback, talking with teachers at a professional level, taking the time to write personal notes or emails, and explaining reasons for decisions. Disengaging communication practices included: the overuse of email in lieu of face-to-face communication, leaders not being open to the perspectives of others during discussions, introducing a structure of hierarchy and power, not providing explanations or reasons for decisions, and having hidden or unshared agendas. This research can add to the body of knowledge on international schools.

Engagement through relationship and community building. Kahn (1990) presented three psychological conditions for engagement: psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, and psychological availability. Psychological safety is achieved when one feels they are able to participate in their work free from feelings of fear, or retribution from leadership (or others) in regard to their self-image, status, or career (Kahn, 1990). Current literature provides insight into fear in the work place as a roadblock that keeps employees from working to their full potential (Hallowell, 2011; Hislop, 2103; Rock, 2008). Further, research identified that fear in the workplace is often connected to relationships between leaders and their followers and maybe associated with disagreeing with leadership, sharing true feelings and opinions, and fear of being

labeled (Hallowell, 2011; Nass & Yen, 2011; Rock, 2008). An example of this type of fear from the data came from Karen when she shared that she withdraws when her leader is not open to her ideas and feels Karen does not agree with her, explaining it seems more like an argument. It is important that leaders take time and make efforts to build trusting relationships with workers. Drawing further on the literature, researchers posited that workers with authentic, positive, and supportive relationships with their leaders more wholly experience engagement physically, affectively, and cognitively (Bird et al., 2012; Jeong et al., 2016; Shuck & Herd, 2012).

The second theme from the literature review identified trusting relationships decrease fear and anxiety, increase feelings of value, increase feelings of connection which in turn support engagement (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Friedman, 2014; Ghamrawi, 2011; Hallowell, 2011; Handford & Leithwood, 2013; Jacobs, 2013; Klein, 2012; Kutsyuruba et al., 2016; Lencioni, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b; Thomsen et al., 2016). Participants in this study identified relationship building as influential on their engagement by breaking down barriers, making it easier to share ideas, and creating a sense of trust between leaders and teachers. This connects with the an expected finding for the study, that leaders who use their emotional intelligence support teacher engagement. Rachel and Mark both noted that when their leaders "make the rounds" to just say hello, sends a positive message. Caterina, alternatively, shared that a lack of relationship building from some of her leadership diminished the interactions she had with leadership and created an increased level of disengagement for her.

Leaders need to be consistent and regularly work to build rapport with their teachers. Trust is built in a relationship over time through repeated consistent interactions (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Amanda shared that her school leadership worked over time to build relationships such that a culture of collaboration and exchange exist in her school. An alternative perspective came from Mark who shared that he did not feel his school's leadership did not create

any feeling of organizational engagement within him, and that he rarely attends any extra-curricular events or activities with the exception of his additional role. School leaders should work to build trusting relationships and be aware that distrust can be contagious. In addition, research on teachers in the United States has indicated that when there is distrust between teachers and school leadership, teachers tend to adopt self-protective behaviors that result in disengagement (Adams & Miskell, 2016; Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015b).

Engagement through tools and processes. Providing workers with the tools and processes to be successful is imperative for their success and engagement. This can be connected to the third theme of the literature review of leaders actions and styles influencing engagement. Tools and processes are also referred to as job supports or job resources and are recognized as anything that reduces or diminishes the demands related to a job or work. According to the literature, job supports can be personal as well as job related and can include, but are not limited to: autonomy, co-workers, leaders, feedback, coaching, positive work place climate, recognition, support, job variety, task variety proactive personality, pride, and self-efficacy (Bakker, 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Shuck & Herd, 2012). Further, research suggests that when workers do not have adequate resources to balance job demands, there exists the potential for employees to become disengaged, frustrated, and less productive (Shuck & Herd, 2012).

