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# Teacher Perceptions of Administrative Support in Urban Charter Schools

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IN URBAN CHARTER  
SCHOOLS

by

Ali Yilmaz

A Dissertation Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy  
in Urban Education

at

The University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee

May 2016

## ABSTRACT

### TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IN URBAN CHARTER SCHOOLS

by

Ali Yilmaz

The University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee, 2016  
Under the Supervision of Professor Simone C.O. Conceição

National teacher survey results indicate that lack of administrative support is the most frequently cited reason as to why teachers leave charter schools. This non-experimental quantitative study explored what types of administrative support are more valuable to urban charter school teachers and the extent of that support in their current schools. This study also investigated if perceived needs of urban charter school teachers for administrative support change as they gain more teaching experience.

In this study, a 41-item survey titled *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was validated, and used to measure perceived support needs of 1,945 teachers from 127 different urban charter schools across the nation. Data analysis involved various quantitative methods including factor analysis, descriptive statistics, one sample t-test, and one-way ANOVA. Three themes emerged from the analysis of data:

Perceived Importance of Administrative Support: (a) except for emotional support, all dimensions of administrative support are more important to first year teachers in urban charter schools than teachers with more experience, and the importance of administrative support gradually decreases as teachers gain more teaching experience; (b) urban charter school teachers in career stage-I and career stage-II have significantly higher perceived need for appraisal and

informational support compared to teachers in career stage-III; (c) instrumental and emotional support are more important to urban charter school teachers than other dimensions of support, where informational support ranks last in importance.

Perceived Administrative Support Gap (PASG): (a) there is a statistically significant difference between teachers' perceived need for administrative support and the extent of such support in their current schools, confirming that urban charter school teachers are not satisfied with the level of support that they receive; (b) urban charter school teachers in their first to fourth years of teaching are more concerned about the extent of administrative support than teachers with more experience.

Level of Experience and Teacher Turnover: (a) urban charter school teachers are considerably younger and with less teaching experience than teachers in traditional public schools and charter schools at large; and (b) the average teacher turnover rate in urban charter schools is about 39%.

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To

my wife, Meltem,

my daughter, Aysegul,

my son, Ahmet,

and my parents.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

One of the core beliefs in Human Resource Development (HRD) is that “[o]rganizations are human-made entities that rely on human expertise to establish and achieve their goals” (Swanson & Holton, 2009, p. 10). From this perspective, employee “[t]urnover touches every aspect of organizations because people touch every aspect of these organizations” (Finnegan, 2010, p. 12). Persistently high employee turnover rates create performance gaps and/or deficiencies that adversely impact organizations’ smooth operations and business success. This is why attracting and retaining productive and talented employees have gained a strategic importance for organizations of the twenty-first century.

Haberman and Post (1998) espoused that “[n]o school can be better than its teachers” (p. 102). This is a widely held belief supported by many empirical studies that teachers play a very critical role in schools success as their performance makes a profound difference in students’ learning (Marzano, 2003; Sanders & Horn, 1998; Rivkin, Hanusek, & Kain, 2002). Both scholars and professional educators agree on the need for recruiting and retaining highly-skilled and effective teachers to produce desirable learning outcomes in public schools, especially in those urban schools located in low-income communities. Recent literature suggests that administrative support is the most salient factor affecting teacher retention in urban schools identified with high-poverty and high-minority student populations (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2011; Cancio, Albercht, & Johns, 2013). In order to achieve high teacher performance, job satisfaction, and retention for sustained improvement in urban public schools, school administrators need to make conscious efforts to understand and satisfy diverse support needs of their teachers. This is critically important in the urban charter schools that have been experiencing historically high teacher turnover rates.

## **Charter Schools in the U.S.**

The concept of a charter was first proposed in the 1970s by a New England educator, Ray Budde, who advocated that groups of teachers should be given contracts or “charters” by their local school boards to explore innovative teaching methods. The promotion of the “charter” concept continued in the 1980s with Albert Shanker, who was a former president of the American Federation for Teachers. Shanker stimulated the idea of establishing teacher-led laboratories to implement alternative instructional practices and replicating successful ones in other public schools. By the late 1980s, there were already some schools-within-schools in Philadelphia, which were called “charters.” In 1991, with a slim margin, Minnesota’s legislature passed the first charter school law in the United States. California became the second state to pass charter school legislation in 1992.

According to the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools ([NAPCS], 2014), charter schools are “unique public schools that are allowed the freedom to be more innovative while being held accountable for advancing student achievement” (p. 3). Similar to traditional public schools, charter schools are open to all children in a district without any tuition charge and special admission requirements. Charter schools offer parents an alternative public school education option to meet their child’s specific educational needs and interests. Charter schools have complete freedom “from many bureaucratic rules and regulations that [normally] apply to traditional public schools run by school districts” (Batdorff et al., 2014, p. 5) in exchange for accountability of advancing student academic achievement and rigorous financial and organizational stability requirements.

The first charter school, City Academy Charter School, was officially opened in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1992. Over the past 24 years, charter schools have gained increasing popularity and



proliferated across the United States. As of March 2015, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Vermont are the only states without a charter school legislation. On March 19, 2015, Alabama became the 44th state to sign a bill to allow charter schools. The first charter school in Alabama is expected to open in 2017. Today, with 513,304 students in more than 1,200 charter schools, California has by far the largest charter school enrollment of any state (NAPCS, 2015). During the 2013-2014 school year, 91% of all public school students in New Orleans, Louisiana attended charter schools, proportionally the highest charter school enrolment in the United States (NAPCS, 2014). Similarly, 55% of the students in the Detroit City School District attended charter schools during the 2013-2014 school year.

Over the last decade, the number of charter schools has increased nearly 218% which equates to 340 new schools per year, while total student enrollment in charter schools has simultaneously increased as much as 320%. In the 2003-2004 school year, there were only 2,959 charter schools with 789,479 students. During the 2013-2014 school year, there were 6,440 charter schools serving approximately 2.5 million students, which accounted for nearly five percent of all students in the U.S. public education system. The estimated number of students on charter schools' waiting lists was 920,000 in the 2013-2014 school year (NAPCS, 2015). The number of charter schools has been growing at a steady pace with an average rate of 6.86% every year since the 2009-2010 school year, whereas the number of traditional public schools decreased by 3.53%, from 93,065 to 89,775 during the same time frame (NAPCS, 2015).

Over 50% of the existing charter schools are located in settings classified as "city," and provide alternative public school education to students who come from predominantly low-income families, and who represent minority populations. For example, during the 2013-2014 school year, there were a total of 59,627 students enrolled in charter schools in Illinois, 96.2% of

which were non-White (55.3% Black, 36% Hispanic, 1.3% Asian, 3.2% Others). This can be attributed to the fact that approximately 96% of charter schools in Illinois are located in an urban city setting. The percentage of students from nondominant ethnic backgrounds changes based on where charter schools are located, in a city, suburb, town, or rural area. For instance, in North Carolina, where only one-third of the charter schools are located in a city setting, more than 60% of students were White and less than 20% were qualified for free or reduced lunch during the 2010-2011 school year. At the national level, during the same school year, while 47.6% of the students attending traditional public schools were non-White, 64.3% of the students attending charter schools were non-White. According to a nationwide survey by the Center for Education Reform ([CER], 2014), “sixty-one percent of charter schools serve a student population where over 60% qualify for the federal Free or Reduced lunch program based on their family’s low income” (p. 3). These statistics confirm the conclusion that when compared to traditional public schools, charter schools are more likely to serve students from minority populations and low-income families.

Similar to traditional public schools, charter schools receive state and federal funds based on their student enrollment. However, upon their perusal of audited financial statements in 30 states and the District of Columbia from the 2010-2011 school year, Batdorff et al. (2014) found that on average charter schools received 28.4% less funding per student than traditional public schools. This means that in the 2010-2011 school year, an average charter school with 400 students received \$1,525,600 less funds than a traditional public school with the same student enrollment (Batdorff et al., 2014). Besides, unlike traditional public schools, charter schools usually do not receive additional funding for their expenses related to construction, acquisition, maintenance, and security of their facilities (CER, 2014). Due to this inequality in funding,

charter schools are more likely to have inadequate facilities, supplies, and other vital resources (Chen, 2015). Stuit and Smith (2012) reported that 22.5% of charter school teachers cited dissatisfaction with workplace conditions as the most important reason to move to another school, compared to only 7% of traditional public school teachers.

Inadequate funding also affects the work conditions of charter school teachers. According to national survey results, charter school teachers report higher workloads than teachers in traditional public schools (Ni, 2012). Charter schools typically do not have teacher unions, collective bargaining units, long term contracts, or tenure positions (Exstrom, 2012). As a result, most charter school teachers work on an annual, at-will employment contract (Gross & DeArmond, 2010) and do not collectively bargain for their salary and benefits. Results from the 2011-2012 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) demonstrate that on average, charter school teachers received \$8,900 less salary than traditional public school teachers (Goldring et al., 2013). The same results also indicate that when compared to traditional public school teachers, charter school teachers were less likely to receive professional development focused on their subject area, and were more likely to teach students with disabilities and with limited English proficiency.

Moreover, inadequate funding negatively impacts charter schools' ability to attract and hire more qualified and effective teachers. Carruthers (2012) found that "less qualified and less effective teachers move [from public schools] to charter schools, particularly if they move to urban schools, low performing schools, or schools with higher share of nonwhite students" (p. 233). On average, charter school teachers are less likely to hold a graduate degree, less likely to be licensed, and more likely to have three or fewer years of experience (Carruthers, 2012; Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013). According to the 2011-2012 SASS, on average, teachers in

public charter schools were five years younger, and had considerably less teaching experience (nine years) than teachers in traditional public schools (14 years). The SASS results also indicated that 26.3% of charter school teachers had less than four years of teaching experience, compared to 10.7% in traditional public schools (Goldring et al., 2013).

The demographics of charter school teachers also differed from teachers in traditional public schools. According to the 2011 teacher characteristics data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), charter school teachers were more diverse (Snyder & Dillow, 2012). The data also indicated that only 16.7% of the teachers in traditional public schools were from non-dominant populations, compared to 26.1% in charter schools. Charter schools employed almost twice as many Black teachers than traditional public schools (12.3% vs. 6.9%), and 2.3% more Hispanic teachers compared to traditional public schools (9.3% vs. 7.0%).

The SASS results also portray that charter school teachers are more likely to be non-traditional teachers without teaching certification and/or education degree. However, the differences in teacher qualifications between charter and traditional public schools can change considerably from one state to another due to different staffing regulations. For example, the charter schools established in Arizona, District of Columbia, Louisiana, and Texas are not required to hire certified teachers. On the other hand, some states such as Connecticut and North Carolina allow charter schools to have up to 50% of their teaching staff to be non-certified. Some states have more complex regulations for hiring non-certified teachers. Illinois, for example, gives charter schools freedom to hire uncertified teachers as long as they have a bachelor's degree, five years of teaching experience in the area of degree, a passing score on state teacher tests, and evidence of professional growth. The Chicago charter schools established before April 16, 2003 can hire as much as 50% of their instructional staff based on this criteria. If a charter

school in Chicago was established after April 16, 2003 or the school is located outside of the city of Chicago, then 75% of the individuals employed in instructional positions are required to hold a valid teaching certificate.

Charter school teachers are also more vulnerable to more frequent principal changes (Exstrom, 2012). According to the New York City Charter School Center (2012), between 2006 and 2011, the conservative estimate of average year-to-year principal turnover in New York charter schools was five times larger than the traditional public schools (18.7 % vs. 3.6%). Similarly, based on their analysis of longitudinal data on Utah principals and schools from 2004 to 2011, Ni, Sun, and Rorrer (2012) found that charter schools had a higher principal turnover rate than traditional public schools. Ni et al. (2012) also reported that charter school principals were less likely to have master's degree and were less likely to hold a current state administrative license. This is consistent with the findings of another study that on average, schools serving minority students from low-income families have principals with less experience, less education, and degrees from less selective colleges (Loeb, Kalogrides, & Horng, 2010).

### **Problem Statement**

With a total of approximately 3.4 million members, public school teachers constitute one of the largest occupations in the U.S. workforce. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014), as of May 2013, teaching occupations were the fifth out of six largest occupations in the U.S. public sector. It is alarming that public school teachers' attrition and mobility rates have been chronically high since the late 1980s. For instance, during the 2012-2013 school year, more than a half million public school teachers either moved (271,900) to another school or left (259,400) the profession entirely (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). This turnover rate has been

relatively and consistently higher than many other occupations and professions in the United States (Ingersoll, 2012).

At the organizational level, high teacher turnover harms urban schools in many ways. Phillips and Connell (2003) listed 11 categories that successfully encapsulate the negative impacts of turnover on organizations in general: (1) high financial costs; (2) loss of talent necessary for the survival of the organization; (3) exit problems such as increased litigation due to issues of disgruntled and departing employees; (4) productivity losses and workflow interruptions; (5) decreased quality of service to internal and external customers; (6) loss of critical skills needed to maintain ongoing operations and projects; (7) shortage of staff to explore or take advantage of new business opportunities; (8) loss of administrative time to deal with turnover-related issues; (9) disruption of social and communication networks; (10) low job satisfaction and extra burden for the remaining employees; and (11) negative public image of the organization.

More specifically, the high teacher turnover rates in urban schools lead to serious problems such as limited and less cohesive instructional programs (Guin, 2004), “lack of continuity in instruction, lack of adequate teaching expertise for making curriculum decisions and providing support and mentoring [for the new teachers]” (Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005, p. 44), recurrent hiring and training needs, erosion of professional development for other teachers in the building, decreased instructional quality, extra burden on remaining teachers to make up for the shortcomings of the new teachers, and “loss of instructional knowledge among faculty that is critical for supporting student learning” (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013, p. 18). The high teacher turnover also impacts schools’ ability to establish

productive professional learning communities and positive school cultures, and to maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of their parents (Miron & Applegate, 2007).

It is very concerning that the overall teacher turnover rate in the U.S. urban schools with high composition of minority students is three times greater than the schools with predominantly White students (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009; Brill & McCartney, 2008). Furthermore, teachers with stronger qualifications (as measured by general-knowledge certification-exam scores) are more likely to quit or transfer than are less-qualified teachers, especially if they teach in low-achieving schools (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005). Findings also suggest that there is a significant and negative correlation between teacher turnover rate and students' achievement levels in math and English on the standardized state tests (Guin, 2004; Ronfeldt et al., 2013), and these effects are more significant in schools with more low-performing and Black students (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). In general, earlier studies seem to agree that new teachers are on average less effective than other teachers, and due to high teacher turnover in their schools, those students who are exposed to higher percentage of new teachers are more likely to receive an inferior education compared to other students (Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2000). This is especially problematic for students who come from low income families as they are more dependent on their teachers (Downey, Von Hippel, & Hughes, 2008; Simon & Johnson, 2015).

Chronically high teacher turnover in urban schools also has a considerable impact on their operational budgets by reducing available funding and resources that might otherwise be spent for better resources and initiatives that can help improve quality of education and student learning outcomes, and for improving working conditions of the teachers. According to a new report from Alliance for Excellent Education, the annual cost of recruiting and training

replacement teachers in U.S. public schools is approximately \$2.2 billion (Haynes, 2014). Rinke (2011) posited that each teacher who leaves the district can cost up to \$8,000, while the effect of teacher turnover on the states' budgets has a range of approximately \$5 million in Wyoming to \$235 million in Texas. Based on their analyses of the 2007-08 SASS and the 2008-09 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) results, Ingersoll and Perda (2014) estimated the overall cost of teacher attrition to U.S. public schools is between \$1.004 billion and \$2.186 billion annually. In another study, Barnes, Crowe, and Schaefer (2007) estimated the annual total costs associated with teacher turnover to be \$7.34 billion at the national level with an average cost of \$70,000 per urban school and \$33,000 per non-urban schools.

Turnover may also have negative impacts on individual teachers who leave. For example, teacher departures may result in temporary loss of employee benefits and job security due to loss of seniority or tenured position. Besides, transition between organizations can be costly because of relocation costs or some contractual obligations such as noncompete provisions or breach of contract fees. Furthermore, dismissals resulting from insufficient performance or compliance issues can be financially devastating for teachers as they may not be able to find an alternative employment. They may also experience high stress and low-morale as a result of losing the social network and emotional support provided by their coworkers and the organization. At the same time, issues such as adjustment to a new school culture, policies, and procedures, and attaining necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to sufficiently perform their new teaching duties may adversely impact their initial performance and effectiveness.

Since 1988, the teacher turnover rates in traditional public schools have ranged from 12.4 to 16.5% (Goldring et al., 2014). As part of the same public education system, charter schools are not immune to teacher turnover problems either. Charters schools lose about 20 to 25 % of



their teachers every year, which is significantly higher than traditional public schools (Goldring et al., 2014; Miron & Applegate, 2007; Stuit & Smith, 2010, 2012; Torres, 2014). Stuit and Smith (2012) found that “turnover rate of charter school teachers [25%] was twice as high as traditional public school teachers [14%]” (p. 268). Moreover, the likelihood of “a charter school teacher leaving the profession versus staying in the same school was 130% greater than a traditional public school teacher” (Stuit & Smith, 2010, p. 2). Robinson and Opfer (2005) reported that in the state of Ohio, 44.3 to 52.8% of charter school teachers left their schools, whereas this number only fluctuated between 6.8 to 11% in traditional public schools during the same period.

National teacher survey data suggest that lack of administrative support is the most frequently (65%) cited reason why teachers leave charter schools (Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Stuit & Smith, 2012). Conversely, efforts to address ongoing staffing problems in urban schools generally focused on finding alternative ways to attract qualified and effective teachers into these schools without much attention to providing necessary support to retain the ones who are already there (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Simon & Johnson, 2013; TNTP, 2012).

Both qualitative and quantitative studies have confirmed repeatedly that administrative support is significantly correlated with teachers’ intent to stay in the profession, job satisfaction, and positive views of their schools (Birkeland & Johnson, 2002; Boyd et al., 2011; Cancio, Albercht, & Johns, 2013; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Finnigan, 2012; Littrell, Billingsley, & Cross, 1994; Prather-Jones, 2011; Russell, Williams, & Gleason-Gomez, 2010; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2010; Useem, 2001). For example, a recent quantitative study examining the relationship between school contextual factors and teachers’ retention decisions in New York City endorsed that “the administration factor is the only one that significantly predicts teacher retention

decisions after controlling for other school and teacher characteristics” (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 323). While there is considerable evidence suggesting that administrative support is an important factor in teachers’ decisions to move to another school or leave the profession, it is not known what types of support are more valuable to teachers and what they really mean by lack of administrative support.

Previous studies also indicated that there is limited information regarding teachers’ perceptions of work conditions in charter schools (Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Miron & Applegate, 2007). A comprehensive review of recent literature has revealed that the number of research involving charter school teachers is very limited when compared to volumes of research on teachers in traditional public schools. Due to dearth of research on charter school teachers’ perceptions of administrative support, little is known about the nature of the teacher turnover problem in charter schools as compared to traditional public schools (Gross & DeArmond, 2010).

Additionally, a growing body of research suggests that teachers go through various stages during the course of their careers and their developmental needs may change in each stage (Eros, 2011; Podsen, 2002; Zepeda, 2008). The existing literature on teacher development agrees that teachers at different stages of their career have predictable job skills, knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, satisfactions, stress, and concerns (Burden, 1979, 1982; Burke, Christensen, & Fessler, 1984; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Huberman, 1989; Katz, 1972; Klassen, Durksen, & Tze, 2014; Putman, 2012; Speck & Knipe, 2005; Steffy & Wolfe, 2001; Rebore, 2015; Zepeda, 2008). The consensus is that administrators should provide different types of support when working with teachers at different stages of their career. While results from recent studies point out that almost half of new teachers leave the profession before even they reach to five-year experience mark

(Hughes, 2012; Latham & Vogt, 2007; Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008), it is not known how teachers' perceived support needs are different at the earlier stages of their career as compared to other teachers with longer tenures.

Teaching is a unique profession in which both new and veteran teachers are expected to execute similar daily tasks, and are evaluated by the same performance criteria (Bluestein, 2015). Despite considerable number of studies that investigated the relationship between administrative support and teacher retention, it is still not clear if perceived needs of teachers change as they gain more teaching experience. Schindewolf (2008) suggested that teachers' perceived need for administrative support should be investigated based on demographic information such as school type and number of years teaching. However, in the absence of this knowledge base, it is difficult for school administrators to determine if and how they should customize their support efforts based on teaching experiences of their teachers.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The primary purpose of this non-experimental quantitative study was to explore what types of administrative support are more valuable to urban charter school teachers and if they perceive that support to be sufficient at their current school. The secondary purpose of this study was to investigate if and how the perceived needs of urban charter school teachers for administrative support change at different stages of their career.

### **Study Implications**

A clear understanding for perceived administrative support needs of urban charter school teachers can help both policy makers and urban charter school administrators create more effective strategies to reduce chronically high teacher turnover rates. High teacher retention can boost students' academic achievement, and reduce costs associated with recruitment, hiring, and

training of new teachers. Since high teacher turnover is a common problem in most urban schools, the results of this study will also inform both administrative practices and future studies in other urban school settings. In addition, this study introduced a new theoretical framework by which researchers and practitioners can examine perceived administrative support needs in any PreK-12 school setting, and help school leaders identify what types of administrative support are perceived to be insufficient in their building.

Improved administrative support can lead to higher teacher performance, motivation, and job satisfaction, and consequently, increase teachers' desire to continue teaching at their current schools. Enhanced administrative support can also catalyze teachers' professional growth, and provide a greater sense of accomplishment and belonging that can make other school level factors less of a concern in their employment related decisions. Initiatives to close perceived administrative support gaps can foster mutual trust, understanding, and respect, all of which are crucial for establishing and maintaining a successful organization.

Earlier studies suggest that there are many school level factors that influence teachers' career decisions. Some of the most important factors such as competitive compensation and benefits are beyond the control of urban charter school administrations due to budgetary limitations. However, implementing an effective teacher support system does not require much funding and any changes in school policies and teacher contracts. An increased understanding of what premium teachers place on different types of administrative support and how they perceive the extent of current administrative support can help charter school leaders enhance their practice as early as the next school day.

## Definitions of Terms

There are several key terms that are repeatedly used in this study. For consistency and clarification purposes, definitions for these frequent terms are provided in alphabetical order below. It is important to note that definitions for other critical terms are available within relevant sections throughout the chapters.

*Administrative Support:* can be defined as behaviors of school administrators that “make teachers’ work easier and improve their teaching” (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 307), and that lead teachers to believe that they are “cared for and loved, esteemed, and a member of a network of mutual obligations” (Cobb, 1976, p. 300). It includes various administrative behaviors “that positively contribute to the capacity of teachers to effectively cope with the challenges inherent in the teaching profession” (Cordeau, 2003, p. 18).

*Administrative Support Behaviors:* It includes all types of actions or behaviors of administrators that can be classified as administrative support.

*Charter Schools:* are publicly funded privately operated schools that have complete freedom “from many bureaucratic rules and regulations that [normally] apply to traditional public schools run by school districts” (Wolf, 2014, p. 5) in exchange for accountability of advancing student academic achievement and rigorous financial and organizational stability requirements.

*Charter Management Organization:* Non-profit organizations that work with charter authorizing agents to establish and manage charter schools. Typical management services include drafting charter proposals, securing start-up funding, facility management, human resources, curriculum development, financial and operational supervision, information management, and so on.

*Dimensions of Administrative Support:* According to *the Model of Social Support* by House (1981), administrative support behaviors can be divided into four broad categories: appraisal,

emotional, informational, and instrumental support. *Dimensions of Administrative Support* refers to these broad categories of administrative support.

*Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)*: It is a survey instrument which has been used by the National Center for Education Statistics to investigate current trends in teacher retention, school programs, characteristics of teachers and administrators, and general conditions in both public and private PreK-12 schools.

*Teacher Retention*: It refers to the number or percentage of teachers who started working in the beginning of a specified time frame and who continue to work in the same school in the following period. In the case of urban charter schools, one academic year, which generally runs between September and June, is considered as the unit of measurement.

*Teacher Turnover*: The terms *teacher turnover* or *teacher attrition* will be used interchangeably, and refer to the number or percentage of teachers who leave their organization for various reasons. Among these teachers, according to Stein and Christiansen (2010) “productive recruits with great prospects who choose to leave” (p. 18) are grouped as *regrettable turnover*, as oppose to the ones performing significantly below expectations with low prospect and who choose to leave or are dismissed are classified as *desirable turnover*.

*Teacher Turnover Rate*: The proportion of the teachers who stay in the school to the average total number of teachers in a school year will be used as the equation for *teacher retention rate*.

*Traditional Public School*: Schools that are funded publicly and controlled by local governments to provide free education for the students in PreKindergarten through 12 grades.

*Urban*: Density and diversity are some of the primary attributes that authorities use to define the term *urban*. A formal definition for this term includes a densely settled territory that consists of core census block groups, or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per

square mile, and surrounding census blocks, which have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002). The term *urban* also “refer[s] to densely populated low-income neighborhoods located in cities that are dominated by racial and ethnic minorities” (Martin, 2004, p. 4).

*Urban Charter School:* It refers to those charter schools located in territories that can quickly be identified with the density and diversity characteristics of urban. Given their historically higher teacher attrition rates, urban charter schools are considered as “hard-to-staff schools with high proportion of students from low-income and nondominant racial and cultural communities” (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010, p. 71).

### **Theoretical Framework**

In this study, administrative support was examined in four dimensions: (a) appraisal support, (b) emotional support, (c) informational support, and (d) instrumental support, using *the Model of Social Support* established by House (1981). To investigate these dimensions, this study adapted and modified administrative support items from two existing survey instruments: *Mentoring Alternatively Certified Teachers: Principals’ Perceptions* by Cordeau (2003) and *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* by Schindewolf (2008). Additional administrative support items were included and field-tested during this study.