Findings from this study are in line with the current research. Participants noted how job supports helped to maintain their engagement. Matthew noted that autonomy in the classroom allowed him be creative in his teaching and because his principal allows him to have autonomy he feels confident and trusted as a professional which increases his self-efficacy, another job support. Bethany and Amanda related how access to supportive leaders supported their experiences of engagement with their work. Additionally, Molly, Rachel, Mathilde, Bethany, and Mark found leadership support in managing situations involving parents. Mark added he felt it was

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empowering when leadership stood behind him 100% because it sends the message that he is a professional and demonstrates sound judgement. Participants also recognized professional development as a job support coming in the form of courses and trainings, professional dialogue and discussions, and mentoring.

In agreement with the literature, a few participants noted how the lack of supports influenced their level of engagement negatively. Bethany and Caterina made connections to the lack of time they felt they required to do the job well and the resulting stress it created. For Caterina, it was grading and planning time that she did not have enough of, and for Bethany, it was time lost in a meeting creating documents that she did not know how they would be useful to her. Though the stress was minimal, it was still recognized as a job demand that was not being abated by a resource. In both cases the participants felt leadership was to blame and that leadership could have provided support.

Limitations

Limitations related to this study include: sampling, geographical selection, volunteer process, timing of the study, and potential researcher bias.

The first limitation considered for this study was sampling. This study focused on 11 international school teachers from Central European schools selected through a purposeful sampling method. Specific criteria were set for participation in the study: currently teaching internationally, have been in their position for at least four years, do not intend to leave their school in the next two years. The limitations can be first addressed in the sampling method. Asking for volunteers to participate in a study on engagement is likely to only recruit individuals who are engaged in their work, as disengaged workers are likely to do only what is required of them in their jobs (Jacoby, 2015) suggesting the possibility of not volunteering when the initial contact was made through school directors. Second, although the study intended to focus on teachers who are

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more embedded in their lives, limiting responses to this subset of teachers could lead to the omission of pertinent data on engagement.

A second limitation is the geographical location of the study. Limiting the study to Central Europe and Council of International Schools member schools introduces a homogeneity of sources, which was intended, yet it also potentially limits the study in relation to participant's national origin and cultural expectations of behavior and interactions between leadership and teachers.

Limitation three is connected to the manner in which solicitation and participation was managed. Solicitation for participation was initiated through email to Directors or Heads of School asking them to forward information on to their staff via email. As email is a faceless interface, it is easy to disregard requests for participation and delete emails. Additionally, there were a number of steps in the process for volunteers to take, including a short survey to agree to be a volunteer. The potential existed for interested participants to not complete all steps in the process, finding it to be too time consuming.

Time of year for data collection is a fourth limitation. The study began accepting volunteers late into the school year and data collection began near the end of the school year. This is a busy time of the year for teachers and administrators, which could have affect the number of participants volunteering.

A final limitation is researcher bias. As an international school teacher in Central Europe this researcher does have opinions about engagement and practices of leadership that create disengagement. Though this researcher attempted to remain neutral in the data collection and data analysis processes, it is impossible to know if personal biases influenced the study.

Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

The key findings and superordinate themes of this study suggest there are potential implications for international school leaders to make improvements to their practices. International school leaders who want to improve their schools and get the most from their teachers by developing and supporting teachers in achieving engaging in teaching and strengthening organizational engagement will benefit from the following suggestions.

Leaders need to engage teachers in professional dialogue. This study revealed that teachers want to engage in dialogue with leadership to grow professionally, be exposed to new perspectives, and be part of a professional community. Current literature supported the need for communication between workers and leaders, recognizing communication as one of the antecedents to work engagement (Beslin & Chitra, 2004; Ghamrawi, 2011; Lingenfelter, 2015, Tschannen-Moran, 2009; Rock, 2008). A lack of interaction can build barriers between leaders and teachers. To remedy this, leaders should frequently and regularly interact with all staff.

Truthfulness and transparency in communication are also important for teachers. Teachers like to understand why decisions are made in an organization and feel more connected and engaged when they understand leaders' motives. As each teacher and leader work for the same organization, a sense of community and purpose can evolve when reasons accompany decisions. Hidden or personal agendas create disengagement between leaders and teachers. Leaders should incorporate truthful, honest and transparent communications in their interactions with teachers.