This study also adapted the *Teacher Career Stages* model developed by Burden (1979) to examine if charter school teachers’ perceptions for administrative support change at different stages of their career. According to Burden (1979), the career stages of teachers consist of three stages: stage-I (year 1), stage-II (years 2-4), and stage-III (years 5 and more). In this study, the teachers were divided into three groups based on these career stages, and their responses to

administrative support questionnaire were analyzed accordingly. Chapter two further describes the theoretical framework which guided this study.

## **Methodology of the Study**

### **Research Method**

This non-experimental study employed a quantitative research method to explore what administrative support behaviors are more valuable to urban charter school teachers, to examine the extent of administrative support they perceive to be receiving from their administrators, and to determine if their perceived needs of administrative support change as they gain more teaching experience. Quantitative research was appropriate for this study because it encompassed collecting survey data from a large sample size, and tried to “establish the overall tendency of responses from individuals and to note how this tendency varies among people” (Creswell, 2012, p. 13). Earlier studies such as Cordeau (2003), Schindewolf (2008), and Peronto (2013) also used quantitative approach to investigate participant’s perceptions of administrative support in other school settings, and reported reliable results.

### **Sampling**

The target population of this nationwide study was charter school teachers in urban settings in the United States. This study employed convenience sampling technique to recruit participants from urban charter schools located in the states of California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. Names and e-mail addresses of the charter school leaders in these states were obtained using publicly accessible online school directories or through the state educational boards.



An informational e-mail was sent to all charter school leaders in the aforementioned states to request their assistance with this study by providing a list with names and work e-mail addresses of their teachers. Once teachers' names and work e-mail addresses were obtained from the school leaders, a personalized e-mail invitation was sent to each teacher. Great majority of the school leaders preferred teacher invitation e-mail to be sent to them so that they can review the content, and then forward it to their teachers internally.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the investigation in this study:

1. What administrative support behaviors are perceived by urban charter school teachers as more important?
2. What dimensions of administrative support are perceived by urban charter school teachers as most important?
3. Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived need for administrative support between different career stages?
4. What administrative support behaviors do urban charter school teachers perceive to be lacking in urban charter schools?
5. What dimensions of administrative support do urban charter school teachers perceive to be most insufficient in urban charter schools?
6. Do urban charter schools sufficiently meet the perceived administrative support needs of their teachers?
7. Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived lack of administrative support between different career stages?

## **Data Collection**

Prior to data collection, an approval from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee was secured (IRB Approval # 16.183). An online survey with a total of 59 administrative support items in four support dimensions was distributed using the Qualtrics survey platform. Each participant received an e-mail including a brief description of the study, assurances of anonymity, and an electronic link to the survey.

## **Data Analysis**

In this study, the unit of analysis was at the teacher level. The results comprised general rankings for the most valuable administrative support behaviors within each dimension for each teacher career stage. The differences between each teacher career stage were analyzed statistically. Various quantitative methods were employed to analyze the data using IBM SPSS 22.0 statistical software. These methods included descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, one sample t-test, and one-way ANOVA. All identifiers such as charter schools' names, locations, and management organizations were replaced by pseudonyms, and survey results were aggregated to ensure anonymity of the schools and participants.

## **Assumptions**

In this study, all charter teachers were assumed to have a work e-mail address and access to an internet connected device. It was also assumed that participants in this study read each administrative support item carefully, and responded honestly. Teachers are generally busy during the school day, and may be interrupted by students, parents, and colleagues while they are taking the survey. It was assumed that participants took enough time to fully understand each item before they responded. Since aggregated results for each school with more than 50% participation rate were shared with school administrators, it was assumed that invited charter

schools would be willing to participate in this study. It was also assumed that teachers would be motivated to participate as they may see this study as a unique opportunity to anonymously communicate their support needs to the school administration.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was heavily dependent on self-reports, which could not detect over or under statements. With self-report, even if anonymity was assured, it is still possible that some respondents were less than candid about their perceived needs for administrative support and/or the extent of available administrative support. For example, due to social desirability, participants might be inclined to rank their needs low for certain types of administrative support to look and/or feel more competent or independent. It is also possible that participants might have interpreted the survey items other than their intended purpose. Furthermore, teachers generally complain about lack of time to complete their daily tasks, and therefore, their response rate could be lower than expected, and could lead to complications with data collection within intended time period and with highest accuracy. Moreover, unmeasured aspects of the school environment and personal factors may have impacted teachers' perspectives of administrative support as well.

In addition, the survey data were obtained only one point in time, which did not allow for pretest and posttest comparisons to check the reliability of the responses. Furthermore, the design of this study was non-experimental, results from which cannot be confidently used to support causality among observed relations. Besides, chances are that among urban charter schools which were invited to participate those with severe teacher retention issues and/or going through some administrative problems might have elected not to participate in a study of this nature.

Another limitation was that this study employed convenience sampling to recruit teachers from urban charter schools. Polit and Beck (2012) posit that “convenience sampling is the most commonly used [sampling] method in many disciplines” (p. 277), but go on to say that it is the weakest form of sampling with the highest risk of sampling bias in heterogeneous populations. Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling technique which does not guarantee that each member of the targeted population has equal chance of being included in the sample. Representativeness of the sample in a quantitative study directly impacts the inferences and generalizations that can be made about the entire population.

### **Chapter Summary**

Chapter one introduced the research problem which was investigated in this study. It also incorporated general background information about development and characteristics of charter schools in the United States. In addition, this chapter presented the problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions and methodology, study implications, definition of terms, assumptions, and limitations of the study.

The following chapter will present a comprehensive review of the most recent and relevant literature pertaining to teacher turnover and administrative support, emphasize identified gaps in the literature, and further describe the theoretical framework which guided this research.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the most recent and relevant literature pertaining to teacher turnover and administrative support in public schools. The review of literature on teacher turnover will be presented through three themes: (1) prevalence, (2) consequences, and (3) reasons. Since lack of administrative support has been identified as the most important reason for teacher turnover, the literature on most important administrative support behaviors will be presented in a separate section. In addition, this chapter will elaborate on identified gaps in the existing literature, and establish the theoretical framework for this study.

### **Scope of the Review and Inclusion Criteria**

The references used in this review have been selected systematically to represent a wide range of recent studies germane to teacher retention and administrative support in public schools. The vast majority of the literature included in this chapter has been retrieved through an exhaustive search of Google-Scholar, EBSCO/ERIC, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global database, and University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee online library by using the following keywords: “teacher retention” OR “teacher attrition,” “administrative support” AND “teacher retention OR teacher attrition,” and “administrative support” AND “teacher retention OR teacher attrition” AND “charter schools.” In order to capture the most recent and relevant studies, journal articles and dissertations published after 2006 have been reviewed exclusively. This review solely focused on research studies conducted in the United States and published in English language.

By carefully examining the abstract and results sections of the articles and dissertations retrieved through the exhaustive search of the aforementioned databases, 122 were selected for further perusal, which yielded most relevant and reliable references encapsulated in this chapter.

In addition, data from selected books on teacher or employee retention and relevant statistics from various online sources such as the National Center for Educational Statistics, the Dashboard of National Alliance of Public Charter Schools, the New Teachers Center, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics have been used to support findings and claims included in this chapter.

### **Teacher Turnover**

It is a widely held belief supported by many empirical studies that teachers play a very critical role in schools success as their performance makes a profound difference in students' learning (Goldhaber, 2009; Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006; Marzano, 2003; Sanders & Horn, 1998; Rivkin, Hanusek, & Kain, 2005). Marzano (2003) stated that “[a]lthough most attempts to answer this question arrive at slightly different quantitative estimates” (p. 71), there is a growing consensus among both scholars and professional educators on the need for recruiting and retaining highly-skilled and effective teachers to produce desired learning outcomes in public schools, especially the urban schools that are located in low-income communities.

Today's urban schools deal with many critical issues such as high dropout rate, teenage pregnancy, out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, gang violence, large class sizes, low student scores on standardized achievement tests, low student attendance and engagement, low parental involvement, and lack of funding and necessary resources (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Horng, 2009; Levin, 2006). Despite increasing efforts in developing and implementing more effective educational policies and practices to meet the needs of economically, socially, and culturally diverse urban students, problems persist. Coupled with these ongoing problems, high teacher turnover rates in urban schools make the greatest contribution to a wide achievement gap between students attending suburban and urban schools.

The deleterious impacts of teacher turnover on urban school students attracted many researchers to study this chronic issue from different perspectives. The following section will provide a review of recent literature on teacher turnover. Table 1 illustrates the themes emerged during this review with a list of authors included in this section.

Table 1. *Literature on Teacher Turnover by Theme and Author*

Teacher Turnover	Themes	Authors
	Prevalence	Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al., 2009; Brill & McCartney, 2008; Carruthers, 2012; Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013; Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014; Gray & Taie, 2015; Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Harris, 2007; Haynes, 2014; Ingersoll, 2012; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2012; Latham & Vogt, 2007; Ladd, 2012; Miron & Applegate, 2007; Perrachione et al., 2008; Robinson & Opfer, 2005; Simon & Johnson, 2013; Stuit & Smith, 2010, 2012.
	Consequences	Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007; Clotfelter et al., 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Goldhaber, 2009; Gordon, Kane, & Staiger, 2006; Grissom, 2011; Guin, 2004; Henry, Fortner, & Bastian, 2012; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Marzano, 2003; Phillips & Connell, 2003; Rinke, 2011; Rivkin, Hanusek, & Kain, 2005; Ronfeldt et al., 2013.
	Reasons	Achinstein et al., 2010; Birkeland & Johnson, 2002; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Finnigan, 2012; Griffith, 2004; Hughes, 2012; Ingersoll & Connor, 2009; Ingersoll & Perda, 2014; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Johnson et al., 2004; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Ladd, 2011; Levine, 2006; Liu, 2007; Liu and Ramsey, 2008; Milner, 2012; Podsen, 2002; Prather-Jones, 2011; Richardson & Watt, 2006; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2010; Watson, 2011; Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007; Zumwalt & Craig, 2005.

### Prevalence of Teacher Turnover in Urban Schools

Turnover rate in the teaching profession has been relatively higher “compared to many other occupations and professions, such as lawyers, engineers, architects, professors, pharmacists

and nurses” (Ingersoll, 2012, p. 49). Since 1988, the percentage of the U.S. public school teachers who either move to another school or leave the teaching profession has been chronically high, fluctuating between 16.5% and 12.4% (Haynes, 2014). For example, in 2012, more than a half million public school teachers either moved (271,900) to another school or left (259,400) the profession entirely (Haynes, 2014).

While urban schools are the ones that need more effective and experienced teachers the most, new teacher turnover rate in urban schools is 50% higher than those located in communities with low-poverty (Hanushek et al., 1999; Ingersoll, 2003). Studies also show that overall teacher turnover in those schools with high composition of minority students is three times greater than schools with predominantly White students (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Brill & McCartney, 2008). For example, Allensworth, Ponisciak, and Mazzeo (2009) found that teacher stability rates in Chicago are significantly lower at schools with predominantly African American student population compared to other schools. Allensworth et al. (2009) also stated that schools located in neighborhoods identified with high crime and high poverty experienced 10 percentage points higher teacher turnover rate compared to schools located in areas with low crime and low poverty.

Teacher turnover rates are especially higher among teachers who are at earlier stages of their career. For example, 20% of the 3,031 new teachers who were hired by the New York City Public Schools during the 2010-2011 school year left their first assigned school after one year, while 9% of them left the district completely. Consistent with other findings in the literature, 63 to 70% of these new teachers in this large public school system left their first assigned schools within five years, whereas, 43 to 49% of them exited the system entirely. Another study analyzing attrition patterns among teachers in New York City (NYC) public elementary and



middle schools reported that while a higher percentage of least effective first year teachers in low-performing schools left the profession altogether, the remaining portion of these ineffective first year teachers who started teaching in schools with higher student achievement disproportionately transferred to other schools in NYC (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009). Boyd et al. (2009) also emphasized that the more effective first year teachers who transferred within NYC were less likely to go to the low performing schools with higher percentage of poor and minority students.

There is no doubt that the worst teacher turnover problems occur at charter schools. While the average teacher turnover rates in other public schools range between 11 and 14%, the overall teacher turnover rate in charter schools “varies from 15-40 percent, with a 20 to 25 percent range being most common” (Miron & Applegate, 2007, p. 4). Harris (2007) found that charter school teachers in Florida are 15% less likely to stay in their schools than traditional public schools. Gross and DeArmond (2010) indicated that on average, teachers in charter schools are “far more likely to leave their schools than traditional public school teachers: charter teachers have 40 percent greater odds of moving schools than traditional public school teachers, and 52 percent greater odds of exiting the system all together” (p. 6). Stuit and Smith (2010) added that likelihood of “a charter school teacher leaving the profession versus staying in the same school was 130% greater than a traditional public school teacher” (p. 2).

This review has revealed that teacher turnover has been a chronic problem in all public schools, and it is significantly higher in urban public schools that serve predominantly minority and low-income students. It also specified that charter schools have been experiencing more severe teacher turnover problems compared to other public schools. The following section will present the consequences of teacher turnover to demonstrate the significance of this problem.

## **Consequences of Teacher Turnover**

High teacher turnover causes many problems. Phillips and Connell (2003) listed 11 categories that successfully encapsulated the negative impact of turnover on organizations in general: (1) high financial costs, (2) loss of talent necessary for the survival of the organization, (3) exit problems such as increased litigation due to issues of disgruntled and departing employees, (4) productivity losses and workflow interruptions, (5) decreased quality of service to internal and external customers, (6) loss of critical skills needed to maintain ongoing operations and projects, (7) shortage of staff to explore or take advantage of new business opportunities, (8) loss of administrative time to deal with turnover-related issues, (9) disruption of social and communication networks, (10) low job satisfaction and extra burden for the remaining employees, and (11) negative public image of the organization.

This review of literature has revealed that high teacher turnover rates in urban schools lead to serious problems such as limited and less cohesive instructional programs (Guin, 2004), “lack of continuity in instruction, lack of adequate teaching expertise for making curriculum decisions and providing support and mentoring [for the new teachers]” (Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005, p. 44), recurrent hiring and training needs, erosion of professional development for other teachers in the building, decreased instructional quality, extra burden on remaining teachers to make up for the shortcomings of the new teachers, and loss of instructional knowledge among faculty that is critical for supporting all student learning (Ronfeldt et al., 2013, p. 18). The high teacher turnover also affects schools’ ability to establish productive professional learning communities and positive school cultures, and to maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of their parents (Miron & Applegate, 2007).

High teacher turnover in urban schools also generates a constant influx of new teachers with no or limited teaching experience. It is problematic because the existing literature offered ample and convincing evidence that on average, novice teachers are less effective than more experienced teachers (Boyd et al., 2009; Clotfelter et al., 2004; Grissom, 2011; Henry, Fortner, & Bastian, 2012). Furthermore, Sanders and Horn's (1998) analyses of longitudinal data on student test scores illustrated that "the effectiveness of teacher is the major determinant of student academic progress" (p. 247) among other factors such as race, socioeconomic level, class size, and classroom heterogeneity. While benefits of having more years of teaching experience proportionally increase during the first five years (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Henry et al., 2012), findings from numerous studies showed that significant proportion—between 40% and 50%- of new teachers leaves the profession before they reach to five year experience mark (Haynes, 2014; Ingersoll, 2003, 2012; Ingersoll & Merrill, 2012). According to Ingersoll (2012), new teacher attrition rates have increased about 33% in the past 20 years. As a result, low-income students attending urban public schools with high teacher turnover rates are more likely to be taught by less experienced and ineffective teachers (Simon & Johnson, 2013).

Marzano (2003) provided an important analysis for teacher effectiveness on students' academic achievement by using a scenario assuming that a student enters a school at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile achievement level in math or reading. Even if the school was the most effective school as far as enhancing students' academic achievement, the student's achievement in math or reading would be reduced to 37<sup>th</sup> percentile after being exposed to an ineffective teacher for two years. On the opposite side, even if the school was one of the least effective schools, the student's achievement would increase to 63<sup>rd</sup> percentile after being taught by an effective teacher. If both the school and teacher were least effective, the student's achievement in math

and reading would drop from 50<sup>th</sup> percentile to 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile in two years. Marzano (2003) concluded that “effective teachers have a profound influence on student achievement and ineffective teachers do not” (p. 75).

There is convincing evidence that nothing schools can do improves their student achievement more than providing them with effective teachers. For example, Goldhaber (2009) found that “the effect of increases in teacher quality swamps the impacts of any other educational investment, such as reduction in class size” (p. 1). Based on their analysis of Los Angeles public school data, Gordon, Kane, and Staiger (2006) concluded that “having a top-quartile teacher rather than a bottom-quartile teacher four years in a row would be enough to close the Black-White test score gap” (p. 8). In another study investigating impact of schools and teachers in influencing student achievement in all Texas Public Schools, Rivkin, Hanusek, and Kain (2005) also found that having an effective teacher throughout elementary school can “substantially offset disadvantages associated with low socioeconomic background” (p. 419).

In Guin’s (2004) study examining the characteristics of 17 urban elementary schools that chronically experienced high teacher turnover showed that there is a significant and negative correlation between teacher turnover rate and students’ achievement level in math and English on the standardized state tests. Similarly, in a more recent study examining the effects of teacher turnover on more than 850,000 fourth and fifth grade students in NYC, Ronfeldt et al. (2013) demonstrated that “the students of teachers in the same grade-level team in the same school do worse [in math and English] in years where teacher turnover rates are higher” (p.18), and added that “these effects are particularly strong in schools with more low-performing and Black students” (p. 1).

Another consequence of teacher turnover problem is the sizeable costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training replacement teachers. Rinke (2011) posited that each teacher who leaves the district can cost up to \$8,000, while the impact of teacher turnover on the states' budgets has a range of approximately \$5 million in Wyoming to \$235 million in Texas. Based on their analyses of the 2007-08 SASS and the 2008-09 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) results, Ingersoll and Perda (2014) estimated the overall cost of teacher attrition to the U.S. public schools to be between \$1.004 billion and \$2.186 billion annually. In another study, Barnes, Crowe, and Schaefer (2007) estimated the annual total costs associated with teacher turnover to be \$7.34 billion at the national level with an average cost of \$70,000 per urban school and \$33,000 per non-urban schools.

Barnes et al. (2007) further examined the substantial costs associated with recruiting, hiring, and training a replacement teacher, regardless of the district size. Upon their comprehensive analyses in various school districts, Barnes et al. (2007) reported that the average cost of each teacher leaving the district was \$4,366 in Jemez Valley, New Mexico, \$15,325 in Milwaukee, and as much as \$17,872 in a larger school district like Chicago. Barnes et al. (2007) also added that “[m]ost studies of teacher turnover costs have produced estimates that are quite large, ranging from 20 percent to 200 percent of the leaving teacher’s salary” (Barnes et al., 2007, p. 9). Similarly, in a 2005 policy brief on turnover costs, the Alliance for Excellent Education estimated “that attrition costs an employer 30% of the leaving employee’s salary” (as cited in Barnes et al., 2007, p. 9).

Turnover may also have negative impacts on individual teachers who leave. For example, teacher departures may result in temporary loss of employee benefits or job security due to loss of seniority or tenured position. Furthermore, transition between organizations can be costly

because of relocation costs or some contractual obligations such as noncompete provisions or breach of contract fees. Dismissals resulting from insufficient performance or compliance issues can be financially devastating for those teachers as they may not be able to find an alternative employment right away. They may also experience high stress and low-morale as a result of losing the social network and emotional support provided by their coworkers and the organization. At the same time, issues such as adjustment to a new school culture, equipment, and job procedures, and attaining necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to sufficiently perform their new teaching duties may adversely impact their initial performance and effectiveness.

It is clear that high teacher turnover creates substantial problems for the urban schools, teachers, and students. Most importantly, it substantially affects the quality of education by reducing the number of effective teachers and causing critical problems at the organization level. High cost of turnover also affects urban schools' operational budgets by reducing the available funding and resources that might otherwise be spent for better resources and initiatives that can help improve quality of education and student learning outcomes, and for improving working conditions of the teachers. The following section will encapsulate the reasons as to why teachers move from one school to another or leave the teaching profession entirely.

### **Reasons for Teacher Turnover**

The detrimental consequences of high teacher attrition in urban public schools have attracted numerous studies to analyze the reasons why teachers move between schools or leave the profession. The extant literature includes copious studies examining how teacher turnover is related to various factors. In these studies, many different factors have been cited that affect teacher turnover. For example, in a meta-analytic and narrative review of the literature on teacher

turnover, Borman and Dowling (2008) discovered that as many as 63 different factors were investigated in 34 empirical studies that they selected. This review of the most recent literature on teacher turnover suggests that factors that potentially influence teacher turnover can be categorized into two levels: teacher level and school level.

**Teacher Level Factors.** Teacher level factors consist of variables such as teacher's age, race, gender, pre-service preparation, content area, certification route, test scores, marital status, motivation, full-time employment status, and years of teaching experience (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Allensworth et al., 2009; Anderson & Olson, 2006; Brill & McCartney, 2008; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2010; Freedman & Appleman, 2009; Goldring et al., 2013; Ingersoll & Conner, 2009; Milner, 2012; Richardson & Watt, 2014; Ronfeldt et al., 2013; Roth, 2014). This review has revealed that teachers who are younger (Allensworth et al., 2009; Goldring et al., 2014), work on a part-time basis (Goldring et al., 2014), obtained teaching license through a nontraditional teacher education program or not licensed at all (Boyd et al., 2006; Gray & Taie, 2015; Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006), and with less than five years of experience (Ingersoll, 2003; Elfers et al., 2006; Perda, 2013) are more likely to leave their schools or the profession.

Even a brief summary of the extant literature on all of the teacher level factors would certainly exceed the intent and scope of this review. Furthermore, earlier studies such as Boyd et al. (2011), Finnigan (2012), Grissom, (2011), Gross and DeArmond (2010), and Wynn et al. (2007) provide convincing evidence that the roots of teacher attrition in today's public schools "largely reside in the working conditions within schools and districts" (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 32). The SASS and Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) also confirm that the school level factors are significantly more important in teachers' decision to either move or leave their

schools (Boyd et al., 2011; Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Wynn et al., 2007). For these reasons, more attention has been given to the literature regarding school level factors, which are presented in the following section.

**School Level Factors.** Many studies have examined teacher turnover rates at different school settings. The teacher turnover literature within the last decade has mostly concentrated on school level factors such as school location and sector, student demographics and socioeconomic status, and working conditions. Since the differences in teacher turnover rates by school location (urban vs. others), school sector (Charter vs. Traditional Public School), students' ethnic composition (predominantly White vs. minority), and students socioeconomic status (as measured by the rate of free and reduced lunch applications) have already been stated earlier, this section will only elaborate on working conditions in public schools.

In general, personal motivations behind teachers' decision to move to another school or leave the profession vary greatly. Among these reasons, dissatisfaction with working conditions has been the most commonly cited reason for their departure. For example, Ingersoll and Perda (2014) reported that retirement (15.1%), school staffing action (16.7%), pursue of other job (34.1%), family or personal reasons (34.3%), and dissatisfaction (47.8%) were among the top reasons for public school teachers' turnover. Teachers who leave their schools or the profession cited dissatisfaction with various working conditions such as teaching assignment, administrative support, facilities, salary and benefits, student discipline problems, lack of collegiality among staff, lack of parental involvement, poor student motivation, safety, hiring practices, and job security (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Goldring et al., 2014; Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Guarino et al., 2006; Haynes, 2014). Among these, hiring practices, existence of mentoring and induction programs, compensation, and administrative support have been



identified as the most influential working conditions regarding teacher turnover (Boyd et al., 2011; Grissom, 2011; Johnson et al., 2004; Ladd, 2011; Liu, 2007; Liu & Meyer, 2005; Loeb et al., 2005; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2011).

*Hiring Practices.* There are significant differences between hiring practices at high-income and low-income schools. Based on their analyses of the results from a quantitative study including 374 first and second year teachers, Johnson, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu, and Donaldson (2004) concluded that “[c]ompared to new teachers in high-income schools, [new teachers in low-income schools] are less likely to experience a hiring process that gives them a good review of their job” (p. 2). It is concerning that only 13% of the new teachers from the low-income schools in this study were observed teaching a sample lesson as part of the interview process, while 28% of them were hired after the school year has started. Eighteen percent of these teachers indicated that they did not participate in at least one interview for the position. On the other hand, Johnson et al. (2004) reported that 100% of new teachers in high-income schools participated in at least one interview for the position, and only 8% were hired after the school year had started. These differences in hiring practices between high-income and low-income schools were statistically significant at the .05 significance level. This study and other empirical research suggested that effective screening, interviewing, and hiring practices at urban schools may positively influence teacher retention, especially the new ones.

*Induction and Mentoring.* Coupled with effective hiring practices, existence of an induction and or mentoring program appears to have a significant impact on new teachers’ retention. As new teachers try to learn day-to-day operations of classroom and school, and gradually build their teacher identity, implementation of effective induction and mentoring programs can significantly improve their teaching performance and longevity in that school.

Based on their examination of 15 empirical studies conducted after 1980s, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) reported that “beginning teachers who received some type of induction had higher job satisfaction, commitment, and retention” (p. 211). The data from 2000-2001 teacher follow-up survey show that both induction (from 17.6% to 11.9%) and mentoring (from 18.6% to 11.8%) programs reduced the attrition of beginning teachers after their first year compared to the ones who did not participate in these programs.