Leaders should make time to be out of their offices and have a presence in the learning areas of the school. Findings in this study indicated that teachers want leaders to be visible and have a presence. When leaders are visible interacting around the school and with teachers it sends a message to teachers that leaders are interested and care about what is happening in the school and what teachers are doing. In addition, some teachers feel it is part of a leader's job to move about

the school and know what is happening. An added benefit in leaders making the rounds is it allows adding touch points with each teacher which can support relationship building.

Finding from this study supported positive effects of relationship and community building on engagement. Existing literature highlights trust as an outcome of relationship building (Lencioni, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). Trust allows individuals to work together, share ideas, and minimizes fear and anxiety. Trust increases teachers' willingness to engage which can lead to an increase in taking on additional roles and responsibilities.

International school leaders should regularly assess the needs of their teachers to better support them with the resources they need to do their work and alleviate job demands. Data from this study indicated that time was a valuable resource for teachers. With this in mind leaders should consider the time requirements of teachers and scheduling practices that can provide the best use of teachers' time.

A final suggestion that international school leadership can add to training and professional development is emotional intelligence training; learning to recognize one's emotions and the emotions of others. Results of this study identified multiple disengaging interactions grounded in building trusting relationships and professional and respectful interactions. Existing literature notes the importance of emotional intelligence. Leaders who use emotional intelligence offer authentic interest and care in their employees (Shuck and Herd, 2012) and allows leaders and workers to improved opportunities to interact in professional and respectful ways.

Recommendations for Further Research

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the experiences of international school teachers' lived experiences related to work engagement and the practices of leadership that lead to disengagement. Not only does an interpretive phenomenological analysis hope to add to the current body of knowledge it also helps to identify areas for further research (Smith et al., 2009).

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The findings from this study support the need for future research on engagement in international schools. Continued research on engagement in international schools may also address limitations of this study. The following questions were established for consideration of further research related to the findings of the study and insights from the researcher.

- What effects on engagement are realized by international school teachers in connection to international schools as businesses?

- How do new or newly appointed international school teachers experience engagement?

- What influences international school teachers to feel they are part of something bigger?

- What role does leadership play in how international school teachers demonstrate organizational commitment?

- What reasons do international school teachers have for not demonstrating organizational commitment?

- What influence does job satisfaction have on engagement for tenured international school teachers?

- What influence does doing the right job have on teacher engagement?

- What influence does culture have on engagement expectations?

- How effective are international school's Human Resources departments in supporting teachers when leaders are unsupportive, hostile, or abusive?

Further research on engagement in international school teachers might follow a different methodology. The use of case study could provide greater details in experiences of teachers' engagement. A quantitative design comparing engagement in new and tenured teachers could provide beneficial statistical data to help build a better understanding of international school teacher engagement.

Conclusion

This phenomenological study has important implications for international school leaders who wish to support and build engagement, in tenured teachers, beyond the classroom setting. Eleven K–12 international school teachers—eight females and three males—from CIS member schools in Central Europe were interviewed to understand how they experienced work engagement and what practices of leadership create disengagement for them in their work. Findings of the study revealed, at the teaching level, participants are engaged in their teaching roles and their engagement is internally driven by personal values, minimizing the role and perceived influence of leadership. Additionally, the findings revealed, at the organizational level, participants desired to interact professionally with those in leadership positions and that leadership's interactions and communications have a direct influence on participant's work and organizational engagement.

The latter two findings are consistent with current literature on engagement in non-educational settings and studies of trust in educational settings in the United States. Participants experienced organizational engagement in multiple ways: through transparent and positive communication with their leaders, when leadership has a presence and is visible in the learning environment, as leaders work to build trusting personal relationships and build community, through leadership's providing professional growth opportunities, and when leaders treat them with professional respect. Disengagement was experienced by participants through the practices and actions of leaders that included: the lack of proper formal observations and feedback, lack of meaningful feedback, when leaders demonstrate combative or defensive behaviors, avoidance of interactions and lack of presence by leadership, lack of communication from leaders, through the lack of information sharing, actions by leaders that indicate they have favorite teachers, when leaders engage in unprofessional behaviors and cannot control their emotions, and leaders not recognizing professional status of teachers.

The magnitude of efforts required to maintain the operational efficiency of an international school reach far beyond the classroom setting and requires support from all staff members, including teachers. As a future educational leader, it is this researcher's hope that international school leaders will consider and include the findings and implications for practice of this study in leadership training and professional development.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Personal values
1. Do you see consistent alignment between your organization's values and leadership's behavior?
2. In what ways do your values influence your engagement level?

Leadership
3. What specific leader actions or behaviors influence your level of engagement?
4. Describe the specific contexts or situations, with your leaders, that have typically influenced or affected your level of engagement.

Trust and Respect
5. With engagement in mind; describe or explain how your leaders cultivate and foster your trust and respect?

Job role/Organizational role
6. From the time you were hired in your current position to the present, describe your level of engagement?
7. Describe the value you would place on your leader's role in your engagement?

Communication
8. What have you experienced in terms of communication with individuals in your school's leadership?
9. Describe your level of engagement after a typical communication or interaction with your leader or a person in leadership?
10. Thinking of a recent communication or interaction, what, specific elements, if any, increased or decreased your level of engagement?

Engagement
11. At this moment in time would you consider yourself to be engaged, disengaged, or actively disengaged? Why?
12. Can you describe your leader's behaviors that cultivate your engagement or disengagement?
13. What is the one thing that your leader/s could do to improve your engagement?

Is there anything on your mind right now that you would like to tell me or add to the interview?

Appendix B: Recruitment Letter to Head of School

Joseph Leonetti

Doctoral Candidate, Concordia University–Portland

Employee engagement is a growing interest in organizations around the world and across many fields including education. International school leaders have a profound effect on teachers, student outcomes, and ultimately organizational success and competitive advantage. As a candidate in the Educational Leadership doctoral program a Concordia University, I am conducting a research study on teacher engagement in international schools. The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the lived experiences of international school teachers in relation to the practices of leadership that influence work engagement.

Your role in the study, if you agree to participate, is to send the message below to your teaching staff. I would be appreciative if you are able to preface the message with a few words of encouragement to your staff to participate in this study.

Confidentiality will be maintained during and after the study by means of secure, password-protected electronic files. Participants will be assigned pseudonyms. Any identifying information related to schools, colleagues, or administrators will also be kept confidential. Participation is voluntary and participants may decide at any time to discontinue their participation. Upon withdrawal any collected data will be deleted and removed from the data collection repository.

Please contact me at [redacted] if you have any questions about the study. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390). I sincerely thank you for your help,

Joseph Leonetti

----------------------------Please send the message below to staff----------------------------

Joseph Leonetti
Doctoral Candidate, Concordia University

Dear Teacher,

Employee engagement is a growing interest in organizations around the world and across many fields including education. International school leaders have a profound effect on teachers, student outcomes, and ultimately organizational success and competitive advantage. As a candidate in the Educational Leadership doctoral program a Concordia University, I am conducting a research study on teacher engagement in international schools. The purpose of the study is to gain insight into the lived experiences of international school teachers in relation to the practices of leadership that influence work engagement.

Your role in the study, if you agree to participate, will involve participating in a semistructured Skype interview. Due to the nature of international teaching contracts and international teacher mobility, there are certain criteria for interview participants. The criteria include: currently teaching in a Central European international school with English as the medium

of instruction, been in your current position for at least four years, and do not intend to leave your position in the near future (2 or more years).

Audio recording of interviews will be made for transcribing and coding purposes. Copies of transcripts will be provided to you for verification and approval. I am additionally interested in artifacts and documents that relate to engagement if you are willing to or can share them.