*Compensation.* Compensation has also been one of the most cited reasons for teacher departures or career changes (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Wynn et al., 2007). According to a study which involved more than 1,900 teachers from different public schools in NYC, salary was cited as one of the most important factors on teachers’ decision to leave the profession (Boyd et al., 2011). Gross and DeArmond (2010) reported that 40% of charter schools and 22% of traditional public school teachers cited better salary and benefits as very or extremely important factor in their decision to move to another school. Similarly, better salary and benefits were cited by 27% of charter school teachers and 19% of traditional public school teachers as one of the most important factors in their decision to leave the teaching profession entirely. Other researchers such as Liu (2007), Loeb et al. (2005), and Kelly (2004) also identified low salaries as a reliable predictor for teacher attrition. Liu and Meyer (2005) found that salary was one of the main reasons for teachers’ low job satisfaction. Adding a slightly different perspective to the discussion, Brill and McCartney (2008) highlighted that overwhelmingly increasing workloads and associated paper work without much increase in teacher salaries also contribute to their attrition.

In contrast to these findings, Liu and Ramsey (2008) reported that “teachers’ satisfaction with compensation is not highly correlated with their satisfaction with [other] work conditions”

(p. 1181). Implied is that improving teachers' compensation may not necessarily improve their satisfaction with other work conditions, and they may still leave in the end. It is also a fact that many school districts simply cannot afford to give a cross-the-board salary increase to all of their teachers, and be able to sustain their operations smoothly. Such salary increases generally come with certain staffing actions that have other implications. Meanwhile, Brill and McCartney (2008) estimated that an initiative to raise salaries for all teachers enough to improve their retention rate significantly would require almost a 20% increase in payroll expenses, which is not feasible for most charter schools.

Based on their statistical analyses of the data collected through the 2003-2004 administration of the SASS, which included almost 35,000 teacher responses, Tickle et al. (2011) asserted that "administrative support mediates the effect of teaching experience, student behavior, and teachers' satisfaction with their salary on teachers' job satisfaction and intent to stay in teaching" (p. 342). This critically important finding shifted the focus of this review to the literature regarding teacher turnover and administrative support, which produced substantial evidence to support this claim.

*Administrative Support.* There is a widely held belief among both researchers and professional educators that administrators play a critical role in schools because they influence almost all facets of school life (Blasé & Kirby, 2009). Given administrative leaders' significant influence on teachers and the school climate, researchers have conducted various studies exploring effectiveness of different leadership styles and behaviors on teachers' job performance, commitment, and decision to leave their schools or quit teaching (Blasé & Kirby, 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Finnigan, 2012; Giejsel, Slegers, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2003; Griffith, 2004; Grissom, 2011). For instance, Grissom (2011) analyzed the 2003-2004 SASS data which

was gathered from 30,690 respondents in 6,290 different schools across the United States, and reported that teachers who are more satisfied with their principal's effectiveness are less likely to leave their schools within a year. It is also noted that new teachers enter the profession with a tentative commitment to teaching (Peske et al., 2001) and make their decisions about whether to continue teaching based on the level of support they received and the academic success they experience with their students (Johnson et al., 2004).

Both qualitative and quantitative studies have confirmed repeatedly that administrative support is significantly correlated with teachers' intent to stay in the profession, job satisfaction, and positive views of their schools (Birkeland & Johnson, 2002; Boyd et al., 2011; Cancio, Albercht, & Johns, 2013; Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Finnigan, 2012; Littrell, Billingley, & Cross, 1994; Prather-Jones, 2011; Russell, Williams, & Gleason-Gomez, 2010; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2010; Useem, 2001). A quantitative study examining the relationship between school contextual factors and teachers' retention decisions in NYC also endorsed that "the administration factor is the only one that significantly predicts teacher retention decisions after controlling for other school and teacher characteristics" (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 323).

Boyd et al. (2011) asked as many as 4,360 first-year teachers to complete a survey which consisted of more than 300 questions about their preparation experiences, characteristics of their current schools, teaching practices, and goals. The school level factors included teacher influence, administration, staff relations, students, facilities, and safety. The summary of multinomial logistic regression models with all the school factors entered separately and simultaneously showed significant correlation (at the 0.001 level) between the administration factor and teacher retention decisions. Boyd et al. (2011) concluded that "[t]eachers who have

less positive perceptions of their school administrators are more likely to transfer to another school and to leave teaching in New York City” (p. 323).

As part of the same study, Boyd et al. (2011) also wanted to examine the reasons why teachers leave or consider leaving their schools. In their follow-up survey with a group of 386 teachers who left their schools during the last school year and 1,587 teachers who indicated that they were considering leaving their schools, Boyd et al. (2011) asked each group of teachers to identify the reasons made them actually leave or consider leaving. Among other popular responses such as salary (9-14%), school staffing action (7-13%), work closer to home (7-10%), and other family or personal reasons (7-10%), job dissatisfaction (39-42%) was by far the most frequently stated factor in their decisions and or intention to leave. Furthermore, the participants indicated that support from administrators (42%) was the most important source of their dissatisfaction with their job. Figures 1 and 2 clearly illustrate all the stated reasons by each group of teachers.

Figure 1. Most Important Factor in Decision to Leave

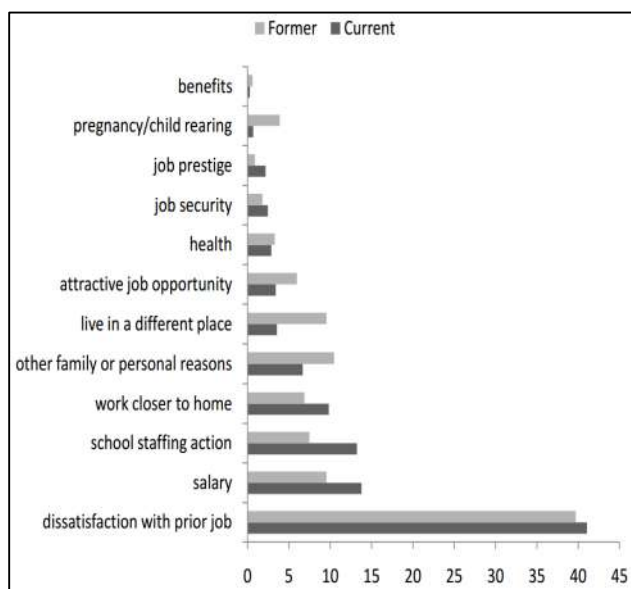
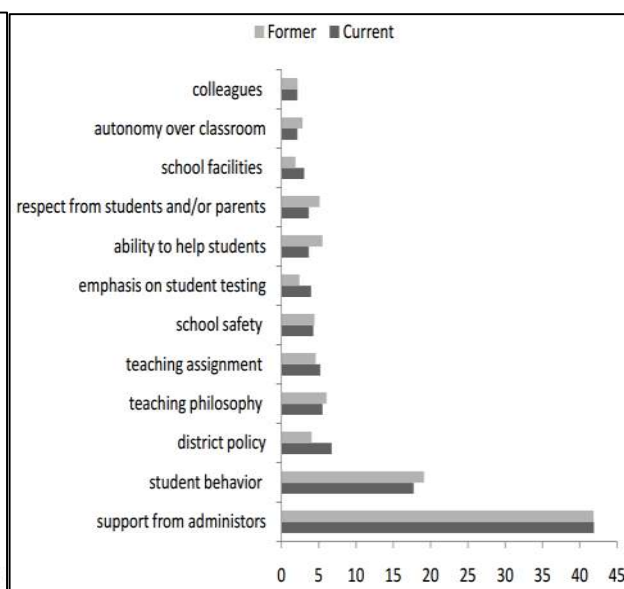


Figure 2. Most Influential Aspect of Job in Decision to Leave



Source. Boyd et al., 2011, pp. 325-326

The reasons why teachers leave their schools or quit teaching may change across different schools sectors, but lack of administrative support remained to be the leading factor. Upon examining the issues identified as the most important factors in public school teachers' decision to either move or leave their schools, Gross and DeArmond (2010) provided comparative data between charter school teachers and traditional public school teachers. Again, lack of administrative support was one of the top reasons for teacher departures across different school sectors. Gross and DeArmond (2010) reported that lack of administrative support was cited by 65% of charter school teachers who moved, and was the most frequently cited reason for their departure. After "better teaching assignment" (47%), the lack of administrative support (45%) was also the most important reason for traditional public school teachers who moved to another school. Table 2 illustrates most important factors in the teachers' decisions to move or leave their schools.

Table 2. *Top Five Issues Identified as Very or Extremely Important Factors in the Decision to Move or Leave Schools, By Sector*

Charter School Teachers		Traditional Public School Teachers	
	Percent of Teachers		Percent of Teachers
<b>Reasons for Moving Schools</b>			
Lack of administrator support	65%	Better teaching assignment <sup>1</sup>	47%
Workplace conditions	58%	Lack of administrator support	45%
Better teaching assignment	52%	Workplace conditions	37%
Higher job security	46%	Change of residence	27%
Better salary/benefits	40%	Better salary/benefits	22%
<b>Reasons for Leaving Schools</b>			
Another career	33%	Retirement	29%
Family or personal reasons	32%	Family or personal reasons	23%
Better salary/benefits	27%	Another career	20%
Pregnancy/child rearing	22%	Better salary/benefits	19%
Dissatisfaction with job description or duties	22%	Pregnancy/child rearing	16%

Source. Gross & DeArmond, 2010, p. 13

In 2014, more than 80,000 teachers from 2,501 different schools participated in the *North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions* survey. Forty-six percent of the participants selected school leadership and instructional support as the most important aspects of their teaching conditions in their willingness to keep teaching at their school. Time during the work day (14%), facilities and resources (11%), community support and involvement (8%), managing student conduct (8%), and teacher leadership (12%) were among other popular responses. Ladd (2011) also analyzed the data from the North Carolina survey administered in 2006, and concluded that “[t]eachers’ perceptions of working conditions at the school level are highly predictive of an individual teacher’s intentions to leave a school, with the perceived quality of school leadership the most salient factor” (p. 251). Ladd’s (2011) analysis of the North Carolina survey confirmed that school leadership was consistently the most important aspect of teachers working conditions that influenced their decision to stay or leave.

In another study with 217 first and second year teachers, Wynn, Carboni, and Patall (2007) reported that among reasons that made them consider leaving teaching, salary was the most cited reason, followed by disruptive students and lack of administrative support. Wynn et al. (2007) concluded that “beginning teachers’ decisions to remain at their school site and in the district is most strongly associated with school climate and principal leadership” (p. 209). Similarly, based on their statistical analyses of the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) conducted by National Center for Education Statistics, Ingersoll and Smith (2003) reported that poor salary, student discipline problems, poor administrative support, and poor student motivation were the top four reasons for the dissatisfaction of those beginning teachers who left their positions. According to a recent report, 81% of 14,063 new teachers who responded to the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition survey in 2014 stated that additional support that

they received helped them to impact their students' learning, while 72% stated that additional support has been important in their decision to continue teaching at their current school.

The aforementioned findings have provided substantial evidence to claim that administrative support is the most important factor affecting teacher retention in urban schools. One would be totally convinced that urban school administrators must provide better support to retain their teachers at a higher rate. However, the question is that what types of administrative support are more important to teachers. The following section will provide an answer to this question through close examination of the most recent and relevant research regarding administrative support behaviors that teachers as well as effective school administrators believe to be important.

### **Administrative Support Behaviors**

In order to examine effective types of administrative support, a clear definition for administrative support must be established first. However, this review revealed that despite considerable number of studies that investigated the relationship between administrative support and teacher retention, the extant literature still lacks a clear operational definition for the term administrative support. Russel, Williams, and Gleason-Gomez (2010) agreed that “with only a very few exceptions, the term *administrative support* has not been operationally defined and is, therefore, open to individual interpretation” (p. 196). As House (1981) espoused, it “is a concept that everyone understands in a general sense but it gives rise to many conflicting definitions and ideas when we get down to the specifics” (p. 13).

Although there is no clear consensus to date on the meaning of administrative support, exploring some of the most recent definitions can enhance our understanding of its core components. As part of their comprehensive meta-analysis of 34 quantitative studies on teacher



career trajectories, Borman and Dowling (2008) broadly defined administrative support as “the school’s effectiveness in assisting teachers with issues such as student discipline, instructional methods, curriculum, and adjusting to the school environment” (p. 380). In another study, Boyd et al. (2011) defined administrative support as “the extent to which principals and other school leaders make teachers’ work easier and help them to improve their teaching” (p. 307). In addition, naming it as “leading by standing behind,” Blasé and Kirby (2009) defined administrative support as “providing basic materials, reducing interference of instructional time, paying tuition for professional conferences, and assisting teachers in matters of student discipline” (p. 118).

It appears that in order to compose a more inclusive and operational definition of administrative support, a few basic questions must be answered first. For example, what is it that some principals do that makes their teachers perceive them as more supportive? Moreover, as House (1981) asked, “[w]hat causes them to act in a supportive manner?” (p. 95).

Blasé and Kirby (2009) used an open ended questionnaire, *the Inventory of Strategies Used by Principals to Influence Teachers* (ISUPIT), to create a list of strategies and related practices that teachers associate with the effectiveness of their principal. As a summary of their coding and line-by-line analyses of the responses from 836 teachers, Blasé and Kirby (2009) reported that principals who are effective (a) praise teachers’ professional accomplishments associated with school goals; (b) communicate and model high expectations for student achievement; (c) use data to support teacher involvement in significant school-wide decisions; (d) grant professional autonomy regarding curriculum and instruction to teachers exhibiting professional readiness; (e) support teachers with material resources, protection of instructional time, professional development, and assistance with student discipline and parental concerns; (f)

encourage individual growth through advice, feedback, and professional development; (g) exercise authority as necessary and when justifiable in ethical terms; and (h) consistently model effective practices congruent with principals' ethical code. These findings are certainly very important for building a comprehensive definition for administrative support. However, 88% of these teachers who participated in this study were from rural and suburban schools, and therefore, the findings did not represent perspectives of teachers from urban school settings where teacher turnover is experienced the most. Moreover, 85.4% of these teachers were already tenured, and the findings did not differentiate for the support needs of untenured teachers, who are more likely to leave due to lack of administrative support.

Referring to a Philadelphia Education Fund study (2001), which examined the most common practices of the principals in Philadelphia middle schools with the lowest rates of teacher turnover, Useem (2001) reported that teacher turnover is low in schools where principals (a) involve themselves actively in teacher recruitment; (b) implement strong induction programs for new teachers; and (c) oversee safe and orderly school environments and actively back up their teachers on disciplinary issues. Useem (2001) described it as an overall philosophy that a big part of the principal's role is to support teachers and let them know someone cares about what is happening to them on a daily basis. Useem (2001) noted that principals can achieve this through (1) maintaining a welcoming and respectful administrative approach towards teachers; (2) delegating authority and developing the leadership skills of other school staff; and (3) providing materials and supplies to teachers in a consistent, timely, and smart way. However, Useem (2001) did not provide any information about these schools such as their location, sector, student demographic composition, student socioeconomic status, and working conditions, which

would help us determine if high teacher retention in these schools was solely due to these effective principal behaviors or other school level factors had played any role.

Cornella (2010) interviewed nine high-performing principals, who had worked at their current school for at least three years and had high teacher retention rates of 90% or better for the last three years or more. Cornella (2010) reported that principals ranked communicating, building a positive school culture, demonstrating positive personal practices, exercising fairness, valuing teachers, being visible, building a sense of belonging, seeking right fit for teachers, fostering shared decision making, and supporting teachers as the most influential practices in their success retaining their teachers. In a similar quantitative study with one-hundred K-8 principals, Richards (2007) found that (1) encouraging teachers to improve in areas of teaching practice and professional development; (2) holding consistent, high standards for all members of the school family; (3) respecting and valuing teachers as professionals; (4) being fair, honest, and trustworthy; and (5) having an open-door policy were the top five principal behaviors that encouraged teachers.

Earlier studies also reported significant differences in teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the importance of various types of administrative behavior. Hughes et al. (2015) found that "principals perceived that they supported their teachers better than the teachers perceive they were supported by the principals" (p. 132). The largest difference between the principals and teachers' perceived level of administrative support was in the instructional support dimension, while emotional support dimension had the smallest difference. Hernandez (2006) surveyed 139 first- and second-year teachers to investigate characteristics of principal support they find most valuable. Out of 30 survey items, a principal who (a) is competent; (b) respects teachers as a teaching professional; (c) is open and honest with teachers; (d) says what s/he

means and means what s/he says; and (e) listens to teachers' concerns ranked the highest in importance. Hernandez (2006) indicated that new teachers who perceived their principals as open, honest, and trustworthy were more likely to remain in the profession. Results also suggested that new teachers who have "principals who met and talked with them regularly, helped them resolve problems, included them in decision making, provided constructive feedback, and secured needed materials and resources for them" (Hernandez, 2006, p. xiii) were less likely to leave their current schools.

In another study with 254 certified K-12 classroom teachers and 17 school-level administrators, Hicks (2011) reported that "teachers perceived trust as one of the most important supports, whereas administrators thought frequent interaction with teachers were more important" (p. iv). The study also confirmed that some administrative support behaviors such as provision of materials, provision of professional collaboration opportunities, and attending to teachers personal feelings were more important to middle and elementary school teachers than high school teachers. These perspectives are certainly important. However, similar to the Blasé and Kirby's (2009) study, teachers with more than five years of teaching experience constituted 85% of the sample in this study, not to mention 61.4% of them had more than 10 years of experience. In addition, all of the teachers in this study were certified, and there was no information about the school district where the study took place. Nevertheless, what makes Hick's (2011) study exceptional is that participants were asked to identify from whom they receive the most administrative support. This was unique, and it is also a considerable gap in the literature because other studies (except Prather-Jones, 2011) assumed principals to be the dominant source of administrative support, and drafted survey questions with little or no attention to other sources of support.

Prather-Jones (2011) reported that teachers (n=13) who participated in her qualitative study “were referring to their building principal and/or assistant principal” (p. 4) when using the term “administrative support” or “administrator.” Hicks (2011) reported that 67.1% of the teachers claimed receiving most of their administrative support from their assistant principal, while the remaining 32.9% stated it was their principal who provided most of their administrative support. When the results were segregated based on grade level, the perception for the administrator who provided the most support changed considerably. Teachers teaching in lower grades reported that they received almost equal support from both their principals and assistant principals, while teachers in middle and high schools indicated they received most support from their assistant principals. Table 3 includes frequencies and percentages for the source of administrative support by grade level taught (Hicks, 2011).

Table 3. *Frequencies and percentages for administrators from whom teachers perceived that they received most support, by grade level.*

Grade	Administrative Support	Frequency	Percent
Grades K-5	Principal	51	49.5
	Assistant Principal	52	50.5
Grades 6-8	Principal	12	30.0
	Assistant Principal	28	70.0
Grades 9-12	Principal	13	14.8
	Assistant Principal	75	85.2

Source. Hicks, 2011.

Both Hicks (2011) and Prather-Jones’s (2011) findings confirmed that other administrators such as assistant principals, instructional deans, and deans of students are included in teachers’ perceptions of administrative support, which suggests that their support can potentially account for a portion of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various types of administrative support. Implied is that earlier studies that examined teachers’ perceptions of administrative support in school buildings with two or more administrators may not reflect the

actual picture of available administrative support if the survey questions they used read as “principal provides...” This is also problematic in the SASS, results from which have been used heavily in the literature, where the terms “school administration” and “principal” are used interchangeably to measure the extent of teachers’ satisfaction with various types of administrative support. To avoid this issue, either the specific source of support should be identified for each item measuring the extent of available administrative support or the questions should be worded carefully to include all the administrators in a school building. This study addressed this issue by wording the survey questions as “school administration ...” which was inclusive of all sources of administrative support at the school level.

Prather-Jones (2011) also reported that teachers’ career decisions were largely influenced by the level of administrative support that they perceived to receive. According to this qualitative study that investigated the reasons as to how some experienced special education teachers managed to remain in this relatively more challenging teaching field, enforcing reasonable consequences for student misconduct and including them in the decision making process, showing them respect and appreciation, and establishing structures to promote supportive relationships between teachers were the most valued administrative support behaviors.

In a longitudinal study as part of the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard University, Birkeland and Johnson (2002) wanted to conduct follow-up interviews and found out that out of 50 first and second-year teachers whom they initially interviewed two years ago, only 13 of them were still at the same school. The other teachers had either moved to another school or a different profession because they were dissatisfied with teaching or their first school. Again, one of the major factors that considerably helped these 13 teachers stay in

their current schools and in the teaching profession was a supportive collegial atmosphere, in the establishment and maintenance of which their principals' approach and actions played a critical role. These teachers stated that their administrators made conscious effort to schedule a common time for their team, gave them autonomy in teaching methods, and provided curricular resources and support.

In an earlier study, Richard (2004) created a list of 22 positive principal behaviors and attitudes through interviews with a number of K-8 teachers regarding what principal behaviors most encouraged them in their first five years of teaching. In a follow up study, Richard (2007) asked 100 teachers with less than five years teaching experience to rank these items. According to these teachers, the top five positive principal behaviors included (1) respecting and valuing teachers as professionals; (2) supporting teachers in matters of student discipline; (3) having an open-door policy; (4) being fair, honest, and trustworthy; and (5) supporting teachers with parents. When the same survey was given to teachers at later stages of their career, the results varied in each group. The greatest need that early career teachers perceived was emotional support and safety, whereas "being respected as professionals" was most important to teachers with six to 10 years of teaching experience. Meanwhile, teachers with more than 10 years of experience ranked respecting and recognizing their knowledge and experience by asking them their opinion, seeking their input, and involving them in the decision-making process as the most important principal behaviors to them (Richard, 2007).

Richard's (2007) study was unique because it is the only study that recognize that teachers' perceived support needs may be different at different stages of their career. Richard (2007), however, did not include any framework to justify why five and 10 years of experience was theoretically important in the teaching profession. This review has revealed that most of

the studies exploring the relationship between administrative support and teacher retention either draw their samples from first-year and or second-year teachers only or solely focus on new teachers (e.g., Boyd et al., 2011; Ingersoll, 2012; Johnson et al., 2004). Comparatively less attention has been paid to the support needs of more experienced teachers. While administrative support may be critically important for new teachers, the perceived support needs of more experienced teachers cannot be ignored.

Darling-Hammond (2000) stated that benefits of having more years of teaching experience appear to level off after five years. Could this have anything to do with diminished administrative support? While certain administrative support behaviors may not be necessarily very important to teachers with more teaching experience, however, lack of support in certain areas may explain why their effectiveness generally flattens once they reach a certain stage in their career. Existing literature does not sufficiently answer these critical questions. This study addressed this issue by comparing teachers' perceived needs for administrative support at different stages of their career.

Price (2012) reiterated that administrators play a critical role in establishing the school climate as their interactions with teachers strongly and directly impact their teachers' attitudes, job satisfaction, and commitment. Earlier studies highlighted that fostering mutual trust, promoting cooperation among staff, and welcoming teacher input in decision making process are the most critical behaviors that help establish a positive school climate (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010; Price, 2012). Among these attitudes, establishing a trusting relationship holds a special place as it serves as a foundation for successful organization (Price, 2012). Ndoye, Imig, and Parker (2010) examined teacher retention in North Carolina charter schools using the data from the North Carolina 2006 Teacher Working Conditions



survey. Ndoye, Imig, and Parker found that leadership was a strong predictor of teachers' intention to stay in their current schools. Establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff was found to be one of the most important characteristics of effective school leadership. Allensworth et al. (2009) added that schools where teachers report high levels of trust of their principals experience higher teacher retention rates. In the lack of this mutual trust and supportive administrators, teachers can lose their motivation and get frustrated with their school administration (Finnigan, 2012).

Deal and Peterson (2009) indicated that the culture of the school also greatly influences the feelings, beliefs, and behaviors of the teachers. Teachers are more likely to stay in schools with a school culture giving them a sense of belonging and being an integral part of the school. In another study investigating teacher mobility in Chicago Public Schools, Allensworth et al. (2009) found that schools where teachers feel they have more influence over school decisions were significantly better at retaining them. The New Teacher Project (TNTP, 2012) reported that teachers are more likely to stay in schools "where teachers work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, where school leaders take action with teachers who perform poorly, and where great teaching is the top priority" (p. 18). In these schools, principals were "more likely to clearly communicate high expectations and make sure that teachers feel supported, and less likely to tolerate ineffective teaching" (TNTP, 2012, p. 18).

The analyses in TNTP (2012) included data for 90,000 teachers from 2,100 schools in four urban school districts with 1.4 million students. In this study, teachers were divided into two groups as high-performing (irreplaceables) and low-performing based on their students' achievement scores. It was discovered that 20% of the teachers in this study could be identified as high-performing teachers, who generate five to six more months of student learning each year

than a low-performing teacher. Contrary to the conventional wisdom which assumes that teachers are leaving for reasons beyond schools' control, 70% of high-performing teachers who plan to leave their school stated that their principals significantly influenced their decisions. One of the teachers in this study stated that "[p]ositive, effective communication between teachers and administration is lacking. Performance feedback is missing. For example, my principal never once visited my classroom during the entire school year to see how effective I really am with my students" (TNTP, 2012, p. 15).

Furthermore, TNTP (2012) identified eight administrative support behaviors that considerably reduced retention of high-performing teachers. Teachers who experienced at least two of these strategies "planned to remain at their schools up to *six years* longer than those who didn't" (p.16). The eight effective administrative support behaviors included: (1) providing regular, positive feedback; (2) helping teachers identify areas of development; (3) informally providing critical feedback about teacher's performance; (4) recognizing their accomplishments publicly; (5) letting teacher know that s/he is a high-performer; (6) identifying opportunities for teacher leader roles; (7) putting teachers in charge of something important; and (8) providing access to additional classroom resources.

Dunham (1984) brought up a great point that stress exists in teaching and it can build up since some teachers perceive disclosing their professional problems and asking for extra support as a sign of weakness or incompetence. This makes it important for administrators to encourage their teachers to talk about their failures as well as successes. Dunham (1984) listed (1) treating teachers with respect regardless of status; (2) treating teachers with honesty; (3) systematic maintenance of good communication; (4) giving praise and guidance; (5) establishing a professional development program for each teacher; (6) organizing in-service professional

development courses; (7) creating opportunities to talk formally and informally; (8) involving teachers in making decisions; (9) being aware of individual needs of teachers; (10) being available and flexible; (11) creating efficient schedules and routines; (12) establishing an open and controlled workplace; and (13) providing clear job descriptions as some other administrative behaviors that can help reduce teachers' stress by satisfying their support needs.

The findings in the literature regarding the most important administrative support behaviors were usually reported as a list and without much detail about the characteristics of each support behavior. Only the selected books such as Blasé and Kirby (2009), Bryk (2010), and Whitaker et al. (2013) provided such details based on empirical evidence. This review has identified as many as 59 different administrative support behaviors that the literature cited as important, among which establishing trust and praising teachers have emerged as the most frequently cited support behaviors. The characteristics for these particular behaviors are provided in the following two paragraphs.

In order to establish and sustain trusting relationships with their teachers, administrators must be cognizant of the key characteristics of trust building behaviors. Bryk et al. (2010) espoused that relational trust is embedded in social respect, which is displayed by genuinely "listening to what each person has to say, and in some fashion taking this into account in subsequent actions" (p. 138). Teachers need to feel that their opinions are greatly valued whether consistent or not with what their administrators may think. Another trust building behavior for administrators is to show their teachers that they really care about them and are willing to go beyond the regular call of their duty for them. Bryk et al. (2010) added that "taking a personal interest in a staff member's career development or family situation" (p. 139) is just one of many examples of this type behavior. It was also noted that teachers are more

likely to trust their administrators if they have the core competencies associated with their roles, and their actions are consistent with their words (Bryk et al., 2010).

Recognizing and praising teachers for their efforts has been identified as an important support behavior as well. Whitaker et al. (2013) suggested that educational leaders should look for “opportunities to find people doing right things” (p. 43) so they can praise them. In other words, they should try to catch teachers doing things right instead of focusing on their mistakes and shortcomings. However, they should also be cognizant of five characteristics of effective praise. Whitaker et al. (2013) espoused that effective praise should be authentic, specific, immediate, clean, and private. All of these characteristics are self-explanatory except for one, “clean.” It means two things. One is that praise should not be given in any expectation that someone will do some other things differently because you recognized them for one thing. Secondly, praise should not contain the word “but.” Whitaker et al. (2013) emphasized that the praise should be clean because “individual we hoped to praise will very likely to remember only the part after the ‘but’” (p. 44). Praise can become a powerful tool if administrators fully understand these characteristics of effective praise and genuinely recognize their teachers’ efforts on a consistent basis.

This review of the recent literature have made it clear that certain administrative behaviors are more effective and can positively impact teachers’ job motivation, performance, and longevity in their current schools and the teaching profession. The following section will establish a theoretical framework to study what administrative support behaviors are more valuable to teachers, and if their perceived support needs change as they gain more teaching experience. The theoretical framework will also introduce a new technique to quantify teachers’ perceived lack of administrative support.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework in this study was established on the theoretical foundations of the *Model of Social Support* by House (1981) and the *Career Stages of Teachers* model by Burden (1979). The *Model of Social Support* provided the theoretical base to study various types of administrative support behaviors. The *Career Stages of Teachers* model was used to distinguish the teacher career stages based on years of teaching experience.

### **Dimensions of Administrative Support**

In general, social support is defined as “information leading the subject to believe that [she/]he is cared for and loved, esteemed, and a member of a network of mutual obligations” (Cobb, 1976, p. 300). Cohen, Underwood, and Gottlieb (2000) indicated that social support acts as a stress buffer “through either supportive actions of others (e.g., advice, reassurance) or the belief that support is available [perceived support]” (p. 30). Social support theory has served as a foundation for many studies examining stress and coping (Lakey & Orehek, 2011). Cohen et al. (2000) stated that “[s]upportive actions are thought to enhance coping performance, while perceptions of available support lead to appraising potentially threatening situations less stressful” (p. 30). Given unfavorable work conditions in urban school settings and stress associated with everyday teaching tasks, supportive behaviors of administrators can considerably lessen teachers’ stress and improve their coping with everyday challenges of teaching, especially in difficult school settings.

Using underpinnings of *Social Support Theory*, House (1981) developed the *Model of Social Support* and suggested that administrative support can be studied in four broad behavioral dimensions: emotional, appraisal, instrumental, and informational. A brief summary for these dimensions of supportive behaviors or acts are provided below

## **Emotional Support**

Emotional Support primarily involves providing empathy, esteem, caring, affect, concern, trust and listening (House, 1981). Administrative acts or behaviors that directly or indirectly lead teachers to believe that administrators care about them by attentively listening to their concerns and suggestions, and that make teachers feel that they are esteemed, valued and trusted professionals and worthy of concern by such practices as maintaining two-way communication using multiple channels, showing appreciation for their good work and understanding for everyday challenges associated with being a teacher, supporting their professional judgements in curriculum design, lesson planning and student discipline, backing them up in their interactions with parents, and employing a friendly relationship can be considered as emotional support (Cancio et al., 2013; Cobb, 1976; House, 1981; Littrell et al, 1994).

## **Instrumental Support**

Instrumental support “is the most clearly distinguished from emotional support, at least in theory, involving instrumental behaviors that directly help the person in need” (House, 1981, p. 25) by providing aid in kind, money, labor, time, and modifying environment. Helping teachers directly with their work-related tasks by such as providing necessary materials, space, and resources, ensuring adequate time for teaching and nonteaching duties, helping with classroom discipline problems, equally distributing unpopular duties, consistently enforcing school discipline policies, providing extra assistance when needed, being available to help when needed, conveying to teachers readiness to engage in future problem solving behavior, and protecting teachers from external pressures can be classified as instrumental support (Boyd et al., 2011; Cancio et al., 2013; Cobb, 1976; House, 1981; Littrell et al., 1994; Williamson, 2008).

## **Informational Support**

Informational support “means providing a person with information that the person can use in coping with personal and environmental problems” (House, 1971, p. 25). In this study, informational support can be classified as providing teachers with useful information, advice, suggestion, and directives that they can use to improve their classroom practices, enhance their job performance, and better deal with daily tasks and challenges. Offering opportunities for professional development, keeping teachers informed of current educational research, encouraging teachers to think about their career development, and providing suggestions to improve instruction and classroom management are some of the many examples for informational support (Boyd, 2011; Cancio et al., 2013; Cobb, 1976; House, 1981; Littrell et al., 1994; Williamson, 2008).

## **Appraisal Support**

Unlike informational support, appraisal support means transmitting information in forms of affirmation, feedback, and comparison of performance to standards or established norms (House, 1981). Providing ongoing teacher appraisal, such as frequent and constructive feedback about their performance, information about what constitutes effective teaching, and clear guidelines regarding job responsibilities and expectations are some examples of appraisal support. (Boyd et al., 2011; Cancio et al., 2013; House, 1981; Littrell et al., 1994; Williamson, 2008).

Previous studies such as Littrell (1994), Cordeau (2003), Schindewolf (2008), and Peronto (2013) examined different administrative support behaviors in public schools using the model established by House (1981). As part of their investigation on the effects of perceived support on teacher stress, job satisfaction, school commitment, personal health, and intent to stay

in teaching, Littrell et al. (1994) created a list of 40 principal support items, grouped them according to the specific support categories described by House (1981), and asked a group of 613 special education teachers and 613 general education teachers to rate the extent of support that they felt they received from their principals. Littrell et al. (1994) concluded that “principals who are emotionally supportive and provide informational support are more likely to have teachers who are satisfied with their work” (p. 305). Both groups of teachers participated in this study ranked emotional support as the most important form of support, followed by appraisal support, instrumental support, and informational support in a decreasing order of importance.

Additionally, a recent study with 408 special education teachers reports similar findings, and adds that except for appraisal support ( $p=0.257$ ), the characteristics of administrative support such as informational support ( $p<0.05$ ), appreciation ( $p<0.001$ ), and emotional support ( $p<0.01$ ) were significantly correlated with these teachers’ intent to stay in the field (Cancio et al., 2013). However, while both of these studies quantitatively investigated the teachers’ intent to stay in the field, they failed to ask the teachers about their intention to leave their current schools, which could have produced critically more important information.

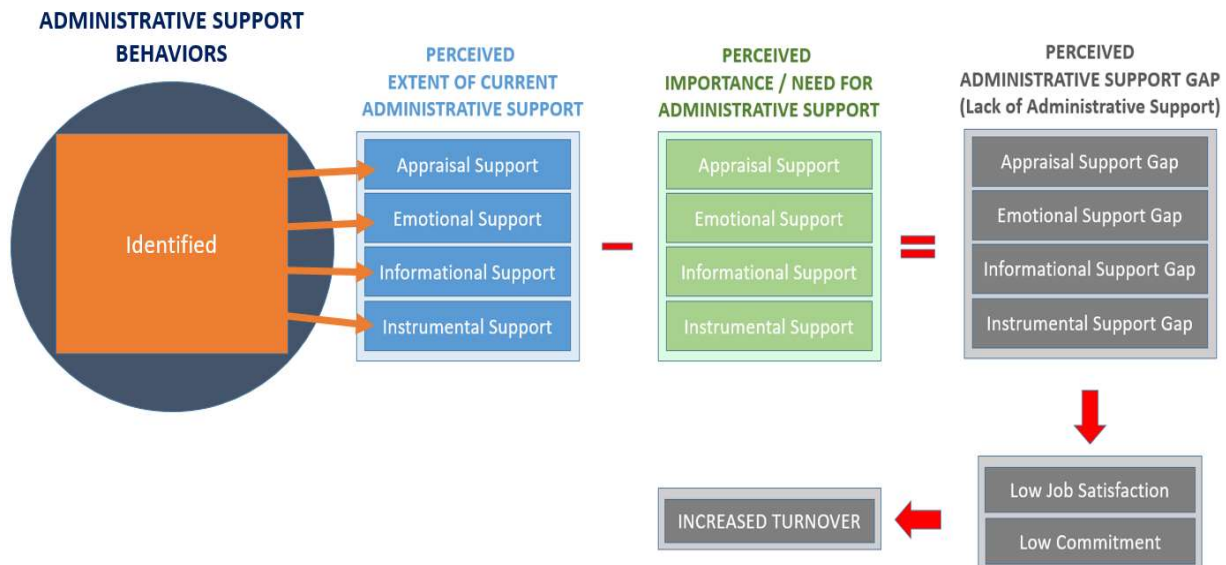
In a very recent study with 41 teachers and 17 administrators in various hard-to-staff schools, Hughes, Matt, and O’Reilly (2015) examined the relationship between administrative support and teacher retention. The findings of this study confirmed that support received from administrators have a significant ( $p<0.01$ ) correlation with teacher retention. Hughes et al. (2015) reported that “highest correlation was that of emotional support [ $r=0.707$ ], and the second highest was environmental support [ $r=0.633$ ], followed by instructional support [ $0.419$ ] and finally technical support [ $0.374$ ]” (p. 131).



Previous studies such as Littrell (1992), Cordeau (2003), Schindewolf (2008), Peronto (2013), and Hughes et al. (2015) have utilized same or similar administrative support items to study administrative support in four categories as identified by House (1981). The problem is that none of these studies performed a factor analysis to confirm that four factor solution was valid. Even though face and content validity of these survey questions have been established earlier, it is still not known if four factor solution is statistically valid as well.

For the purposes of this study, I have developed a theoretical framework to study perceived lack of administrative support based on *the Model of Social Support* by House (1981). In this framework, the difference between perceived need/importance of administrative support and perceived extent of current administrative support is defined as Perceived Administrative Support Gap (PASG), which substitutes the term *lack of administrative support*. This theoretical framework allows researchers to quantify “lack of administrative support,” and to study its correlation to teacher turnover. Figure 3 illustrates components of this framework which is employed in this study.

Figure 3. *Proposed Framework to Quantify and Study Lack of Administrative Support.*



As noted earlier, the secondary purpose of this study was to explore if teachers' perceptions of administrative support change as they gain more teaching experience. A brief review of literature on teacher career stages revealed that teachers on average go through foreseeable changes throughout their career. The following section further describes the theory behind the distinct teacher career stages adapted in this study.

### **Teacher Career Stages**

A growing body of research suggests that teachers go through various stages during the course of their careers and their developmental needs may change in each stage (Eros, 2011; Podsen, 2002; Zepeda, 2008). The extant literature on teacher development agrees that teachers at different stages of their career have predictable job skills, knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, satisfactions, stress, and concerns (Burden, 1982; Burke, Christensen, & Fessler, 1984; Hoy & Spero, 2005; Huberman, 1989; Klassen, Durksen, & Tze, 2014; Speck & Knipe, 2005; Steffy & Wolfe, 2001; Rebore, 2015; Zepeda, 2008). Podsen (2002) added that on average, teachers within the same career stage are also exposed to similar career retention risk factors. Given these similarities, teachers' perceived needs for administrative support may also be following similar patterns based on where they are on their career path.

Turnover statistics confirm that teachers in earlier stages of their career are more likely to move between schools or leave the profession entirely. Podsen (2002) espoused that factors that impact career retention vary at different stages of teaching. According to Podsen (2002), some of the retention risks for beginning teachers include: (1) realizing that job is more complex than expected; (2) experiencing failure; (3) trying to teach while learning how to teach; (4) seeking acceptance into the teaching community; (5) experiencing professional isolation; (6) not having an effective induction and or mentoring programs; (7) unclear expectations; and (8) inadequate

resources. As teachers progress into later stages of their career, these risks are gradually replaced by other risk factors such as (1) not having advancement opportunities; (2) sense of boredom due to job routine; (3) not having incentives or rewards for seeking and attaining expertise; and (4) incentives for early retirement. These differences in career retention risks also suggest that some types of administrative support may be perceived as more important at different stages of teaching career.

Different theoretical models, for example, Burden (1979), Fuller (1969), Huberman (1989), Katz (1972), and Steffy (1989) have been developed to explain and further study predictability of patterns and transitions that teachers face at each career stage. Among these teacher career models, Burden's (1979) *Career Stages of Teachers* model was the best fit for this study as it only focuses on in-service teachers and provides a clear distinction between each career stage as determined by years of teaching experience. The other models either adopted a progressive approach which makes it difficult to identify the transition between career stages and/or are composed of many career stages that sufficient number teachers to represent each group may not be achieved in this study, given that 83.1% of charter school teachers have less than 14 years of teaching experience (Goldring et al., 2013). Burden's (1979) career stages model allows teachers' perceived administrative support needs to be studied in three distinct stages during the first five years where most of the teacher turnover takes place. Besides, Burden's (1979) model is consistent with other teacher career models such as Fuller (1969) and Katz (1972), and is still referenced as a reliable theoretical model in many contemporary teacher development books, for instance, Sweeney (2011) and Zepeda (2014).

Based on his research, Burden (1979) concluded that teachers experience various changes during the course of their teaching career, and categorized them as (1) job skills, knowledge, and

behaviors – in areas such as teaching methods, discipline strategies, curriculum, planning, rules and procedures; (2) attitudes and outlooks – in areas such as images of teaching, professional confidence and maturity, willingness to try new teaching methods, satisfactions, concerns, values and beliefs; and (3) job events – in areas such as changes in grade level, school, or district; involvement in additional professional responsibilities; and age of entry and retirement.

According to *Career Stages of Teachers* model of Burden (1979), teachers go through three distinct career stages: Stage-I (Year 1), Stage-II (Years 2-4), and Stage-III (Years 5 and later).

### **Stage-I (Year 1)**

This occurs during the first year of teaching which is also known as *Survival Stage*. During this stage teachers reported feelings of confusion and uncertainty, limited knowledge of teaching activities and environment; they were subject-centered and felt they had little professional insight; they lacked confidence and were unwilling to try new methods; and they found themselves conforming to their preconceived image of teacher. In this stage, “teachers spend most of their time refining their efforts to control classes and learning what and how to teach” (Christensen et al., 1984, p. 4). Katz (1972) added that teachers at this stage are very likely to need more support and guidance.

### **Stage-II (Years 2-4)**

This stage occurs between second and fourth years of teaching, and is also known as *Adjustment Stage*. During this period, teachers reported that they were learning a great deal about planning and organization, children, curriculum, and methods. They gradually gain confidence in themselves as they became more adept at planning, organization, and methods. Katz (1972) added that when they reach to this stage in their career, they have usually decided that they can survive.

### **Stage-III (Years 5 and later)**

This stage starts with the fifth year of teaching, and is also known as *Mature Stage*. Teachers in this stage felt they had a good command of teaching activities and the environment; they were more child-centered, felt confident and secure, and were willing to try new teaching methods. Teachers noticed that they gradually abandoned their image of teacher and had gained professional insight, and felt they could handle most new situations that may arise.

Burden (1982) advised that “[s]chool administrators and supervisors can help classroom teachers improve their instruction and facilitate their development by varying the type of assistance and supervisory strategy” (p. 22). Glickman (1981) suggested that teachers in the survival stage need more support with technical skills of teaching, and a directive supervisory approach would be appropriate. Glickman (1981) further indicated that collaborative supervisory approach would be the best strategy during the *adjustment stage*, while suggesting a non-directive supervisory approach with teachers in their fifth or later year of teaching. The extant literature provides convincing evidence that administrators should customize their support and supervisory approach based on their teachers’ experience.

In order to examine if and how teachers’ perceived lack of administrative support change as they gain more teaching experience, this study adapted the *Career Stages of Teachers* model by Burden (1979). During the data analysis process, the participants were grouped into the three career stages based on their years of teaching experience. Table 4 illustrates teacher career stages based on previous years of teaching experience. Pre-service teaching was not included in the total years of teaching experience.

Table 4. *Teacher Career Stages based on Years of Previous Teaching Experience.*

Career Stage	Years of Previous Teaching Experience
Stage-I: Survival Stage	0 (First Year)
Stage-II: Adjustment Stage	1-3
Stage-III: Mature Stage	4+

### Identified Gaps in the Literature

During this review some important perspectives have been identified as either insufficient or missing in the extant literature. A summary of these findings are presented in the following section, which will also specify how this study filled the gap.

#### Unreliable Measurements of Administrative Support

It must be remembered that teacher cited lack of administrative support, *not* lack of principal support as the most important reason for their departure. Studies such as Hicks (2011) and Prather-Jones's (2011) confirmed that teachers view other administrators such as assistant principals as a source of administrative support. However, this review has revealed that recent studies mostly assumed principals as the only source of administrative support, and worded their survey questions accordingly. Implied is that earlier research that examined teachers' perceptions of administrative support in school buildings with two or more administrators may not have accurately captured available administrative support if teachers were asked to rate the extent of available support provided only by their principals. This is also problematic in the SASS where the terms "school administration" and "principal" are used interchangeably to measure the extent of teachers' satisfaction with various types of administrative support. This study addressed this issue by wording the survey questions as "school administration ..." which was inclusive of all sources of administrative support at the school level.

Boyd et al. (2011) stated that “teachers who plan to leave teaching in the following year might respond in particularly negative way to the survey items on working conditions even if they were leaving teaching for other reasons” (p. 310). Boyd et al. contended that if they had a chance to survey the same teachers at another time when teachers are not planning on leaving teaching, “their responses might be less negative even if the working conditions were identical” (p. 310). This study addressed this issue by administering the survey during the months of January and February, which was probably before most teachers started exploring alternative job opportunities for the next school year. If the survey were to be administered any sooner than mid-year, especially new teachers would not have had enough time to fairly evaluate the extent of all administrative support behaviors in their current school.

Earlier studies such as Littrell (1992), Cordeau (2003), and Schindewolf (2008) utilized administrative support surveys with labels for only the extreme response categories. However, Weijters, Cabooter, and Schillewaert (2010) suggested that labeling only these end points would make the interpretation of the intermediate choices more challenging. In the absence of labels for each choice, respondents are likely to take more time to determine which one expresses their opinion more accurately and to attach different meanings to the same response option. This study addressed this issue by fully labelling all response choices which enhanced the interpretation of each option and eliminate the extra amount of cognitive difficulty caused by the choices with no labels.

This review has also revealed that previous studies such as Littrell (1992), Cordeau (2003), Schindewolf (2008), Peronto (2013), and Hughes et al. (2015) utilized same or similar administrative support items to study administrative support in four categories as identified by House (1981). However, they did not perform any factor analysis or report their findings to

explain how four factor solution was validated. Even though face and content validity of these survey questions were established earlier, it is not known if the four factor solution was valid as well. This study addressed this issue by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis to validate the four factor solution for the survey instrument used in this study.

### **Lack of Recognition for Teacher Support Needs at Different Career Stages**

It has been determined that the recent studies examining teacher turnover primarily focused on new teachers. New teachers who participated in these studies cited lack of administrative support as the most important reason for moving to another school or leaving the profession. However, the studies examining administrative support behaviors mostly involved samples from teachers with more than five years of experience. While new teachers indicate that they need more support from their administrators, their perspectives about administrative support have been underrepresented in the literature. Furthermore, existing literature failed to recognize that teachers' perceived needs for administrative support may change as they gain more experience. Only a few studies distinguished between administrative support needs of teachers at different experience levels. However, these studies did not provide any theoretical framework or failed to justify their grouping of teachers based on different years of experience. This study closed this gap in the literature by establishing a reliable framework and analyzing teachers' administrative support needs for each career stage.

### **Lack of Studies Involving Charter School Teachers**

As noted earlier, there are sizable differences in work conditions and general characteristics of teachers and students between charter schools and traditional public schools. Furthermore, studies such as Gross and DeArmond (2010), Stuit and Smith (2010), Miron and Applegate, 2007, and Harris (2007) confirm that charter school are the ones suffering from the



teacher turnover problems the most. Gross and DeArmond (2010) report that lack of administrative support was cited by 65% of charter school teachers who moved, and was the most frequently cited reason for their departure. This study closed this knowledge gap in the literature by solely focusing on charter school teachers' perceptions of administrative support. This was the first research study to investigate administrative support behaviors in urban charter schools at the national level.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter provided a comprehensive review of the most recent and relevant literature on prevalence, consequences, and reasons of high teacher turnover in public schools. The review of existing literature has produced fairly consistent findings indicating that teachers who are young, have less teaching experience, work on a part-time basis, received their teaching license through nontraditional programs or are not certified, work at urban public schools, and/or receive relatively lower salary and benefits are more likely to leave their schools or the teaching profession. Moreover, the findings in this chapter confirmed that teachers prefer to work in schools where they have greater levels of administrative support. Among other working conditions, administrative support has appeared to have a significantly large positive influence on teachers' willingness to keep teaching at their current schools. The findings in this review were complemented by data from other reliable sources. This chapter also provided a comprehensive list of administrative support behaviors that teachers perceive to be effective.

This chapter also established the theoretical framework which was employed in this study, and highlighted several very important gaps in the existing literature. The identified gaps included unreliable measurement of administrative support, lack of recognition for

teacher support needs at different career stages, and most importantly, the lack of studies involving charter school teachers. It also specified how this study addressed the identified gaps and contributed to the existing literature on teacher retention and administrative support.

The following chapter will provide further information about the methodology used in this study. It will present each research question and corresponding hypothesis, design considerations, target population, and the sampling technique used to achieve a large and nationally representative sample of urban charter school teachers. The following chapter will also comprise further details about the development and validation of the survey instrument used in this study.

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

The primary purpose of this non-experimental quantitative study was to explore what types of administrative support were more valuable to urban charter school teachers, and to determine the extent of support that they perceived to be receiving from their administrators. The secondary purpose of this study was to investigate if the perceived needs of charter school teachers for administrative support changed at different stages of their career.

A clear understanding for perceived administrative support needs of urban charter school teachers can help both policy makers and urban charter school administrators create more effective strategies to reduce chronically high teacher turnover rates. High teacher retention can boost students' academic achievement and reduce costs associated with recruitment, hiring, and training of new teachers. Since high teacher turnover is a common problem in most urban schools, a greater understanding for perceived support needs of urban charter school teachers can also inform both administrative practices and future studies in other urban school settings.

In addition, this study introduced a new framework by which researchers and practitioners can examine perceived administrative support needs at any school setting, and help school leaders identify what administrative support behaviors are perceived to be insufficient in their school campus. This information can help charter school administrators evaluate their management and leadership practices, and determine where to concentrate their support efforts to enhance their teacher's satisfaction and job performance. Identified commonalities and differences between teachers' perceptions of administrative support at different stages of their career can also help charter school administrators develop more effective strategies to support their teachers.

## Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions guiding this research were based on exhaustive review of the most recent and relevant literature pertaining to teacher turnover and administrative support in public schools with a specific focus on urban charter schools. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) and alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) for each research question are listed below.

*Research Question 1:* What administrative support behaviors are perceived by urban charter school teachers as more important?

This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing; therefore, there was no null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The ranked means for the administrative support items are provided for each support dimension: appraisal, emotional, informational, and instrumental.

*Research Question 2:* What dimensions of administrative support are perceived by urban charter school teachers as most important?

This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing; therefore, there was no null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The ranked means for the top 10 dimensions of administrative support are provided.

*Research Question 3:* Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived need for administrative support between different career stages?

$H_{30}$ : The means for urban charter school teachers' ratings of their administrative support needs are the same for all three career stages.

$H_{31}$ : The means for urban charter school teachers' ratings of their perceived administrative support needs are significantly different between at least two career stages.

*Research Question 4:* What administrative support behaviors do urban charter school teachers perceive to be lacking in urban charter schools?

This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing; therefore, there was no null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The ranked means for the perceived administrative support gaps are provided for each support dimension.

*Research Question 5:* What dimensions of administrative support do urban charter school teachers perceive to be most insufficient in urban charter schools?

This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing; therefore, there was no null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The ranked means for the top 10 dimensions of the perceived administrative support gap are provided.

*Research Question 6:* Do urban charter school administrators sufficiently meet the perceived administrative support needs of their teachers?

H6<sub>0</sub>: The mean for urban charter schools' perceived administrative support gap scores is equal to zero (0).