Your participation in this research will result in no direct benefit or compensation to you. By volunteering to participate, you will be contributing to the developing body of knowledge on international school leadership practices that influence teacher engagement. Ultimately this research can help inform leadership professional development and training.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout this study, and I would be glad to share my findings with you when my research study is complete. Participation is voluntary and participants may decide at any time to discontinue their participation. To participate, click "I agree to participate" link below. After clicking the agree to participate link you will be redirected to a Qualtrics survey form where you can enter your contact information and provide basic demographic information. Volunteer participants will be contacted and an informed consent form will be sent by email.

Please contact me at [redacted] if you have any questions about the study. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

I agree to participate.

I sincerely thank you for your help,

Joseph Leonetti

Research Study Title: Leadership Engagement Practices in International Schools
Principal Investigator: Joseph Leonetti
Research Institution: Concordia University–Portland
Faculty Advisor: William Boozang

Purpose and what you will be doing:
The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the lived experiences of international school teachers in relation to the practices of leadership that influence engagement. Teachers will volunteer to participate in semistructured interviews. No one will be paid to be in the study. Enrollment will begin January 14, 2019 and end on January 21, 2019. The study is scheduled to last from January 28, 2019 to February 11, 2019.

To be in the study, you will be asked to:
- Read, sign, and return a consent for participation
- Participate in a 30 to 40–minute interview
- Share artifacts or documents if possible or allowed
- Be available for "member checking" to review transcripts, themes, and conclusions

Risks:
There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, we will protect your information. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic passcode. This study will use a passcode protected computer and recording device and software. When we or any of our investigators look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. We will refer to your data with a code that only the principal investigator knows links to you. This way, your identifiable information will not be stored with the data. We will not identify you in any publication or report. Your information will always be kept private and then all study documents will be destroyed 3 years after we conclude this study.

Benefits:
By volunteering to participate, you will be contributing to the developing body of knowledge on international school leadership practices that influence teacher engagement. Ultimately this research can help inform leadership professional development and training resulting in increased engagement.

Confidentiality:
This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. Exceptions to confidentiality include legal obligation to report mistreatment of children, serious threats against self or others, or court ordered release of data.
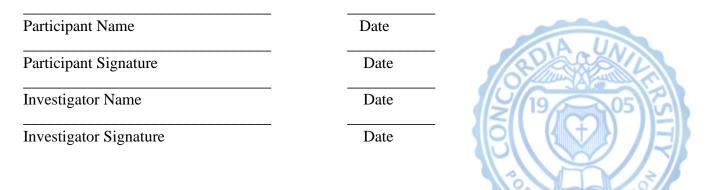
Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions.

Contact Information:
You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Joseph Leonetti at email [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

_____   _____
Participant Name   Date

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

_____   _____
Investigator Name   Date

_____   _____
Investigator Signature   Date

Investigator: Joseph Leonetti email: [redacted]
c/o: Faculty Advisor: Dr. William Boozang; bboozang@cu-portland.edu;
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, Oregon 97221

Appendix D: Demographic Survey Questions

Please indicate your nationality.

Please select the choice that best describes your age.

Please indicate your domestic status.

Please indicate the number of years you have been teaching.

Please indicate the number of years you have taught internationally.

Please indicate the number of years you have been in your current country.

Please indicate the number of years you have been at your current school.

Please indicate the years of your average length of teaching assignment.

Please indicate your level of involvement in committees or other activities in your prior schools.

Please indicate your primary role in your current school.

Please indicate if you have an additional role beyond teaching.

If you indicated that you have an additional role, please indicate the level of attention required.

Please indicate who you directly report to in your school.

Appendix E: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously- researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

> As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does "fraudulent" mean?

> "Fraudulent" work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one's own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate's final work without full and complete documentation.

What is "unauthorized" assistance?

> "Unauthorized assistance" refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another's work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.

2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association.*

_____
Digital Signature

Joseph Alan Leonetti
_____
Name (Typed)

November 29, 2019
_____
Date