H6<sub>1</sub>: The mean for urban charter schools' perceived administrative support gap scores is significantly different than zero (0).

*Research Question 7:* Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived lack of administrative support between different career stages?

H7<sub>0</sub>: The means for urban charter school teachers' perceived administrative support gap scores are the same for all three career stages.

H7<sub>1</sub>: The means for urban charter school teachers' perceived administrative support gap scores are significantly different between at least two career stages.

### **Design Considerations**

This study employed a quantitative research method. Creswell (2012) stated that quantitative research can help researchers investigate and answer a research problem based on

“overall tendency of responses from individuals” and “how this tendency varies among people” (p.13). Creswell (2012) further explained that “[a]nalyzing trends, comparing groups, or relating variables using statistical analyses, and interpreting results by comparing them with prior predictions and past research” (p. 13) based on numeric data collected from a large number of people by using a survey instrument are among major characteristics of quantitative research. Based on these characteristics, a quantitative research method was determined as the most appropriate approach to investigate the research problems in this study. Other researchers such as Littrell (1992), Cordeau (2003), Schindewolf (2008) and Peronto (2013) also used quantitative research methodology to examine teachers’ perceptions of administrative support, and reported reliable results.

### **Target Population and Sampling**

The target population of this nationwide study was charter school teachers in urban settings in the United States. This study employed convenience sampling technique to recruit participants from urban charter schools located in the states of California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. Names and e-mail addresses of the charter school leaders in these states were obtained using publicly accessible online school directories or through the state educational boards. These states were selected because they have high number of urban charter schools.

An informational e-mail (Appendix-A) was sent to all charter school leaders in the aforementioned states to request their assistance with this study by providing a list of names and work e-mail addresses of their teachers. The informational e-mail also promoted an incentive that schools with more than 50% participation rate were to receive a special school report delivered to the school administration within two weeks after the completion deadline for the survey. As

many as 127 school leaders accepted to participate, and assisted with the administration of this study at their schools. This sampling technique can be classified as convenience sampling, because the study was only conducted at the urban charter schools that were available and willing to participate (Creswell, 2012). Convenience sampling is a nonprobability sampling method, which does not guarantee that each member of the targeted population has equal chance of being included in the sample. However, due to its obvious advantages in cost, time, control of confounding variables, and logistics (Hulley et al., 2013), convenience sampling was an excellent choice for this nationwide study. This technique also allowed me to confirm urban characteristics of each school to ensure that participants in this study can be classified confidently as urban charter school teachers.

Once teachers' names and work e-mail addresses were obtained from the school leaders, a personalized e-mail (Appendix-B) invitation was sent to each teacher. It is important to note that great majority of the school leaders preferred teacher invitation e-mail to be sent to them so that they could review the content, and then forward it to their teachers internally. In order to encourage their teachers' participation, some school leaders allocated time for their teachers to take the survey as part of an after school meeting or a professional development day. Some school leaders promoted the survey in their weekly memos to staff, while some offered gift cards to encourage their participation. As a result, 70% of the schools participated in this study achieved the required teacher participation rate, and received their special school report.

The teacher e-mail invitation briefly explained the purpose of the study, how the survey data were going to be used, potential benefits/risks associated with participation in the study, and their rights. The e-mail invitation also disclosed that participation in the survey was completely voluntary and the results were going to be aggregated to ensure anonymity of participants and

their schools. Clicking on the survey link provided in the body of the e-mail invitation was considered as “implied consent to participate.” The survey was digitally encrypted and password-protected to maintain security and privacy. Participants were allowed a one-time session through the Qualtrics Survey Software. Once they clicked on the submit button, the survey link was automatically disabled by the system. This safeguard was to guarantee that each participant could possibly take the survey only once.

### **Survey Instrument**

In order to measure urban charter school teachers’ perceptions on importance and extent of administrative support, a two part survey entitled *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* (Appendix-C) was administered via e-mail using the Qualtrics Survey Software. Part one of the survey instrument included demographic questions, and part two included a list of 59 administrative support items with two columns including four-point Likert scale ratings for each support item. The first column asked participants to rate the importance of each administrative support item to them at the current stage of their career, while the second column asked participants to make judgements about the extent of support they receive from administrators in their current school.

The survey utilized two separate scales to measure teachers’ perceived importance and extent of administrative support. The four-point Likert scale for perceived importance of administrative support included: (1) not important; (2) slightly important; (3) moderately important; and (4) very important. The extent of support they receive from their current administration consisted of four-point Likert scale including: (1) no support; (2) little support; (3) moderate support; and (4) great support. Survey items and their corresponding support dimension are illustrated in Tables 5, 6, 7, and 8.



Most of the administrative support items in this study were modified from the *Mentoring Alternatively Certified Teachers: Principals' Perceptions* by Cordeau (2003) and *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* by Schindewolf (2008).

Permissions to modify and adapt these surveys were secured via e-mail confirmations (Appendix-D and Appendix-E). I included 22 additional support items that I selected from various survey instruments used in other studies or based on my face-to-face interviews with urban charter school teachers. To distinguish them from others, these additional survey items are written in italic format.

Table 5. *Survey Items for Appraisal Support.*

Survey Item	Support Dimension
Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	Appraisal Support
Provides standards and expectations for performance	Appraisal Support
<i>Accurately and objectively assesses my performance</i>	Appraisal Support
Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	Appraisal Support
Provides frequent feedback about my performance	Appraisal Support
Total Number of Items	5

Table 6. *Survey Items for Emotional Support.*

Survey Item	Support Dimension
Acts friendly toward me	Emotional Support
<i>Cares about my well-being</i>	Emotional Support
Considers my ideas and suggestions	Emotional Support
<i>Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff</i>	Emotional Support
Gives me a sense of importance and that I make a difference	Emotional Support
Gives me undivided attention when I am talking	Emotional Support
Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	Emotional Support
Is easy to approach to discuss my feelings, worries, and frustrations	Emotional Support
Is honest and straightforward with the staff	Emotional Support
Recognizes what I do and my professional accomplishments associated with school goals	Emotional Support
<i>Offers incentives to encourage and maintain good work</i>	Emotional Support
<i>Attends or supports extracurricular activities that I organize</i>	Emotional Support
Shows appreciation for my work	Emotional Support
Expresses confidence in my actions	Emotional Support
Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	Emotional Support
<i>Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher</i>	Emotional Support
Trusts my judgement in making curriculum and instructional decisions	Emotional Support
<i>Cares about my job satisfaction</i>	Emotional Support
Total Number of Items	18

Table 7. Survey Items for Informational Support

Survey Item	Support Dimension
<i>Fosters collaboration by providing structure and time for working with and/or learning from my colleagues</i>	Informational Support
Encourages individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities	Informational Support
Identifies resource personnel to contact for specific problems the administration is unable to solve	Informational Support
Acquires adequate staff to help me teach students with special needs (e.g., special education and ELL students)	Informational Support
Provides helpful information about managing daily challenges of being a teacher	Informational Support
Shares up-to-date instructional techniques and educational research	Informational Support
Communicates current school policies and relevant federal and state mandates and regulations	Informational Support
Provides opportunities for me to attend workshops, attend conferences, and take courses	Informational Support
<i>Provides relevant and accurate data on students' attendance, academics, and discipline to inform my classroom decisions</i>	Informational Support
<i>Shares timely and sufficient information about important changes, deadlines, and upcoming events</i>	Informational Support
<i>Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations</i>	Informational Support
Provides adequate resources to help me teach students with special needs (e.g., special education and ELL students)	Informational Support
Total Number of Items	12

Table 8. *Survey Items for Instrumental Support*

Survey Item	Support Dimension
<i>Aligns teaching assignment and prep time based on my teaching experience and educational background</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Visits my classroom on a regular basis to see if I need assistance</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Effectively deals with pressures from outside the school that might interfere with my teaching</i>	Instrumental Support
Equally distributes resources and unpopular tasks	Instrumental Support
Establishes channels of communication among staff	Instrumental Support
<i>Helps me analyze my students' assessment data and develop an action plan</i>	Instrumental Support
Supports me during parent and student meetings and back me up when needed	Instrumental Support
Helps me evaluate my professional development needs	Instrumental Support
Helps me solve problems and conflicts that occur	Instrumental Support
Assists me with classroom discipline problems	Instrumental Support
Is available to help when needed	Instrumental Support
<i>Is flexible and accommodates my individual needs as much as possible</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Is highly visible, actively involved in everyday processes of the school , and frequently interacts with me and my students</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our work conditions</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Protects my class time from outside disruptions (e.g., announcements, phone calls, unscheduled visitors during class time)</i>	Instrumental Support
Schedules adequate planning time	Instrumental Support
<i>Provides adequate training and time to effectively use new tools and resources to implement my curriculum</i>	Instrumental Support
<i>Schedules common planning time with a mentor or teachers in my department</i>	Instrumental Support
Offers extra assistance when I become overloaded	Instrumental Support
Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	Instrumental Support
Allocates time for various non-teaching responsibilities	Instrumental Support
<i>Responds to my emails and or requests in a timely manner, and keeps me informed on its progress</i>	Instrumental Support
Collaborates with me to plan specific goals and objectives for my program and students	Instrumental Support
Total Number of Items	24

The content and construct validity for the original survey instrument - *Principal Support Questionnaire*- were established by Littrell (1992) with assistance from James House, who is the developer of the social support framework. Littrell (1992) confirmed that items for each support item were appropriate. Cordeau (2003) developed *Mentoring Alternately Certified Teachers: Principals Perceptions* survey by adapting the questions from the original survey designed by Littrell (1992). Through examination of current research and using a panel of experts in the field of educational leadership, Cordeau (2003) established the face and content validity of the new survey instrument, which was revised based on expert feedback. Later on, Schindewolf (2008) modified Cordeau's (2003) survey instrument and developed *Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Retention* survey. Schindewolf (2008) also established the validity of the last version of the survey instrument through field-testing and based on feedback from two experts.

### **Validation of the Survey Instrument**

First step in the validation of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was to check if the sample size was adequate for factor analysis. Comrey and Lee (1992) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2012) suggested having at least 300 participants for studies involving factor extraction and factor rotation. This study achieved a sample size of 1,945 teachers, which Comrey and Lee (1992) considered an excellent sample size for reliable data factor analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure also verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO=0.97, which was well above the minimum criterion of 0.5 and fell into the range of “marvelous” according to Hutcheson and Sofroniou (1999). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ( $p < .001$ ), which also suggested suitability of the data for factor analysis (Reinard, 2006).

Examination of anti-image correlation matrices confirmed that all KMO values for individual items were greater than 0.90, which was well above the acceptable limit of 0.5 (Field, 2013).

The previous research studies that used either the original or modified version of the *Principal Support Questionnaire* did not conduct a factor analysis or failed to report factor loadings. In this study, a confirmatory factor analysis with a principal axis factoring extraction followed by a promax rotation was performed in an exploratory nature to confirm the four-factor solution and to examine the loadings of each item on the four dimensions of administrative support.

The confirmatory factor analysis revealed that 50.36% of the variance for the importance of support and 65.32% of the variance for the extent of support were explained by the four factor solution. Initial eigenvalues for the importance of four factors (emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support) were 14.38, 2.68, 2.06, and 1.53 respectively, while the initial eigenvalues for the extent of the four factors (emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support) were 22.58, 1.41, 1.74, and 1.05 in the same order. The pattern matrix was examined to check if there were any items that simultaneously loaded on more than one factor. Based on this analysis, 18 items were eliminated. As a result, the four factor solution for the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* with 41 administrative support items was validated. The factor loadings for the importance and extent of support are displayed in Tables 9-16 below. For easier representation, factor loadings for each dimension (i.e., factor) of support were displayed in separate Tables.

Table 9. *Factor Loadings for the Importance of Appraisal Support Items- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	<b>.485</b>	-.013	.022	.085
Provides standards and expectations for my performance	<b>.734</b>	-.090	.037	.075
Accurately and objectively assesses my performance	<b>.783</b>	.013	-.056	.014
Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	<b>.782</b>	.017	-.022	-.003
Provides frequent feedback about my performance	<b>.680</b>	.073	.146	-.137

Table 10. *Factor Loadings for the Extent of Appraisal Support Items- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	<b>.498</b>	.157	.092	.081
Provides standards and expectations for my performance	<b>.694</b>	.092	.040	.011
Accurately and objectively assesses my performance	<b>.827</b>	.079	-.062	.029
Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	<b>.936</b>	-.033	-.072	.009
Provides frequent feedback about my performance	<b>.807</b>	-.040	.092	.007

Table 11. *Factor Loadings for Importance of Emotional Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Acts friendly toward me	-.071	<b>.677</b>	-.070	-.010
Cares about my well-being	-.096	<b>.714</b>	.010	-.034
Considers my ideas and suggestions	-.015	<b>.669</b>	.031	-.045
Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	.132	<b>.501</b>	-.177	.149
Gives me a sense of importance and that I make a difference	.051	<b>.765</b>	.011	-.112
Gives me undivided attention when I am talking	.006	<b>.581</b>	.119	-.046
Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	-.030	<b>.567</b>	.094	-.010
Is easy to approach to discuss my feelings, worries, and frustrations	-.043	<b>.548</b>	.091	.078
Recognizes what I do and my professional accomplishments associated with school goals	.033	<b>.543</b>	.182	-.036
Shows appreciation for my work	-.009	<b>.724</b>	.056	-.075
Expresses confidence in my actions	.033	<b>.658</b>	-.036	.089
Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	.102	<b>.505</b>	.021	.086
Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher	.002	<b>.549</b>	.044	.086
Trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions	.038	<b>.510</b>	-.121	.201
Cares about my job satisfaction	.007	<b>.700</b>	-.117	.064



Table 12. *Factor Loadings for Extent of Emotional Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Acts friendly toward me	-.021	<b>.879</b>	-.265	.087
Cares about my well-being	-.009	<b>.880</b>	-.138	.044
Considers my ideas and suggestions	-.035	<b>.746</b>	.089	.044
Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	.122	<b>.562</b>	.073	.127
Gives me a sense of importance and that I make a difference	.111	<b>.767</b>	.064	-.062
Gives me undivided attention when I am talking	-.020	<b>.650</b>	-.029	.141
Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	-.058	<b>.498</b>	.386	-.010
Is easy to approach to discuss my feelings, worries, and frustrations	.030	<b>.751</b>	-.030	.087
Recognizes what I do and my professional accomplishments associated with school goals	.117	<b>.608</b>	.262	-.105
Shows appreciation for my work	.041	<b>.794</b>	.105	-.051
Expresses confidence in my actions	.017	<b>.790</b>	.042	-.008
Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	.024	<b>.603</b>	.179	.067
Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher	-.051	<b>.599</b>	.273	.032
Trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions	-.048	<b>.650</b>	.109	.024
Cares about my job satisfaction	.071	<b>.735</b>	.078	-.008

Table 13. *Factor Loadings for Importance of Informational Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Fosters collaboration by providing structure and time for working with and/or learning from my colleagues	.090	.037	<b>.525</b>	.039
Encourages individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities	.168	.006	<b>.625</b>	-.006
Identifies resource personnel to contact for specific problems the administration is unable to solve	-.035	-.007	<b>.704</b>	.022
Provides helpful information about managing the daily challenges of being a teacher	-.040	.017	<b>.759</b>	-.030
Shares up-to-date instructional techniques and educational research	.012	-.062	<b>.815</b>	-.060
Communicates current school policies and relevant federal and state mandates and regulations	.068	-.061	<b>.567</b>	.117
Provides opportunities for me to attend workshops, attend conferences, and take courses	-.001	.092	<b>.548</b>	.026
Provides relevant and accurate data on students' attendance, academics, and discipline to inform my classroom decisions	.001	-.014	<b>.523</b>	.182
Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations	-.041	.103	<b>.542</b>	.115

Table 14. *Factor Loadings for Extent of Informational Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Fosters collaboration by providing structure and time for working with and/or learning from my colleagues	-.018	.027	<b>.694</b>	.031
Encourages individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities	.156	.042	<b>.662</b>	-.028
Identifies resource personnel to contact for specific problems the administration is unable to solve	.126	.053	<b>.515</b>	.118
Provides helpful information about managing the daily challenges of being a teacher	.045	.016	<b>.756</b>	.024
Shares up-to-date instructional techniques and educational research	.016	-.030	<b>.775</b>	.017
Communicates current school policies and relevant federal and state mandates and regulations	.025	-.046	<b>.696</b>	.112
Provides opportunities for me to attend workshops, attend conferences, and take courses	-.132	.065	<b>.707</b>	-.011
Provides relevant and accurate data on students' attendance, academics, and discipline to inform my classroom decisions	.050	-.115	<b>.552</b>	.241
Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations	-.010	.103	<b>.547</b>	.212

Table 15. *Factor Loadings for Importance of Instrumental Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	.076	-.091	-.079	<b>.715</b>
Establishes channels of communication among staff	-.018	.096	.112	<b>.492</b>
Supports me during parent and student meetings and backs me up when needed	.034	.030	-.072	<b>.666</b>
Assists me with classroom discipline problems	.086	.001	.032	<b>.533</b>
Is available to help when needed	-.002	.079	-.055	<b>.696</b>
Is flexible and accommodates my individual needs as much as possible	-.117	.140	.171	<b>.499</b>
Is highly visible, actively involved in everyday processes of the school, and frequently interacts with me and my students	.090	-.032	.121	<b>.558</b>
Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our working conditions	-.051	.063	.023	<b>.696</b>
Protects my class time from outside disruptions (e.g., announcements, phone calls, unscheduled visitors during class time)	-.077	-.057	.206	<b>.553</b>
Schedules adequate planning time	.000	-.002	.023	<b>.645</b>
Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	.015	.006	-.049	<b>.746</b>
Responds to my emails and or requests in a timely manner, and keeps me informed on its progress	-.066	.087	.074	<b>.584</b>

Table 16. *Factor Loadings for Extent of Instrumental Support- Pattern Matrix*

Administrative Support Behavior	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	.059	-.124	.149	<b>.685</b>
Establishes channels of communication among staff	.115	.093	.251	<b>.381</b>
Supports me during parent and student meetings and backs me up when needed	.009	.167	-.075	<b>.669</b>
Assists me with classroom discipline problems	.051	-.014	.056	<b>.730</b>
Is available to help when needed	-.021	.188	-.033	<b>.734</b>
Is flexible and accommodates my individual needs as much as possible	-.048	.368	.021	<b>.479</b>
Is highly visible, actively involved in everyday processes of the school, and frequently interacts with me and my students	.075	.097	.068	<b>.600</b>
Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our working conditions	-.006	.158	.242	<b>.480</b>
Protects my class time from outside disruptions (e.g., announcements, phone calls, unscheduled visitors during class time)	.007	.054	.219	<b>.442</b>
Schedules adequate planning time	-.005	.012	.331	<b>.358</b>
Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	-.076	.034	.336	<b>.421</b>
Responds to my emails and or requests in a timely manner, and keeps me informed on its progress	-.001	.158	.063	<b>.537</b>

The face and content validity of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was established by conducting a focus group with urban charter school teachers and experts in the field of PreK-12 education. Based on the recommendations from the focus group, the necessary revisions were made, and a pilot study with teachers at a charter school in Dayton, Ohio was conducted to ensure everything worked as expected. Distribution of the survey to all participants in other charter schools followed.

Reliability of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was established by analyzing Cronbach's alpha for each of the four dimensions of administrative support. The reliability of the original questions were established by Littrell (1992) and confirmed by later research (Cordeau, 2003; Peronto, 2013). Littrell (1992) reported that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for importance levels of the four dimensions of administrative support ranged between 0.8016 and 0.8632, and for the extent of administrative support, ranged between 0.8578 and 0.9304.

As part of this study, the reliability coefficients for each dimension of administrative support with the additional survey items were also analyzed. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for importance levels of the four dimensions of administrative support ranged between 0.836 and 0.915, and for the extent of administrative support, ranged between 0.911 and 0.964. The results indicate that the reliability statistics of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* were comparatively higher than the reliability statistics for other survey instruments used in earlier studies. Table 17 illustrates the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for both importance and extent of administrative support along with number of cases and items for each factor (i.e., dimension).

Table 17. *Reliability Statistics for the Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey*

Factor	Cases	Cronbach's Alpha Importance	Cronbach's Alpha Extent	N of Items
Appraisal	1945	.836	.911	5
Emotional	1838	.915	.964	15
Informational	1752	.885	.922	9
Instrumental	1668	.901	.938	12

These reliability statistics also confirmed that the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* is more reliable than the existing survey tools to measure both the importance and extent of administrative support in schools. When compared to the reliability statistics provided by Littrell (1992), the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* had higher reliability statistics for both importance and extent in four dimensions of administrative support. Table 18 provides comparisons for the reliability statistics of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* to the original instrument developed by Littrell (1992).

Table 18. *Comparison of Reliability Statistics of Modified Instrument to Original Instrument*

Support Dimension	Level	Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey		Littrell (1992)	
		# of items	Cronbach's Alpha	# of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Appraisal	Extent	5	0.911	7	0.861
	Importance	5	0.836	7	0.802
Emotional	Extent	15	0.964	12	0.930
	Importance	15	0.915	12	0.837
Informational	Extent	9	0.922	8	0.858
	Importance	9	0.885	8	0.863
Instrumental	Extent	12	0.938	13	0.879
	Importance	12	0.901	13	0.831

## Labelling all Response Categories

Unlike previous administrative support surveys by Littrell (1992), Cordeau (2003), and Schindewolf (2008), the response categories for each item in the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* were clearly labeled. Whether all response categories should be clearly labeled or it is enough to label only the extreme categories such as “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” is a controversial issue in the format of rating scales. Weijters et al. (2010) suggested that labeling only the end points would make the interpretation of the intermediate choices more challenging. In the absence of labels for each choice, respondents are likely to take more time to determine which one expresses their opinion more accurately and to attach different meanings to the same response option. Based on this assumption, Weijters et al. (2010) hypothesized that due to the extra amount of cognitive difficulty caused by the choices with no labels, full labeling would enhance the interpretation of each option.

Both Weng (2004) and Krosnick (1999) agreed that clearly labeling all response categories are likely to make the interpretation process easier and, therefore, yield more stable participant responses and higher reliabilities compared to a scale with only extreme options are labeled. Based on his results from a study with 1,247 college students, Weng (2004) concluded that the internal consistency reliability (coefficient  $\alpha$ ) seemed to be independent of the format of verbal labels, however, suggested its use to achieve consistent and stable participant responses.

I agree that labeling each response category greatly enhances the interpretation of measurement results; therefore, further improves the test reliability. Otherwise, it would be difficult to interpret a group mean of 2.3 on a 4-point scale with only extreme categories labeled. How could someone interpret the meanings that each respondent may have attached to choices 2 and 3 to predict the meaning of 2.3 as a group mean? Needless to say, labelling only extreme



categories would make the data analysis process more difficult and ambiguous. Thus, each item in the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was labeled to further enhance the accuracy and reliability of responses and interpretation of results.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the methodology used in this study. It presented each research question and corresponding hypothesis, design considerations, target population, and the sampling technique used to achieve a large and nationally representative sample for urban charter school teachers. This chapter also comprised further details about the development and validation of the new survey instrument.

The following chapter will outline participation statistics, detailed description of demographics variable, statistical procedures used for data analysis, and the results of this study. The results for each research question will be presented separately.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

### **Introduction**

This chapter begins with participation statistics followed by a detailed description of demographic variables, which include participants' gender, years of overall teaching experience, years of teaching experience at their current school, certification route, employment status, and age. Following the demographics information, the statistical procedures, data, and analyses are reported for each research question. The analyses and results in this chapter are based on data collected using the survey instrument entitled *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey*. The reliability and validity of this survey instrument were also established as part of this study, and presented in the previous chapter. The survey included six demographics questions followed by 59 items regarding administrative support behaviors. However, as part of the validation of the survey instrument, 18 of the 59 initial support items were eliminated due to low factor loadings or simultaneously loading on more than one factor, leaving 41 administrative support behaviors for the data analysis in this chapter.

### **Participation Statistics**

This nationwide study involved 1,945 teachers from as many as 127 urban charter schools located in the states of California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Nevada, New York, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin. Among these 13 different states, California and Ohio had the highest number of school participation with 35 and 22 charter schools, respectively. Ohio had by far the highest number of teacher participation with 586 teachers, followed by 256 teachers from California. Out of 2,579 charter school teachers who received the invitation e-mail either directly or through their school leader, 1,945 participated in the online survey, which equated to a 75.42% participation rate. Since most of the

leaders in the participating charter schools scheduled time for their teachers to take the online survey as part of an after school meeting or professional development day, and strongly encouraged their participation, the response rate was considerably high. Some of the charter schools were very small, and had only 3 teachers, while some of them had as many as 60 teachers. Table 19 provides more information about the participation statistics for each state.

It is also noteworthy that 1,626 of the 1,945 participants completed all of the survey questions with no missing response. The remaining 319 teachers completed the survey with partial responses. Partial responses were only included in the analyses of data generated by descriptive statistics.

Table 19. *Participation Statistics by State*

State	Schools	# of Teachers Invited	Participated	Response Rate
California	35	463	256	55.29%
Florida	12	154	77	50.00%
Illinois	10	244	165	67.62%
Indiana	4	144	126	87.50%
Michigan	1	41	41	100.00%
Minnesota	1	31	30	96.77%
Missouri	3	101	95	94.06%
North Carolina	9	239	166	69.46%
Nevada	7	107	84	78.50%
New York	3	33	30	90.91%
Ohio	22	614	586	95.44%
Texas	12	227	131	57.71%
Wisconsin	8	181	158	87.29%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>2,579</b>	<b>1,945</b>	<b>75.42%</b>

## Demographics

Part-I of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* consisted of six demographics questions: gender, total years of teaching experience, years of teaching experience at the current charter school, certification route and status, employment status, and age. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze demographic data provided by the participants, and all results are reported using means or percentages.

A total of 1,945 teachers responded to the demographics questions in Part-I of the survey. Of these respondents, 504 were male and 1,441 were female (See Table 20). Majority of the participants were female, which constituted 74.1% of the sample.

Table 20. *Gender of Teachers*

Gender	n	Percent
Male	504	25.9
Female	1441	74.1
Total	1945	100.0

The participants were grouped into three career stages based on their overall years of teaching experience. Teachers who were on their first year of teaching were grouped as career stage-I. A total of 287 teachers were in career stage-I, which accounted for 14.8% of the sample. The teachers who were on their second, third, or fourth year of teaching were grouped as career stage-II, and there were 665 teachers in this career stage. The teachers in career stage-II made up 34.2% of the sample. The last group was the teachers who were on their fifth or more year of teaching. With a total number of 963 teachers, career stage-III teachers constituted almost half of the sample. Thirty teachers did not report their overall teaching experience. The number of teachers in each career stage and corresponding percentages are displayed in Table 21. Teachers

were asked not to include their student teaching or short term substitute teaching experience in their overall experience.

Table 21. *Career Stages of Teachers*

Teacher Career Stage	n	Percent
Stage-I (first year teachers)	287	14.8
Stage-II (years two, three, and four)	665	34.2
Stage-III (years 5 and beyond)	963	49.5
Total	1915	98.5
Missing	30	1.5
Total	1,945	100.0

Participants were also asked to report how long they had been teaching at their current charter school. Of 1,922 who responded to this question, 753 stated that this was their first year teaching at their current school. Table 22 shows teachers' experience at their current school.

Table 22. *Teaching Experience at Current School*

Experience at Current	n	%	Cumulative %
1st year	753	39.2	39.2
2nd year	468	24.3	63.5
3rd year	291	15.1	78.7
4th year	142	7.4	86.1
5th year	91	4.7	90.8
6th year	57	3.0	93.8
7th year	37	1.9	95.7
8th year	17	.9	96.6
9th year	13	.7	97.2
10th year and more	21	2.8	100.0
Total	1922	100.0	100.0

Table 23 displays more detailed data about charter school teachers' overall experience and their experience at their current school. Of the 1,893 teachers who responded to both questions, 747 stated that this was their first year in the profession and at their current school. According to the results illustrated by Table 23, 282 of these first-year-at-current-school teachers were also new to the profession. In other words, 37.45% of the teachers who started teaching at these charter schools during the 2015-2016 school year were first year teachers with no previous teaching experience. Similarly, 33.83% or 157 of the 464 teachers who were on their second year at their current school stated that they started teaching during the last academic year. This means that last year was their first year in the profession. The data suggest that these urban charter schools mainly attracted or preferred to hire first year teachers.

Table 23. *Teachers' Overall Teaching Experience vs. Experience at Current School*

Overall Experience	Experience at Current School										Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+	
1	282										282
2	76	157									233
3	70	52	111								233
4	48	50	36	56							190
5	35	27	26	20	26						134
6	34	24	10	10	6	21					105
7	28	19	11	10	15	7	15				105
8	19	17	10	7	7	3	4	3			70
9	15	19	11	10	5	4	0	2	5		71
10+	139	99	71	28	30	20	15	12	8	48	470
Total	747	464	286	141	89	55	34	17	13	48	1893

Note. n=1,893

Of 1,945 teachers, 1,328 reported that they received their teaching license through a traditional teacher preparation program, while 354 of them indicated that they went through an alternative teacher preparation program to obtain their teaching license. When combined, 86.5% of the participants were certified teachers either through a traditional or alternative teaching certification program. On the other hand, 263 teachers, which accounted for 13.5% of the sample reported that they currently did not have a valid teaching license. Teachers route to their teaching certification and corresponding percentages are illustrated in Table 24.

Table 24. *Certification Route of Urban Charter School Teachers*

Certification Route	n	Percent
Traditional	1328	68.3
Alternative	354	18.2
No License	263	13.5
Total	1945	100.0

A total of 1,942 teachers responded to the question regarding their employment status at their current school. Great majority of the participants indicated that they were full time teachers at their current position. While 97.73% of the teachers who responded to this question stated they were employed on a full time basis, the remaining 2.27% indicated that they had a part time teaching position. Table 25 depicts employment status of the participants along with corresponding percentages.

Table 25. *Employment Status of Teachers*

Emp. Status	n	Percent
Full Time	1898	97.73
Part Time	44	2.27
Total	1942	100

Participants were also asked to select a range for their age. Of 1,945 teachers who responded to this question, 766 of them stated they were younger than 30 years old, which equates to 39.4% of the sample. The second largest age group with a 33.4% was those teachers who were between 30 and 39 years old. The teachers who were between 40 and 49 years old constituted 16.8% of the sample, while the remaining 10.5% were teachers who were at least 50 years old. Table 26 presents the age distribution of the sample.

Table 26. *Teachers' Age*

Age	n	Percent
Less than 30 year	766	39.4
30-39 years	649	33.4
40-49 years	326	16.8
50 years or more	204	10.5
Total	1945	100.0

### **Research Question 1**

The first research question in this study was: What administrative support behaviors are perceived by urban charter school teachers as more important? The urban charter school teachers who participated in this study were asked to make a judgement about the importance of each administrative support behavior to them at the current stage of their career. The rating scale included: (1) Not important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important.

This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing. Using descriptive statistics, ranked means for the importance of all administrative support items were tabulated. The range for mean scores was 3.34 to 3.88. The top 10 of the ranking for the 41 administrative support



items and corresponding support dimensions are included in Table 27. The results indicate that urban charter school teachers perceived establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff as the most important type of support that their school administration can provide. Consistently enforcing school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment and supporting teachers during parent and student meetings and backing them up when needed were the second and third most important administrative support according to the urban charter school teachers.

Among the top 10 most important administrative support behaviors, the instrumental support dimension was the most frequent with five items, while there were four items from the emotional support dimension. Only one of the top 10 most important administrative support behaviors was from *appraisal support* dimension, whereas no items from the informational support dimension made it to the top 10 list. The highest ranked informational support item was “encourages individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities,” which ranked 23<sup>rd</sup> with a mean of 3.63.

Table 27. *Ranked Means and Corresponding Dimensions for Most Important Administrative Support Behaviors*

Rank	Mean	Support Behavior	Support Dimension
1	3.88	Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	Emotional
2	3.80	Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	Instrumental
3	3.79	Supports me during parent and student meetings and backs me up when needed	Instrumental
4	3.77	Trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions	Emotional
5	3.77	Schedules adequate planning time	Instrumental
6	3.76	Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	Instrumental
7	3.76	Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	Emotional

Rank	Mean	Support Behavior	Support Dimension
8	3.74	Is available to help when needed	Instrumental
9	3.72	Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	Appraisal
10	3.72	Cares about my job satisfaction	Emotional

Table 28 describes the similarities and differences between the most important administrative support behaviors for teachers in different career stages. The results suggest that while most of the highly ranked items were same or similar across the career stages, some types of administrative support had considerably different rankings. For instance, “establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff” ranked first across all career stages and in the overall ranking for 41 administrative support items. On the other hand, “trusting my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions” became increasingly more important to the teachers as they gained more teaching experience. While this item ranked 18<sup>th</sup> among first year teachers, it was the second most important item for teachers who had at least four years of previous teaching experience.

Similarly, administrative support items such as “trusts my judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions,” “cares about my job satisfaction,” and “expresses confidence in my actions” were relatively less important to the first year teachers, ranking 18<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>, respectively. However, both “cares about my job satisfaction” and “expresses confidence in my actions” were among the top 10 most important types of administrative support for the teachers in career stage-III with a ranking of eighth and ninth places, respectively. The item “trusts my judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions” ranked as high as second in importance for the teachers in career stage-III.

On the other hand, some of the most important administrative support behaviors for first year teachers became gradually less important for other teachers in later stages of their career. For example, “offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching” was the fifth most important item for first year teachers, and it gradually decreased to 10<sup>th</sup> place for teachers in career stage-II and finally to 18<sup>th</sup> place for the teachers in career stage-III. Similarly, “provides standards and expectations for my performance” followed a decreasing pattern by ranking ninth, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> across the career stages I, II, and III.

Table 28. *Ranked Means for Most Important Administrative Support Behaviors by Career Stage*

Overall		Administrative Support Behavior	Stage-I		Stage-II		Stage-III	
Mean	Rank		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
3.88	1	Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	3.86	1	3.90	1	3.88	1
3.80	2	Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	3.85	2	3.81	2	3.79	4
3.80	3	Supports me during parent and student meetings and backs me up when needed	3.82	3	3.78	4	3.80	3
3.77	4	Trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions	3.69	18	3.75	7	3.81	2
3.77	5	Schedules adequate planning time	3.79	8	3.76	6	3.77	6
3.76	6	Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	3.80	6	3.79	3	3.73	7
3.76	7	Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	3.77	10	3.74	8	3.77	5
3.74	8	Is available to help when needed	3.80	4	3.74	9	3.71	10
3.72	9	Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	3.80	7	3.78	5	3.66	16
3.72	10	Cares about my job satisfaction	3.67	22	3.73	11	3.72	8
3.71	12	Expresses confidence in my actions	3.67	20	3.71	13	3.72	9
3.70	13	Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	3.80	5	3.73	10	3.65	18
3.66	19	Provides standards and expectations for my performance	3.77	9	3.68	17	3.61	23

## Research Question 2

The second research question in this study was: What dimensions of administrative support are perceived by urban charter school teachers as most important? Like the first research questions, this research question did not involve any hypothesis testing either. Using descriptive statistics, a list of the 10 most important support dimensions are reported based on the 10 highest ranked administrative support items across all dimensions of support. A separate column for each teacher career stage and overall rank for each support dimension are reported in Table 29.

Table 29. *The 10 Most Important Support Dimension in Each Teacher Career Stage*

Stage-I		Stage-II		Stage-III	
Dimension	Rank	Dimension	Rank	Dimension	Rank
Emotional	1	Emotional	1	Emotional	1
Instrumental	2	Instrumental	2	Emotional	2
Instrumental	3	Instrumental	3	Instrumental	3
Instrumental	4	Instrumental	4	Instrumental	4
Appraisal	5	Appraisal	5	Emotional	5
Instrumental	6	Instrumental	6	Instrumental	6
Appraisal	7	Emotional	7	Instrumental	7
Instrumental	8	Emotional	8	Emotional	8
Appraisal	9	Instrumental	9	Emotional	9
Emotional	10	Appraisal	10	Instrumental	10

As summarized in Table 30, not only did the most important administrative support items but also the most important dimensions of support followed different patterns across different career stages. For instance, while three of the 10 most important administrative support items for the first year teachers was in appraisal support dimension, none of the 10 most important

administrative support for stage-III teachers were in this dimension of support. It is clear that appraisal support is becoming gradually less important as teachers gain more teaching experience. On the other hand, count for administrative support items in the emotional support dimension was two for career stage-I teachers, three for career stage-II teachers, and five for career stage-III teachers. It is evident that importance of emotional support gradually became more important as teachers gained more teaching experience. It is noteworthy that both informational and instrumental support had consistent presence within the 10 most important support dimensions across different career stages. While informational support items did not make it to top 10 list in any of the career stages, instrumental support items were the most frequent dimension of support.

Table 30. *Support Dimensions in the 10 Most Important Support across Different Career Stages*

Support Dimension	Counts in the 10 Most Important		
	Stage-I	Stage-II	Stage-III
Appraisal	3	2	0
Emotional	2	3	5
Informational	0	0	0
Instrumental	5	5	5

Using descriptive statistics, overall means for importance of each support dimension were also analyzed. As displayed in Table 31, on average, the most important dimensions of administrative support were instrumental (M=3.70), emotional (M=3.67), appraisal (M= 3.65), and informational (M=3.54) in a descending order.

Table 31. *Most Important Dimension of Administrative Support*

Level	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
Importance	3.6462	3.6683	3.5455	3.6928

### **Research Question 3**

Another question that guided the investigation in this research was: Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived need for administrative support between different career stages? Four separate one-way ANOVA tests were conducted to determine if there were statistically significant differences in participants' perceived needs for each dimension of administrative support between different career stages. The ANOVA test included only one-factor with three groups: Stage-I (group-1), Stage-II (group-2), and Stage-III (group-3). The mean scores for the perceived importance of each dimension of administrative support constituted the dependent variable.

An alpha value of .05 is commonly used for the hypothesis testing. However, since the overall data analyses in this study involved six separate statistical tests, the alpha level was adjusted using the Bonferroni procedure. This adjustment ensured that the overall Type-I error across all statistical comparisons remained at .05. The Bonferroni procedure yielded an adjusted alpha value of .00833, which was calculated by simply dividing .05 by six.

Only those respondents without any missing response were included in the following analyses. Respondents (n=1,626) were divided into three career stages based on their overall teaching experience. Career stage-I (n=252) included only first year teachers, and career stage-II (n=564) included teachers who were on their second, third, or fourth year of teaching. Those teachers who were on their fifth year of teaching or beyond were included in the career stage-III (n=810).

#### **Appraisal Support**

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores for the importance of appraisal support between different career stages. Table 32 describes the sample size, mean,

standard deviation (S.D.), standard error (S.E.), and range for mean scores in each teacher career stage. The means were calculated based on the following rating scale: (1) Not important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important.

Table 32. *Descriptives for Importance of Appraisal Support in each Career Stage*

Stage	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E.	Minimum	Maximum
Stage-I	252	3.7373	.39483	.02487	2.00	4.00
Stage-II	564	3.6826	.41948	.01766	1.40	4.00
Stage-III	810	3.5926	.51743	.01818	1.00	4.00
Total	1626	3.6462	.47065	.01167	1.00	4.00

As illustrated by Table 33, the p value for the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was significant ( $p < .001$ ), indicating that variances were significantly different.

Table 33. *Test of Homogeneity of Variance for Appraisal Support*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
17.172	2	1623	<.001

Since the assumption for homogeneity of variance was violated, the F-ratios for Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests were analyzed instead of the one in the main ANOVA Table. As displayed by Table 34, the F-ratios for both the Welch [ $F(2, 741) = 12.509$ ] and the Brown-Forsythe [ $F(2, 1263) = 13.562$ ] tests were significant ( $p < .001$ ) at the adjusted alpha level, indicating that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived need for appraisal support between at least two of the three teacher career stages.

Table 34. *Robust Test of Equality of Means - Perceived Importance of Appraisal Support*

	Statistic <sup>a</sup>	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	12.509	2	740.755	<.001
Brown-Forsythe	13.562	2	1263.366	<.001

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

In order to determine the statistical differences in the mean appraisal support scores between the three teacher career stages, the multiple comparisons table was examined using the Games-Howell procedure, which is robust to violations of homogeneity of variance. As illustrated in Table 35, the post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell procedure indicated that the mean score for the perceived appraisal support needs of the teachers in career stage-I ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD= 0.39$ ) and the teachers in career stage-II ( $M=3.68$ ,  $SD= 0.42$ ) were both significantly higher than the perceived appraisal support needs of the teachers in career stage-III ( $M=3.59$ ,  $SD= 0.52$ ) at the adjusted alpha level of .00833. Even though teachers in career stage-I had a higher mean score for perceived appraisal support need than the teachers in career stage-II, the mean difference of 0.05 was not statistically significant ( $p = .173$ ). The results suggested that as charter school teachers gained more teaching experience, their perceived need for appraisal support gradually decreased. When compared to the teachers who were in their first, second, third, and fourth years of teaching, the teachers with five year or more teaching experience perceived that they needed significantly ( $p < .001$ ) less appraisal support from the administration in these charter schools. Table 35 also includes the multiple comparisons results using the Games-Howell procedure.



Table 35. *Multiple Comparisons for Importance of Appraisal Support*

						99.167% Confidence Interval	
			Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Games- Howell	Stage-I	Stage-II	.05468	.03051	.173	-.0364	.1458
		Stage-III	.14471*	.03081	<.001	.0528	.2367
	Stage-II	Stage-I	-.05468	.03051	.173	-.1458	.0364
		Stage-III	.09003*	.02535	.001	.0146	.1655
	Stage-III	Stage-I	-.14471*	.03081	<.001	-.2367	-.0528
		Stage-II	-.09003*	.02535	.001	-.1655	-.0146

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.00833 level.

The effect size was calculated using the omega squared ( $\omega^2$ ), which is more conservative than eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) as it uses the variance explained by the model, and the error variance. In this formula,  $SS_M$  represents the sum of squares between the groups, while  $SS_T$  is the total amount of variance in the data. This information was obtained from the SPSS output, displayed by Table 36.

Table 36. *ANOVA Table for Importance of Appraisal Support*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.167	2	2.584	11.819	<.001
Within Groups	354.795	1623	.219		
Total	359.962	1625			

$$\omega^2 = \frac{SS_M - (df_M)MS_R}{SS_T - MS_R}$$

$$\omega^2 = \frac{5.167 - (2) .219}{359.962 - .219}$$

$\omega^2 = 0.013$ , which represents a small effect size and a very small correlation of 0.11.

### Emotional Support

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores for the importance of emotional support between different career stages. Table 37 describes the sample size, mean, standard deviation (S.D.), standard error (S.E.), and range for mean scores in each teacher career stage. The means were calculated based on the following rating scale: (1) Not important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important.

Table 37. *Descriptives for Importance of Emotional Support in each Career Stage*

Stage	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E.	Minimum	Maximum
Stage-I	252	3.6222	.38969	.02455	2.13	4.00
Stage-II	564	3.6923	.32806	.01381	2.40	4.00
Stage-III	810	3.6660	.38605	.01356	1.00	4.00
Total	1626	3.6683	.36807	.00913	1.00	4.00

As illustrated by Table 38, the p value for the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was significant ( $p = .004$ ), indicating that variances were significantly different.

Table 38. *Test of Homogeneity of Variance for Emotional Support*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
5.577	2	1623	.004

Since the assumption for homogeneity of variance was violated, the F-ratios for Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests were analyzed instead of the one in the main ANOVA Table. As displayed by Table 39, the F-ratios for both the Welch [ $F(2, 674) = 3.229$ ] and the Brown-Forsythe [ $F(2, 920) = 3.162$ ] tests indicated that the differences in the mean scores for teachers' perceived need for emotional support between stage-I ( $M=3.62$ ,  $SD=0.39$ ), stage-II ( $M=3.69$ ,  $SD=0.33$ ), and stage-III ( $M=3.67$ ,  $SD=0.39$ ) were not statistically significant at the adjusted alpha level ( $p_{\text{welch}} = .040 > .0083$ ;  $p_{\text{brown-forsythe}} = .043 > .0083$ ).

Table 39. *Robust Test of Equality of Means - Perceived Importance of Emotional Support*

	Statistic <sup>a</sup>	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	3.229	2	673.650	.040
Brown-Forsythe	3.162	2	919.527	.043

b. Asymptotically F distributed.

### Informational Support

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores for the importance of informational support between different career stages. Table 40 describes the sample size, mean, standard deviation (S.D.), standard error (S.E.), and range for mean scores in each teacher career stage. The means were calculated based on the following rating scale: (1) Not important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important.

Table 40. *Descriptives for Importance of Informational Support in each Career Stage*

	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E.	Minimum	Maximum
Stage-I	252	3.6160	.44092	.02778	2.00	4.00
Stage-II	564	3.5766	.41018	.01727	1.78	4.00
Stage-III	810	3.5019	.48472	.01703	1.33	4.00
Total	1626	3.5455	.45535	.01129	1.33	4.00

Table 41 displays the p value for the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance, which was significant ( $p < .001$ ). It indicated that variances were significantly different.

Table 41. *Test of Homogeneity of Variance for Informational Support*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
17.172	2	1623	<.001

Since the assumption for homogeneity of variance was violated, the F-ratios for Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests were analyzed instead of the F-statistic in the main ANOVA Table. As displayed by Table 42, the F-ratios for both the Welch [ $F(2, 697) = 7.981$ ] and the Brown-Forsythe [ $F(2, 1052) = 8.509$ ] tests were significant ( $p < .001$ ) at the adjusted alpha level, indicating that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers' perceived need for informational support between at least two of the three teacher career stages.

Table 42. *Robust Test of Equality of Means - Perceived Importance of Informational Support*

	Statistic <sup>a</sup>	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	7.981	2	696.669	<.001
Brown-Forsythe	8.509	2	1051.807	<.001

c. Asymptotically F distributed.

In order to identify the statistical differences in the mean informational support scores between the three teacher career stages, the multiple comparisons table with the Games-Howell procedure was examined. The Games-Howell is robust to violations of homogeneity of variance and unequal sample sizes.

As illustrated in Table 43, the post hoc comparisons using the Games-Howell procedure revealed that the mean scores for the perceived informational support needs of the teachers in career stage-I ( $M=3.62$ ,  $SD=0.44$ ) were significantly ( $p = .001$ ) higher than the perceived

informational support needs of the teachers in career stage-III (M=3.50, SD= 0.48) at the adjusted alpha level of .00833. Similarly, the mean scores for the perceived informational support needs of the teachers in career stage-II (M=3.58, SD= 0.41) were significantly ( $p = .006 < .0083$ ) higher than that of the teachers in career stage-III (M=3.50, SD= 0.48).

Even though teachers in career stage-I (M=3.62, SD= 0.44) had a higher mean score for perceived informational support need than the teachers in career stage-II (M=3.58, SD= 0.41), the mean difference of 0.04 was not statistically significant ( $p = .452$ ). The results suggested that as charter school teachers gained more teaching experience, their perceived need for informational support gradually decreased. When compared to the teachers who were in their first, second, third, and fourth years of teaching, the teachers with five year or more teaching experience perceived that they needed significantly less informational support from the administration in these charter schools.

Table 43. *Multiple Comparisons for Importance of Informational Support*

			Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	99.167% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Games- Howell	Stage-I	Stage-II	0.03933	0.03271	0.452	-0.0376	0.1162
		Stage-III	.11404*	0.03258	0.001	0.0374	0.1907
	Stage-II	Stage-I	-0.0393	0.03271	0.452	-0.1162	0.0376
		Stage-III	.07471*	0.02426	0.006	0.0178	0.1316
	Stage-III	Stage-I	-.11404*	0.03258	0.001	-0.1907	-0.0374
		Stage-II	-.07471*	0.02426	0.006	-0.1316	-0.0178

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.00833 level.

In addition, the effect size was calculated using the omega squared ( $\omega^2$ ), which is more conservative than eta squared ( $\eta^2$ ) as it uses the variance explained by the model, and the error variance. In this formula,  $SS_M$  is the sum of squares between the groups, while  $SS_T$  is the total amount of variance in the data. This information was obtained from the SPSS output, which is displayed by Table 44.

Table 44. *ANOVA Table for Importance of Informational Support*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.336	2	1.668	8.116	<.001
Within Groups	333.598	1623	.206		
Total	336.935	1625			

$$\omega^2 = \frac{SS_M - (df_M)MS_R}{SS_T - MS_R}$$

$$\omega^2 = \frac{3.336 - (2) .206}{336.935 - .206}$$

$\omega^2 = 0.01$ , which represents a small effect size, and is equivalent to a significant but very small correlation of 0.10.

### **Instrumental Support**

Another one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean scores for the importance of instrumental support between different career stages. Table 45 describes the sample size, mean, standard deviation (S.D.), standard error (S.E.), and range for mean scores in each teacher career stage. The means were calculated based on the following rating scale: (1) Not important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important.

Table 45. *Descriptives for Importance of Instrumental Support in each Career Stage*

	N	Mean	S.D.	S.E.	Minimum	Maximum
Stage-I	252	3.7414	.32972	.02077	2.00	4.00
Stage-II	564	3.7039	.35312	.01487	2.08	4.00
Stage-III	810	3.6700	.38975	.01369	1.00	4.00
Total	1626	3.6928	.36918	.00916	1.00	4.00

The Table 46 indicates that the p value for the Levene's test of homogeneity of variance was significant ( $p = .002$ ), indicating that the null hypothesis of equal variances cannot be retained.

Table 46. *Test of Homogeneity of Variance for Instrumental Support*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
6.405	2	1623	.002

Since the assumption for homogeneity of variance was violated, the F-ratios for Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests were analyzed instead of the F-statistic in the main ANOVA Table. As displayed by Table 47, the F-ratios for both the Welch [ $F(2, 674) = 3.229$ ] and the Brown-Forsythe [ $F(2, 920) = 3.162$ ] tests indicated that the differences in the mean scores for teachers' perceived need for instrumental support between the charter school teachers in career stage-I ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD=0.33$ ), career stage-II ( $M=3.70$ ,  $SD=0.35$ ), and career stage-III ( $M=3.67$ ,  $SD=0.39$ ) were not statistically significant at the adjusted alpha level ( $p = .013 > .0083$ ). Since both the Welch and Brown-Forsythe tests revealed no significant differences between the teacher career stages, the multiple comparisons table was not analyzed.

Table 47. *Robust Test of Equality of Means - Perceived Importance of Instrumental Support*

	Statistic <sup>a</sup>	df1	df2	Sig.
Welch	4.334	2	720.117	0.013
Brown-Forsythe	4.357	2	1184.157	0.013

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

#### **Research Question 4**

Another research question in this study was: What administrative support behaviors do urban charter school teachers perceive to be lacking in urban charter schools the most?

Similar to the research questions 1 and 2, this research question did not involve any hypothesis testing. Using descriptive statistics, the ranked means for the perceived lack of administrative support items with a score of .50 or higher are presented in Table 38.

In this study, the teachers were asked to make two judgements about the importance of various administrative support behaviors to them at the current stage of their career, and the extent of that support in their current school. The rating scale for importance of support consisted of (1) Not Important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important. The rating scale for the extent of support was (1) No Support, (2) Little Support, (3) Moderate Support, and (4) Great Support. The perceived administrative support gap (PASG) was calculated by subtracting the rating for importance of support from the rating for extent of that support. For example, if a teacher rated an administrative support item as moderately important (rating: 3), and indicated that the current school administration provides little support (rating: 2), the PASG score was calculated by subtracting 3 from 2, which is equal to -1, suggesting that the teachers perceived support need was not met.

Table 48 displays the ranked means for the lowest PASG scores in the urban charter schools. The teachers indicated that their school administration was currently not meeting their perceived level of support especially in “consistently enforcing school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment,” “establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff,” and “scheduling adequate planning time.” These three support items with the highest PASG scores were also on the list for 10 most important administrative support



behaviors. There were 14 administrative support behaviors with a PASG score equal to or larger than .50. Among these, the ones that were also ranked among the 10 most important administrative support are written in *italic*. Seven of the 14 items with the largest PASG scores were needed to be written in *italic*.

Table 48. *Ranked Means for the Largest Perceived Administrative Support Gaps*

Mean	Rank	Support Behavior	Support Dimension
-0.69	1	<i>Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment</i>	Instrumental
-0.67	2	<i>Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff</i>	Emotional
-0.65	3	<i>Schedules adequate planning time</i>	Instrumental
-0.62	4	Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	Emotional
-0.60	5	<i>Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively</i>	Instrumental
-0.58	6	<i>Cares about my job satisfaction</i>	Emotional
-0.57	7	Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	Appraisal
-0.56	8	Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher	Emotional
-0.53	9	Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations	Informational
-0.52	10	Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our working conditions	Instrumental
-0.52	11	Assists me with classroom discipline problems	Instrumental
-0.52	12	Accurately and objectively assesses my performance	Appraisal
-0.51	13	<i>Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students</i>	Emotional
-0.51	14	<i>Is available to help when needed</i>	Instrumental

Note. *Italic* items were on the list for the 10 most important administrative support behaviors

Table 49 provides comparisons for the lowest PASG scores across different teacher career stages. The results suggest that while ranking for some of the lowest PASG scores were same or similar, some types of administrative support had considerably different PASG scores. For example, the teachers from all career stages seem to agree that their school administration needs to provide more support in “consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment,” which ranked among the lowest three across all career stages

and the overall ranking for 41 administrative support items. On the other hand, while first year teachers perceived that they need better support with “necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively,” the PASG score for this item ranked seventh lowest for the teachers in both career stage-II and career stage-III.

Table 49. *PASG Comparisons between Teacher Career Stages*

OVERALL		Administrative Support Behavior	Stage-I		Stage-II		Stage-III	
Mean	Rank		Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
-0.69	1	Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	-0.66	3	-0.70	2	-0.68	1
-0.67	2	Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	-0.57	9	-0.75	1	-0.64	3
-0.65	3	Schedules adequate planning time	-0.62	6	-0.68	4	-0.65	2
-0.62	4	Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	-0.56	12	-0.69	3	-0.59	4
-0.60	5	Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	-0.77	1	-0.63	7	-0.52	7
-0.58	6	Cares about my job satisfaction	-0.53	17	-0.64	5	-0.55	5
-0.57	7	Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	-0.65	4	-0.64	6	-0.50	8
-0.56	8	Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher	-0.49	19	-0.62	9	-0.53	6
-0.53	9	Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations	-0.47	20	-0.61	10	-0.49	10
-0.52	10	Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our working conditions	-0.57	11	-0.55	13	-0.49	9
-0.52	11	Assists me with classroom discipline problems	-0.60	7	-0.61	11	-0.44	16
-0.52	12	Accurately and objectively assesses my performance	-0.55	14	-0.57	14	-0.48	12
-0.51	13	Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	-0.50	22	-0.54	15	-0.48	11
-0.51	14	Is available to help when needed	-0.59	8	-0.54	16	-0.46	14

### **Research Question 5**

This study also investigated what dimensions of administrative support urban charter school teachers perceived to be most insufficient in urban charter schools. This research question did not involve any hypothesis testing; therefore, there was no null hypothesis or alternative hypothesis. The comparisons of the means for the importance, extent, and PASG levels at each career stage revealed important statistical information.

As displayed in Table 50, the results suggested that on average, the first year teachers viewed instrumental support ( $M=3.74$ ,  $SD=.33$ ) as the most important dimension of administrative support, felt that the emotional support ( $M= 3.25$ ,  $SD=.69$ ) was available the most, and perceived that the appraisal support was the most insufficient ( $PASG= -.59$ ). Similarly, the stage-II teachers also viewed instrumental support ( $M=3.70$ ,  $SD=.35$ ) as the most important dimension of administrative support, felt that the instrumental support ( $M= 3.16$ ,  $SD=.64$ ) was available the most, and perceived that the appraisal support was the most insufficient ( $PASG= -.57$ ). Furthermore, the stage-III teachers also considered instrumental support ( $M=3.67$ ,  $SD=.39$ ) as the most important dimension of administrative support, reported that the emotional support ( $M= 3.28$ ,  $SD=.66$ ) was the most available dimension of support, and felt that the instrumental support was the most insufficient ( $PASG= -.44$ ).

The overall results revealed that on average, the charter school teachers in this sample considered instrumental support ( $M= 3.69$ ,  $SD= .37$ ) as the most important, needed dimension of support. They reported that the emotional support ( $M= 3.25$ ,  $SD= .69$ ) was the most available support in their current schools. With a mean PASG score of  $-.50$  ( $SD= .75$ ), appraisal support was perceived to be most insufficient dimension of support, which was followed by instrumental support with a mean PASG score of  $-.49$  ( $SD= .67$ ). The results also indicate that on average, the

charter school teachers in this sample were least dissatisfied with the emotional support, which they felt was available the most.

Table 50. *Comparison of Support Dimensions in each Career Stage*

STAGE	Level	Appraisal	Emotional	Informational	Instrumental
<b>Stage-I</b>	Importance	3.7373	3.6222	3.6160	<b>3.7414</b>
	Extent	3.1476	<b>3.2500</b>	3.1265	3.2166
	PASG	<b>-.5897</b>	-.3722	-.4894	-.5248
<b>Stage-II</b>	Importance	3.6826	3.6923	3.5766	<b>3.7039</b>
	Extent	3.1145	<b>3.1939</b>	3.0561	3.1619
	PASG	<b>-.5681</b>	-.4985	-.5205	-.5420
<b>Stage-III</b>	Importance	3.5926	3.6660	3.5019	<b>3.6700</b>
	Extent	3.1736	<b>3.2828</b>	3.1287	3.2264
	PASG	-.4190	-.3832	-.3733	<b>-.4435</b>
<b>Overall</b>	Importance	3.6462	3.6683	3.5455	<b>3.6928</b>
	Extent	3.1491	<b>3.2469</b>	3.1032	3.2025
	PASG	<b>-.4972</b>	-.4215	-.4423	-.4903

### Research Question 6

Another question that encouraged the investigation in this study was: Do urban charter school administrators sufficiently meet the perceived administrative support needs of their teachers? To answer this research question, PASG scores were computed for all support items across all dimensions of support.

In this study, the teachers were asked to make two judgements about the importance of various administrative support behaviors to them at the current stage of their career, and the extent of that support in their current school. The rating scale for importance of support consisted of (1) Not Important, (2) Slightly Important, (3) Moderately Important, and (4) Very Important. The rating scale for the extent of support was (1) No Support, (2) Little Support, (3) Moderate

Support, and (4) Great Support. The PASG scores were calculated by subtracting the rating for extent of support from the perceived importance of support. For example, if a teacher selected moderately important (rating score: 3) for an administrative support behavior, and indicated that there was little support (rating score: 2) provided by the current school administration, the PASG score was calculated by subtracting 3 from 2, which is equal to -1. Negative PASG score indicates lack of administrative support. If the teachers' perceived support need was met by their current school administration, the PASG would be equal to zero. To statistically test this hypothesis, a one-way *t* test was performed to examine if the means for teachers PASG scores were significantly different than zero (0) at the adjusted alpha level (0.0083).

$H_0$ : The mean for PASG scores is equal to zero (0).

$H_1$ : The mean for PASG scores is significantly different than zero (0).

The null hypothesis was statistically tested using a one-sample *t* test. The results indicated that the mean for PASG scores ( $M = -.46$ ,  $SD = .62$ ) was significantly different than zero at the adjusted alpha level of 0.0083 ( $t(1625) = 29.994$ ,  $p < .001$ , 2-tailed), therefore the null hypothesis was rejected. Table 51 displays the SPSS output for the one-sample *t* test for the mean PASG scores.

Table 51. *One-Sample t Test Results for Mean PASG Scores*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
PASG	-29.994	1625	<.001	-.46281	-.4931	-.4325

In addition, using the descriptive statistics, the mean PASG scores for each charter school were ranked and analyzed as part of this research question. The analyses included a total of 1,626

teachers from 125 different charter schools across the nation. Based on the teachers' mean PASG scores, the charter schools were divided into three groups. The charter schools with an overall positive mean PASG score were considered that on average, they met or exceeded their teachers' perceived need for administrative support. The charter schools with a mean PASG score between -.01 and -.46 were considered above average given that the grand mean PASG score was -.46 for the sample. The other schools with a mean PASG score with a mean PASG score less than -.46 were grouped as below average.

As described in Table 52, on average, 27 charter schools which equated to 21.60% of the sample in this study were meeting or exceeding their teachers perceived administrative support needs. While half of the remaining 98 charter schools had a mean PASG score between -0.01 and -0.46, the other half had a mean PASG score below the overall mean score of -0.46. In other words, 78.40% of the charter schools that participated in this study had a negative mean PASG score, which indicated that the teachers at these particular schools were either slightly or very dissatisfied with the extent of administrative support.

Table 52. *Classification of Charter Schools based on Mean PASG Scores*

Category	Number of Schools	%
Meets & Exceeds Support Expectations (above mean of 0.00)	27	21.60
Above Average PASG Score (between - .01 to - .46)	49	39.20
Below Average PASG Score (less than - .46)	49	39.20
TOTAL	125	100

### **Research Question 7**

The last research question in this study was: Are there any differences in urban charter school teachers' perceived lack of administrative support between different career stages? A

one-way ANOVA test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the PASG scores between teachers at different career stages at the adjusted alpha level. This test involved only one-factor: career stage, which consists of three groups, whereas the PASG score was the only dependent variable.

H<sub>0</sub>: There is no difference in the mean PASG scores between different career stages.

H<sub>1</sub>: There is statistically significant difference in the mean PASG scores between at least two of the three career stages.

The Levene's test results (See Table 53) indicated that the variances of the three career stages were not statistically significant ( $p=0.792$ ), therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was retained.

Table 53. *Test of Homogeneity of Variances- Mean PASG Scores*

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.233	2	1623	.792

Since the Levene's test result was not significant, the F-ratio or F-statistic in the ANOVA summary table was examined. As displayed in Table 54, the results indicated that the differences in the PASG scores between at least two of the three career stages were statistically significant ( $F(2, 1623) = 7.414, p = .001 < .0083$ ).

Table 54. *ANOVA Table for PASG Scores*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5.696	2	2.848	7.414	.001
Within Groups	623.404	1623	.384		
Total	629.100	1625			

As displayed in Table 55, a post hoc comparisons using *Tukey HSD* was performed to confirm where the differences occurred between the career stages. The multiple comparisons table indicated that the charter school teachers in their career stage-II ( $M = -0.53$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ) had a significantly ( $p = .001$ ) lower mean PASG scores than the teachers in career stage-III ( $M = -.40$ ,  $SD = .62$ ). In other words, the PASG of the teachers in career stage-II were significantly larger than the PASG of the teachers in career stage-III. The results also indicated that on average, the teachers in career stage-II had lower mean PASG scores than the teachers in career stage-I ( $M = -.049$ ,  $SD = .63$ ), but this mean difference was not statistically significant ( $p = .694 > .0083$ ). The mean difference in the mean PASG scores between career stage-I and career stage-III teachers was not statistically significant at the adjusted alpha level ( $p = .113 > .0083$ ). Among all the teachers, the career stage-II teachers were the most dissatisfied with the level of administrative support they felt they were receiving. In this regards, the career stage-I teachers ranked second right after career stage-II teachers.

Table 55. *Multiple Comparisons Table- Tukey HSD*

(I) STAGE	(J) STAGE	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	99.17% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Stage-I	Stage-II	.03822	.04696	.694	-.1016	.1780
	Stage-III	-.08928	.04470	.113	-.2224	.0438
Stage-II	Stage-I	-.03822	.04696	.694	-.1780	.1016
	Stage-III	-.12750*	.03399	.001	-.2287	-.0263
Stage-III	Stage-I	.08928	.04470	.113	-.0438	.2224
	Stage-II	.12750*	.03399	.001	.0263	.2287

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.0083 level.



## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter outlined participation statistics, detailed description of demographics variables, statistical procedures used for data analysis, and the results of this study. The results for each research question were presented separately.

The following chapter will summarize the key findings of this study, and highlight consistencies and inconsistencies with those reported in the literature cited earlier, where applicable. The chapter will also present implications for practice and recommendations for future research.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Introduction**

The primary purpose of this study was to explore what types of administrative support are more valuable to urban charter school teachers and the extent of that support in their current schools. The secondary purpose of this study was to investigate if perceived needs of urban charter school teachers for administrative support are different for teachers in different teacher career stages.

In pursuit of its primary purpose, this study found that (a) establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff; (b) consistently enforcing the school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment; and (c) making conscious effort to support teachers during parent and student meetings, and backing them up when needed were the most valuable types of administrative support to urban charter schools. On average, types of administrative support categorized as instrumental support and emotional support were more important to urban charter school teachers than other dimensions of support, where informational support ranked last in importance. Results of this study also confirmed that on average, urban charter school teachers' perceived need for administrative support was significantly higher than the perceived extent of that support.

Regarding the secondary purpose, this study discovered that all dimensions of administrative support were more important for first year teachers in urban charter schools than teachers with more teaching experience, and except for emotional support, the importance of administrative support gradually decreased as teachers gained more teaching experience. Results of this study also portrayed that on average, urban charter school teachers in stage-I and stage-II of their career were more concerned about the extent of administrative support they receive at

their current school than more experienced teachers.

In this nationwide study with urban charter school teachers, some additional findings that were considered very relevant are also included in the discussion in this chapter. The findings regarding level of experience and teacher turnover include: (a) on average, urban charter school teachers were considerably younger and with less teaching experience than teachers in traditional public schools and charter schools at large; and (b) the average teacher turnover rate in urban charter schools was about 39%.

## **Discussion**

The following discussion will examine the key findings of this study in conjunction with comparable findings from the most recent and relevant literature. The discussion will be presented in three sections: (1) perceived importance of administrative support; (2) perceived administrative support gap (PASG); and (3) level of experience and teacher turnover at urban charter schools. There were seven research questions that guided the investigation in this study. The discussion on perceived importance of administrative support will concentrate on the findings corresponding to the research questions 1, 2, and 3. The key findings in response to the research questions 4, 5, 6, and 7 will be discussed in the perceived administrative support gap section. The third section will include a brief discussion of the level of experience and teacher turnover at urban charter schools.

### **Perceived Importance of Administrative Support**

My study found that the 10 most important administrative support items to the urban charter school teachers were: (1) establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff; (2) consistently enforcing school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment; (3) supporting teachers during parent and student meetings and backing them up

when needed; (4) trusting their judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions; (5) scheduling adequate planning time; (6) providing necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively; (7) demonstrating genuine concern for my program and students; (8) being available to help when needed; (9) giving clear guidelines regarding their job responsibilities; and (10) caring about their job satisfaction. This study also found that the first three of these items were among the four most important administrative support items for all urban charter school teachers across all career stages.

Regardless of their previous teaching experience, all urban charter school teachers participated in this study perceived “establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff” as the most important type of administrative support. This conclusion compares to the findings from earlier studies at other public school settings. For example, in a study with 254 public school teachers in Georgia, Hicks (2011) reported that trust was one of the most important administrative support behaviors. In another study with 100 public school teachers with less than five years of teaching experience, respecting and valuing teachers as professionals was on the top of the list for the top five positive principal behaviors (Richard, 2007). Based on the responses of the charter school teachers who participated in the North Carolina 2006 Teacher Working Conditions Survey, Ndoye et al. (2006) concluded that establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff was one of the most important characteristics of effective school leadership. The New Teacher Project (TNTP, 2012), which involved 90,000 public school teachers from four urban school districts also found that teachers are more like to stay in schools “where teachers work in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust” (p. 18). Bryk et al. (2010) and Price (2012) emphasized that administrators play a critical role in fostering mutual trust and respect in schools.

My study also found that urban charter school teachers place a very high premium on the administrative support they receive regarding student discipline and dealing with difficult students and parents. It suggests that urban charter school administrators can best satisfy this specific support need of their teachers by consistently enforcing the school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment and making conscious effort to support their teachers during parent and student meetings, and back them up when needed. This finding is also consistent with prior research conducted in other public school settings.

For example, in a study examining the Philadelphia public middle schools with the lowest rates of teacher turnover, Useem (2001) found that overseeing safe and orderly school environments and actively backing up teachers on disciplinary issues was the most common practices of the principals. Furthermore, supporting teachers in matters of student discipline and supporting teachers with parents were second and fifth on the top five positive principal behaviors in Richard's (2007) study with 100 public school teachers who had less than five years of teaching experience. In a qualitative study with 836 full-time public school teachers, Blasé and Kirby (2009) also found that assistance with student discipline and parental concerns were among qualities of most effective administrators. In another study with experienced special education teachers from various public schools in a Midwest metropolitan area, Prather-Jones (2011) discovered that enforcing reasonable consequences for student misconduct was one of the most valuable type of administrative support that significantly helped them keep teaching in this relatively more challenging teaching field. Using a 20 item survey, Hicks (2011) asked 254 public school teachers to rate the importance of various administrative support behaviors, and reported that the support items "providing appropriate assistance when a student's behavior

requires it” and “supporting teachers with interactions with parents” (p. 67) ranked the first and second highest on the list, respectively.

In my study, the top three of the 10 most important support items consistently ranked the highest in importance across all career stages. However, the rankings for some of the other items on the most important administrative support list were discovered to be considerably different at each teacher career stage. In other words, this study found that as teachers gain more teaching experience, perceived importance of some support items may gradually decrease or increase. This is a powerful finding because previous studies did not evaluate these variations between the career stages, and only reported an overall ranking for the most important support items for the entire sample.

This study was the first to illustrate how perceived importance of various types of administrative support change as teachers gain more teaching experience. For instance, in this study, “trusting my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions” ranked fourth in importance for the entire group, and became increasingly more important to the urban charter school teachers as they gained more teaching experience. While this support item ranked 18<sup>th</sup> among first year teachers, it was the second most important item for teachers who had at least four years of previous teaching experience. Similarly, administrative support items such as “trusts my judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions,” “cares about my job satisfaction,” and “expresses confidence in my actions” were relatively less important to the first year teachers, ranking 18<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>, respectively. However, both “cares about my job satisfaction” and “expresses confidence in my actions” were among the top 10 most important types of administrative support for the teachers in career stage-III with a ranking of eighth and

ninth places, respectively. The item “trusts my judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions” ranked as high as second in importance for the teachers in career stage-III.

The results of this study also illustrated how some of the most important administrative support items for first year teachers became gradually less important for the teachers in later stages of their career. For example, “offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching” was the fifth most important item for first year teachers, and it gradually decreased to 10<sup>th</sup> place for teachers in career stage-II and finally to 18<sup>th</sup> place for the teachers in career stage-III. Similarly, “provides standards and expectations for my performance” followed a decreasing pattern by ranking ninth, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 23<sup>rd</sup> across the teacher career stages I, II, and III.

According to the Teacher Career Stages model developed by Burden (1979), first year teachers have very limited knowledge about teaching activities and environment, and generally lack professional confidence. As they gain more teaching experience, teachers achieve a better command of their daily tasks and environment, and feel more confident and secure in their professional practice. This is also evident in the findings of this study that the first year teachers value information regarding their teaching activities and environment and feedback they receive about their professional performance more than the teachers with more experience. As teachers gain more teaching experience, they become gradually less concerned about receiving clear guidelines about their job responsibilities or receiving feedback after being observed by their administrators. On the other hand, experienced teachers need their administrators to recognize their professional experience and trust their judgments in making curriculum and instructional decisions considerably more than the first year teachers.

In addition to the variations in importance of administrative support at the item level, this study found that importance of the four dimensions of administrative support also change as

teachers gained more teaching experience. The results of this study show that the most important dimension of support for the urban charter school teachers was the instrumental support across all teacher career stages. In addition, half of the 10 most important support items at each career stage were instrumental support items. The importance of instrumental support decreased gradually as teachers gained more teaching experience. The urban charter school teachers in both the career stage-I and career stage-II placed higher premiums on instrumental support than the teachers in career stage-III.

This study also found that on average, emotional support was the second most important dimension of support for urban charter school teachers. Even though it gradually increased, the importance of emotional support was not significantly different across different teacher career stages. It indicated that on average, gaining more teaching experience does not significantly change the value of emotional support in the eyes of urban charter school teachers.

The appraisal support was the third most important dimension of support to urban charter school teachers. Like instrumental support, the importance of appraisal support significantly decreased as the teachers gained more experience. The urban charter school teachers in both the career stage-I and career stage-II placed a significantly higher premium on appraisal support than the teachers in career stage-III. For example, the 10 most important support items for the career stage-III teachers did not include any appraisal support items, while three of the top 10 were appraisal support items for the first year teachers. This observation is consistent with the ranking of support items in previous research. For example, 85% of the public school teachers in Hick's (2011) study had more than five years of overall teaching experience, and none of the 10 most important support items belonged to appraisal support dimension. In another study at a public school district, where 75% of the teachers had less than five years of teaching experience,



Schindewolf (2008) reported that two of the 10 most important support items were from the appraisal support dimension. Based on these patterns, it can be concluded that overall teaching experiences of the teachers in a sample can considerably influence which support items will make it to the list for the most important types of administrative support. A study that involved mostly first year teachers is more likely to have an appraisal support item on the list for most important administrative support. This is a significant finding because it has not been considered or mentioned in previous research. Thus, teacher career stage of the participants must be taken into consideration when analyzing the most important administrative support items in a study.

The results also revealed that the informational support was the least important support dimension across all teacher career stages. None of the informational support items made it to the list for 10 most important support dimensions at any career stage. Like instrumental and appraisal support dimensions, the importance of informational support decreased gradually as the teachers gained more teaching experience. In an earlier study, Littrell (1992) suggested that more experienced teachers may not need as much informational support as novice teachers. Not only did this study confirmed what Littrell (1992) suggested, but also found that the urban charter school teachers in both the career stage-I and stage-II placed a significantly higher premium on informational support than the teachers in career stage-III.

Even though informational support ranked last in importance, it does not necessarily mean that it is unimportant to the urban charter school teachers. The mean score for the importance of informational support was 3.55, which falls between moderately important and very important, closer to very important than moderately important. The internet and advanced technologies have created an environment where teachers have access to many different sources for helpful information that can inform their practice. This study discovered that the value of

information that teachers can easily find from other sources were relatively less important compared to the information that they can only obtain from their administration. For example, while informational support items such as “provides helpful information about managing the daily challenges of being a teacher” and “shares up-to-date instructional techniques and educational research” were at the bottom of the list within this support dimension, other items such as “provides relevant and accurate data on students’ attendance, academics, and discipline to inform my classroom decisions” and “takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations” were on the top of the list. It is clear that informational support from the administration is more valuable to the urban charter school teachers where such information cannot be possibly obtained from other sources such as educational websites, online databases and webinars, educational journals, graduate classes, printed or digital books, other teachers, online teacher blogs, and district offices.

As far as the informational support is concerned, the urban charter school teachers viewed administrators who “encourage their individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities,” and “foster collaboration by providing them with structure and time for working with and/or learning from their colleagues” as more supportive. This finding confirms that professional development opportunities embedded in the regular school day are more important to the urban charter school teachers. They need the opportunity and time to collaborate with and learn from their colleagues as it allows for “sustained discussion on classroom practices, coaching opportunities, and the formal and informal mentoring they can provide to one another” (Zepeda, 2008, p. 23).

In a descending order, the ranking for the most important dimension of administrative support in this study was instrumental support, emotional support, appraisal support, and

informational support. This finding is not consistent with the findings reported by earlier studies. For example, Littrell (1992) reported that emotional support was the most important dimension of administrative support, and listed instrumental support as third. Using a similar survey instrument, Schindewolf (2008) also found that emotional support was the most important dimension of support to both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers with one to five years of overall teaching experience, while instrumental support ranked fourth in importance. However, based on her analysis of the open ended responses regarding most important administrative support, Schindewolf (2008) found that the public school teachers predominantly described administrative support actions that can be classified as instrumental (34.28%) and emotional (28.98%) support.

The differences between the findings of this study and previous research could be explained that both Littrell (1992) and Schindewolf (2008) used different survey instruments, and their study involved only certified, traditional public school teachers located in urban and suburban settings. In addition, unlike this study, the earlier studies did not conduct a factor analysis to validate their survey instruments. It is important that some of the initial 59 support items in this study were removed during the factor analysis process. For example, the survey item “is honest and straightforward with the staff” was the second highest important support item according to the original list of 59 support items, but it was removed during the factor analysis process. If retained, it would considerably increase the mean importance score for the emotional support, and could also impact the overall ranking of this dimension of support.

Based on the findings discussed in this section, it can be concluded that both instrumental and emotional support are very important to urban charter school teachers. Among others, informational support is the least important dimension of administrative support. As teachers

gain more teaching experience their perceived need for instrumental, informational, and appraisal support gradually decreases, whereas their perceived need for emotional support remains unchanged. Notwithstanding, the range of the mean scores for the importance of 41 support items measured in this study was between 3.40 and 3.88, with an overall mean of 3.64. This suggests that all of the administrative support behaviors included in the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* are perceived as very important by the majority of the urban charter school teachers.

### **Perceived Administrative Support Gap (PASG)**

The results of this study illustrated that the first five survey items on the ranked means for the extent of administrative support were: (1) “acts friendly toward me,” (2) “cares about my well-being,” (3) “considers my ideas and suggestions,” (4) “responds to my emails and or requests in a timely manner, and keeps me informed on its progress,” and (5) “trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions,” whereas the last three items were: (41) “provides helpful information about managing the daily challenges of being a teacher,” (40) “involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me,” and (39) “provides frequent feedback about my performance.” However, these rankings by themselves are not very informative since perceived adequacy of an administrative support behavior can only be determined in comparison to the perceived need for that support. In other words, perceived support need of a teacher cannot be considered satisfied unless the extent of support meets or exceeds the expected level for that specific type of support.

This study used a unique method to quantify adequacy of perceived extent of administrative support. Since both perceived importance and perceived extent of support were measured in similar scales, the differences between the teachers’ ratings were analyzed to

determine if teachers' perceived need for each support item were met sufficiently. My review of the extant literature suggests that this was the first study to quantify lack of administrative support and to test it statistically. In addition, this study also coined the term Perceived Administrative Support Gap (PASG).

In this study, the PASG scores were tested to determine if they were statistically different than zero at the adjusted alpha level. The results showed that PASG scores were significantly different ( $t(1625)=29.994, p<.001, 2\text{-tailed}$ ), indicating that the extent of support was significantly less than the perceived need for that support. Of 127 urban charter schools, only 27 were able to meet or exceed their teachers perceived administrative support needs. The average PASG score for urban charter schools was  $-.46$ . Since this was the first study to calculate PASG scores, there were no comparable results from the existing research. Notwithstanding, using the same method, I calculated the PASG scores based on the results reported in previous studies to make the following comparisons.

For instance, Cancio et al. (2013) conducted a study with 444 teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorder, and reported importance and extent statistics. Of these teachers, 83.8% were from public schools, while the remaining 16.2% were either at a residential treatment center, private therapeutic day school, or a hospital school. The difference between means for importance and extent of support in that study was approximately  $-.65$ . Littrell (1992) also reported the means for importance and extent of administrative support for a group of 675 general and special education teachers from the public schools in Virginia. The PASG score in that study was  $-.55$ . It is noteworthy that neither Cancio et al. (2013) nor Littrell (1992) reported PASG scores, labeled all their response categories, nor used the same survey instrument. Even though the results from these earlier studies were not specifically comparable to the results in

this study due to the aforementioned reasons, it was observed that if calculated, the PASG scores in both studies would have a negative sign, indicating that teachers' perceived need for administrative support was higher than the perceived extent. The negative PASG scores for traditional public school teachers confirm that lack of administrative support is not an issue unique to urban charter schools.

This study also found that urban school teachers in career stage-II were more concerned about the extent of administrative support in their current schools. As noted in chapter three, career stage-II is considered as an adjustment stage during which teachers reported "learning great deal about planning and organization, children, curriculum, and methods" (Burden, 1982). In this study, the urban charter school teachers in career stage-II were found to be least satisfied with the extent of support available in their schools. First year teachers followed the career stage-II teachers. The results also revealed that more experienced teachers (career stage-III) were less concerned about the extent of administrative support compared to teachers in early stages of their career (stage-I and stage-II). The difference between the PASG scores of career stage-II teachers and career stage-III teachers was found to be statistically significant. This finding is consistent with teacher turnover statistics that repeatedly indicate that teachers in early stages of their career are more likely to leave their schools or the profession entirely, and they frequently cite lack of administrative support as their primary reason to leave (Boyd et al., 2009; Gross & DeArmond, 2010; Ingersoll, 2011; Stuit & Smith, 2012). From this perspective, this finding makes a clear connection between perceived administrative support gap and concurring high percentage of teachers who leave urban charter schools or the profession in early stages of their career. This finding also suggests that school administrators should improve their support efforts especially in areas that are more important to the teachers in the stage-II (i.e., adjustment stage) of their career.

In this study, item level analyses of the PASG scores also revealed specific and reliable information about unmet support needs of urban charter school teachers. In a descending order, the lowest five PASG scores were measured in the support items: (1) “consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment;” (2) “establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff;” (3) “schedules adequate planning time;” (4) “involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me;” and (5) “provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively.” Some of these findings reiterate what earlier studies found in other school settings. For example, in a study with 1,587 public school teachers, Boyd et al. (2011) reported that student behavior and school safety were among the most important aspect of job influencing teachers decision to leave the profession or their previous school. The results from the 2014 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey, which involved more than 80,000 public school teachers, reported that time during the work day and managing student conduct were among most important working conditions. In an earlier study with 217 first and second year teachers, Wynn et al. (2007) also found that after salary, disruptive students was the most important reason for teachers to consider leaving their current schools.

High out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, gang violence, and low student attendance and engagement were some of the most critical issues that face all urban schools (Gregory et al., 2010; Horng, 2009; Levin, 2006). The challenging characteristics of urban teaching environments require higher levels of administrative support in the areas of student discipline and safety. The findings in this study suggest that teachers need their building administrators to consistently enforce school rules for students to maintain a safer and more disciplined environment for more effective teaching and learning. In the absence of this support, teachers

become quickly overwhelmed by the level of stress associated with teaching in urban school settings. Thus, the teachers start seeking alternative employment options and move to other schools.

It is concerning that four of the five items with the lowest PASG scores were also among the 10 most important administrative support behaviors. These five items represent the most insufficient type of administrative support in urban charter school teachers, therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers who cited lack of administrative support as their reason to leave charter schools were mostly concerned about inadequacy of these types of administrative support. This finding clearly suggests that the administrators, especially in the urban charter schools need to enhance their support for their teachers by (a) enforcing school rules to maintain a better disciplined environment; (b) establishing a more trusting and respectful work environment; (c) providing more planning time for teachers; (d) involving teachers in the decision making process; and (e) providing necessary materials, resources, and technology to help them teach effectively. This is a very important finding because teachers' dissatisfaction with administrative support in specific areas that they feel most important may lead them to believe that they are not receiving enough support even if the extent of support is sufficient for other support items that are relatively less important (House, 1981).

Given that charter schools receive considerably less funding than traditional public schools receive (Batdorff et al., 2014), it was meaningful that two of the five most insufficient types of administrative support in this study were also in areas that are directly related to availability of funding. Insufficient funding may be limiting urban charter school administrators' ability to give their teachers more prep time and to provide necessary materials, resources, and technology. Particularly first year teachers felt that the extent of support for this item was not



sufficient. It is a fact that especially in the earlier stages of their establishment, charter schools suffer from extensive start-up costs that negatively impact their operational budgets. While some charter schools are able to secure necessary start-up funding through grants or private loans, others really struggle financially during their initial years in operation.

The overall PASG scores in this study suggest that on average, the extent of administrative support in urban charter schools is not perceived as sufficient. Further analyses of the PASG scores across different teacher career stages also reveal that there are statistically significant differences. The career stage-II teachers, who are in their second, third, or fourth year of teaching have the lowest PASG scores, indicating that they are more concerned about the support that they receive from the administration. Compared to the career stage-III teachers, the career stage-II teachers have significantly lower PASG scores. The mean PASG score for the stage-I teachers is located between the stage-II and stage-III teachers, and it is not significantly different from neither groups.

### **Level of Experience and Teacher Turnover at Urban Charter Schools**

Since this study exclusively focused on urban charter school teachers and achieved such a large sample size, it produced reliable statistics about the characteristics of urban charter school teachers that lead to an important finding. This study revealed that on average, the urban charter schools are more likely to have younger and less experienced teachers than both traditional public schools and the charter schools in general.

The 2011-2012 SASS results indicated that on average, 10.7% of the traditional public school teachers and 26.3% of the charter school teachers had less than four years of overall teaching experience. This study found that 39.7% of the urban charter school teachers had less than four years of teaching experience. This means that the urban charter school teachers are far

less experienced than the teachers at traditional public schools or at an average charter school. While the average teaching experience is 14.0 years for the traditional public schools and 8.7 years for the charter schools (Goldring et al., 2013), the average teaching experience for the urban charter school teachers in this study was 6.7 years. It can be concluded that, on average, the urban charter school teachers have two years less teaching experience than the overall charter school teacher population in the United States.

The 2011-2012 SASS results also indicated that on average, 34.4% of the traditional public school teachers and 62.6% of the charter school teachers had less than four years of teaching experience at their current school. This study found that 78.7% of the urban charter school teachers had less than four years of teaching experience at their current school. This also suggests that the urban charter schools experience higher rates of teacher turnover than the traditional public schools or the charter schools in general. While the average teaching experience at the current school was 8.1 years for the traditional public schools and 3.6 years for the charter schools in general (Goldring et al., 2013), the average teaching experience at current school for the urban charter school teachers was 2.6 years. In other words, on average, the urban charter school teachers are more likely to leave their school when compared to the average traditional public school or charter school teachers.

Analysis of the descriptive statistics for the years of teaching experience at current school also lead to an important finding about teacher turnover rates in urban charter schools. Of 1,922 urban charter school teachers who reported their years of teaching experience at their current school, 753 (39.2%) indicated that this was their first year at their current school. Given that only one out of 127 urban charter schools participated in this study was on its first year in operation, the large percentage for the first-year-at-current-school teachers paints a concerning picture for

urban charter schools' ability to retain their teachers. The 39.2% turnover rate for urban charter schools is also consistent with the findings reported by previous research. For example, Miron and Applegate (2007) found that teacher turnover rate in a sample of 15 charter schools was 42.9% in Illinois and 36.8% in Ohio. Using the data obtained from the Ohio State Board of Education, Robinson and Opfer (2005) also reported that an average of 44.3 and 52.8% of the teachers in 248 charter schools left their schools every year.

Moreover, 37.45% of the new-to-the-current-school teachers in this study were also new to the profession with no previous teaching experience, and 10.09% of them were only in their second year of teaching. In other words, almost half of the teachers who were hired by urban charter schools had only one year or no previous teaching experience. It suggests that the urban charter schools are able to or prefer to hire teachers with no or a few years of teaching experience. Since urban charter schools receive less funding compared to traditional public schools, they may only be able to attract the teachers with less or no previous teaching experience. This conclusion is consistent with other research. For example, based on her analysis of the public school teachers' mobility patterns in North Carolina between 1997 and 2008, Carruthers (2012) reported that 48.9% of the 1,926 public school teachers who moved to a charter school had equal to or less than 3 years of teaching experience.

This study also collected demographics information about teachers' gender, age, and certification status. The gender breakdown for the sample in this study is almost identical to the nationally representative SASS data for the charter schools in general. In this study, 74.1% of the urban charter school teachers were female, which is consistent with 74.9% female teacher rate for the charter schools in general. The results also show that 39.4% of the urban charter school teachers were younger than 30 years old. The 2011-2012 SASS results indicate that on average,

14.7% of the traditional public school teachers and 31% of the charter school teachers are younger than 30 years of age. Meanwhile, 86.5% of the urban charter school teachers indicated that they currently hold a teaching license. The remaining 13.5% had no teaching license. Of the teachers who had a valid teaching license, 13.5% reported that they obtained their license through an alternative certification program.

According to the previous research, charter school teachers are less likely to be licensed and more likely to be younger and have three or fewer years of experience (Carruthers, 2012; Goldring et al., 2013). However, this study takes this information one step further and concludes that when compared to the traditional public schools and charter schools at large, urban charter schools are considerably more likely to employ younger teachers with less teaching experience. In addition, urban charter schools are more likely to acquire teachers with no teaching license than both the traditional schools and the charter schools at large.

### **Implications for Practice**

The results of this study lead to three practical implications for practice: (1) supporting and improving administrative leadership in all urban public schools; (2) customized administrative support for higher teacher job satisfaction and retention; (3) reliable measurement of PASG in all public schools. Each of these implications is presented below.

#### **Supporting and Improving Administrative Leadership**

The first implication of this study is that it provided nationwide statistics about the perceived administrative support needs of urban charter teachers, and the extent of that support in today's urban charter schools. The results from this study can help both policy makers and urban charter school leaders create more effective policies and teacher support strategies to address chronically high teacher turnover rates at urban charter schools. These policy efforts and

support strategies should specifically focus on supporting and improving urban charter school administrators in areas with lower PASG scores. Since traditional public schools in urban school settings also experience teacher retention issues, effective policies and practices in urban charter schools can be applied to traditional public schools as well to improve teachers' job satisfaction and retention in all urban schools. Additionally, charter school authorizers can use the results of this study to evaluate human resources section of new charter school proposals to ensure that there is a sound plan for supporting teachers in proposed charter schools.

Improved administrative support can lead to higher teacher performance, motivation, and job satisfaction, and consequently, increase teachers' desire to continue teaching at their current schools. Enhanced administrative support can also catalyze teachers' professional growth, and provide a greater sense of accomplishment and belonging that can make other school level factors less of a concern in their employment related decisions. Initiatives to close perceived administrative support gaps could foster mutual trust, understanding, and respect, all of which are crucial for establishing and maintaining a successful organization.

### **Customized Administrative Support**

The second implication of this study is that school administrators can use the findings of this study to customize their support efforts based on their teachers' overall teaching experience, and concentrate their efforts on types of support identified as more important in certain teacher career stages. This study found that all dimensions of support are very important to first year teachers. While appraisal support, informational support, and instrumental support gradually decrease in importance as teachers gain more teaching experience, the importance of emotional support remains high and unchanged. School administrators can categorize their teachers based on their years of teaching experience, and prioritize their support efforts accordingly.

Meanwhile, school administrators must consider that same type of support within the same dimension of support may not be equally valuable to their teachers with different teaching experiences. Having a clear understanding of these trends in teachers' perceived importance of administrative support, school administrators can better customize their support efforts based on the item level analysis provided in this study.

The results of this study can also assist urban charter school administrators in prioritizing their support efforts with a clear understanding of what types of support are more valuable to their teachers. Earlier studies reported significant differences in teachers' and administrators' perceptions of the importance of various types of administrative behavior. Hughes et al. (2015) found that "principals perceived that they supported their teachers better than the teachers perceive they were supported by the principals" (p. 132). Enhancing support efforts in areas that are most important to the teachers can increase teachers' job satisfaction and performance.

### **Reliable Measurement of PASG**

The third implication of this study is the practical use of the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey*. This survey instrument provides reliable information about teachers' perceived importance and extent of administrative support, and can be used in all Pre-K school settings to determine in what areas the extent of current administrative support is perceived as sufficient, and where support efforts need to be enhanced. By using this measurement tool, schools can figure out what their teachers really mean when they say "lack of administrative support," and prepare powerful action plans to address identified support gaps accordingly. School and district administrators should remember that administration of this survey by itself can be classified as emotional support as it sends a strong message to their teachers that their school administration cares about them. By administering this survey twice

during the same school year, administrators can also measure effectiveness of their action plans and improved support efforts. In addition, school districts can administer this survey to compare effectiveness of administrative support across different schools, identify common administrative support issues at the district level, and determine specific support issues at the school level to increase their teachers' job satisfaction and performance. Moreover, educational boards at the state and national levels can also utilize this survey to obtain reliable information about teachers' perceived support needs, and evaluate PASG scores as part of their policy making efforts to address chronically high teacher turnover rates especially in urban school settings.

It is interesting to note that this implication of the study has already been realized during the course of the study itself. As an incentive that was used to increase participation in this study, the urban charter schools with more than 50% teacher participation rate already received their special school reports. There were more than 70 charter schools that met this participation criterion. Feedback received from the administrators at these schools consistently agreed that the survey results were very informative, and accurately reflected their support issues, some of which they were already aware. Some urban charter school administrators asked me to administer the survey again in the end of this academic year in an effort to determine how their enhanced support efforts will impact their PASG scores in specific areas of concern. Urban school administrators can also compare their scores to the national averages provided in this study to find out where they stand.

It should also be noted that the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* provides a comprehensive and reliable list of important administrative support behaviors. The perceived importance of the support items in this study was considerably high across all items. The support item that ranked last in importance was even substantially important for teachers. With this in

mind, school administrators can use the list of support items included in this survey instrument as a guide to inform their support practices. Furthermore, master programs in educational leadership or principal certification programs can review their curriculum and program outcomes based on the findings of this study to ensure that their graduates have necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to meet the perceived needs of their teachers.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The present study explored what types of administrative support are more valuable to urban charter school teachers and the extent of that support at their current school. The study also investigated if and how the perceived needs of urban charter school teachers for administrative support change at different stages of their career. It established a theoretical framework to measure perceived administrative support gap in a school setting. The findings of this study lead to three recommendations for future research: (1) how other factors may also be influencing teachers' PASG; (2) how PASG scores are correlated to teacher turnover rate in PreK-12 schools; and (3) support needs of teachers in virtual public schools.

### **Impact of Other Factors on PASG**

The investigation in this study was exclusively focused on urban charter schools and how their perceived support needs changed based on their career stages. Further studies are needed to explore how some other factors that were not measured in this study may be influencing teachers' perceptions of administrative support and their PASG scores. These factors can be categorized and studied at three different levels: teacher, school, and administration.

At the teacher level, these factors may include gender, specialty, certification status, average class size, grade level, current teaching load and prep time, and personality of the teacher. It would be significant to know if perceived administrative support needs of female



teachers are any different than that of male teachers. Future studies can collect additional information about aforementioned teacher level variables, and investigate if there are considerable differences in teachers' perceived needs for administrative support. For example, this study adopted the *Teacher Career Stages* model developed by Burden (1982), and based on this model, all the teachers with five or more years of teaching experience were classified as career stage-III teachers. In other words, a teacher with five years of teaching experience and a teacher with 30 years of experience and who was getting ready to retire were considered in the same career stage. This model was a good fit for this study since on average, charter school teachers are considerably younger and have less teaching experience than traditional public schools. However, other teacher career models such as by Huberman (1989) and Steffy (1989) can be used to further explore if and how teachers' perceived needs for administrative support change within career stage-III.

At the school level, factors such as school's type, size, location, years in operation, management model, and financial stability can be included in the data analysis. For example, while some charter schools are managed by Educational or Charter Management Organizations, some of them are self-standing. The current study did not measure or control for the types and extent of support provided by these management organizations at the district level. The extent of support provided by the central office may also influence teachers' perceptions. In this study, teachers reported considerably high scores for their perceived administrative support needs at a charter school which was on its first year in operation. It would also be important to further investigate this factor, and compare perceived support needs of teachers based on how long their school has been in operation. Teachers in a recently established charter school may have

different perceived support needs than teachers in charter schools that have been in operation for long years.

This study did not measure or control for some important variables at the administration level either. Factors such as teacher-admin ratio, gender, personality, certification status, and years of previous teaching and administrative experience of the administrators may also influence perceived extent of administrative support in schools. For example, while preparing individual school reports for the schools with more than 50% participation rate in this study, it was noted that a school with a first year principal and first year assistant principal had considerably low scores for the extent of support. Since it was not the primary purpose of this study, no further investigation was conducted. However, future studies can collect information about these unmeasured aspects of school administration, and can explore if and how teachers' perceptions about administrative support change.

### **PASG and Teacher Turnover**

Future studies can also explore the correlation between schools' PASG scores and teacher turnover rates. While exit survey results show that both charter and public school teachers leave their schools due to lack of administrative support, it would be relevant to explore the relationship between the PASG scores and teacher turnover rate. Based on extant literature, it can be assumed that schools with lower PASG scores are more likely to experience higher teacher turnover rates. However, further investigation is needed to confirm this assumption, and what portion of teacher turnover issues can be explained by teachers' perceived administrative support gap.

## **Admin Support in Virtual Schools**

It should also be noted that the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* was exclusively designed for brick-and-mortar schools. Support needs of teachers in partially or fully virtual schools were not considered. Even though two virtual charter schools accepted to participate in this study, it was determined that the current survey instrument was not a good fit. Future studies can modify the *Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey* by including support items relevant to virtual school teachers and excluding those support items that are only applicable to teachers in brick-and-mortar schools. While there is no reliable data about teachers' job satisfaction and turnover at virtual schools, it would be relevant to know how their perceived needs for administrative support are different compared to the teachers at brick-and-mortar schools. As online education gradually becomes more popular in PreK-12 schools, future studies should focus on support needs of teachers in the virtual schools to ensure excellent teacher job satisfaction and performance.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined perceived importance of administrative support in the eyes of urban charter school teachers, and extent of that support in their current schools. As part of this study, the Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey with 27 items adapted from two existing survey instruments and 14 new items based on my review of literature and previous interviews with urban charter school teachers was developed and validated using confirmatory factor analysis. Furthermore, this study introduced a practical method to quantify what teachers mean by lack of administrative support, and coined the term “perceived administrative support gap” (PASG). In addition, this study established a sound theoretical framework to investigate how perceived importance of administrative support change as teachers gain more teaching

experience. This study also produced nationally representative data about the characteristics of urban charter school teachers in the United States and teacher turnover rates in these schools.

This study found that (a) establishing an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff; (b) consistently enforcing the school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment; and (c) making conscious effort to support teachers during parent and student meetings, and backing them up when needed are the most valuable types of administrative support to urban charter school teachers. On average, types of administrative support categorized as instrumental support and emotional support are more important to urban charter school teachers than other dimensions of support, where informational support ranks last in importance. Results of this study also confirmed that on average, urban charter school teachers' perceived need for administrative support are significantly higher than the perceived extent of that support.

This study also discovered that except for emotional support, all dimensions of administrative support are more important for first year teachers in urban charter schools than teachers with more teaching experience, and the importance of administrative support gradually decreases as teachers gain more teaching experience. Results of this study also portrayed that on average, urban charter school teachers in stage-I and stage-II of their career are more concerned about the extent of administrative support they receive at their current school than more experienced teachers. Furthermore, analysis of nationally representative demographics data achieved in this study lead to two additional findings: (a) on average, urban charter school teachers are considerably younger and with less teaching experience than teachers in traditional public schools and charter schools at large; and (b) the average teacher turnover rate in urban charter schools is about 39%.

The findings of this study offer many practical applications for school and district administrators, policy makers, and principal training programs. Moreover, this study makes a significant contribution to both research and educational administration practice by providing reliable information about urban charter school teachers' perceived needs for administrative support, and where support efforts should concentrate. This study also provided important recommendations for future research to further investigate teachers' support needs based on other factors at teacher, administration, and school levels. This study also established a theoretical framework by which future studies can examine the degree of correlation between teacher turnover and administrative support.

As a researcher, I am pleasantly surprised by the number of charter schools that participated in this study, and the amount of positive feedback I received from urban charter schools leaders after I presented their individual school reports. As many as 127 urban charter schools across the nation welcomed this study, and some schools even offered gift cards to encourage their teachers' participation. It confirmed that this study was relevant, and much needed in urban charter schools. I am also very excited about the potential this study generated for follow up studies and the connections that I have established with urban charter school leaders across the county. As a professional, I have already started using the results of this study for principal training and consulting with urban charter schools in various states. I firmly believe that we need to bridge the gap between research and practice to achieve better results. I am thrilled to see that the results of this study have already started informing practice in urban charter schools where the study took place.

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## APPENDIX A:

### E-mail Invitation to Charter School Leaders

Dear <charter school leader's name>,

As a former charter school principal, I would like to thank you for your continued leadership in providing an effective learning environment for your students to reach their maximum potentials.

I have obtained your contact information from the <name of the source>. As a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, I am conducting a research study to investigate what types of administrative support are more valuable to charter school teachers. I am sending this e-mail to secure your permission and support to involve your teachers in my research.

Evidence suggests that teacher retention has been an ongoing concern for all urban public schools. What is more disturbing is that charter schools lose their teachers at an annual average rate of 20-25%, which is considerably higher than the average rate of 14% that Traditional Public Schools have. National teacher surveys indicate that "lack of administrative support" is the most frequently cited reason (65%) as to why teachers leave charter schools. However, due to dearth of research on charter schools, it is not known what types of administrative support that charter school teachers perceive as more important. This study will also capture what teachers think about the level of administrative support in their current school. Please be assured that the results of this study will be reported as aggregate data only, and fictitious school codes will be used to protect the privacy of your teachers and your school.

This study will involve an online teacher survey which may take approximately 15 minutes of your teachers' time. If you could please provide me with a list of your teachers' names and work e-mail addresses, I can send them a personalized e-mail invitation to request their participation in this study. As a former principal, I will coordinate with you to ensure that teachers complete this survey with no disruption to their daily schedules or your school's routine activities. If you don't want to me to do this, alternatively, I can send you the teacher e-mail invitation, which you can internally distribute to your teachers at an appropriate time. Please let me know which option is more convenient for you.

The findings of this study will enhance our understanding of charter school teachers diverse support needs, and how their needs change as they gain more experience. Findings may also inform future policy, administrative training, and management practices to improve teachers' job satisfaction and retention in all public schools. If more than 50% of your teachers participate in my research, I will prepare a special report for your school and share it with you. This report will illustrate your teachers' perceived support needs in 59 different aspects and how satisfied they are with the current level of administrative support.

Please note that your teachers' participation in this study is completely voluntary. They may choose not to take part in this study, or if they decide to take part, they can change their mind later and withdraw from the study at any time. Also, your decision to help me distribute my survey to your teachers will not change any present or future relationships with the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

As a former principal and now a researcher, I need your support for my research on this critically important topic by connecting me with your teachers. Please simply reply to this e-mail or contact me via phone at 414-xxx-xxxx to confirm your willingness to help.

Thank you,

Ali Yilmaz,  
Doctoral Student  
Administrative Leadership Program  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
ayilmaz@uwm.edu  
414-xxx-xxx cell

## APPENDIX B:

### E-mail Invitation to Charter School Teachers

Dear <name of the teacher>,

I have received authorization from <Principal's Name> to contact you and request your participation in my research study for my dissertation.

This topic of my dissertation is *Teacher Perceptions of Administrative Support in Urban Charter Schools*. The study exclusively focuses on administrative support needs of urban charter school teachers to identify what types of administrative support are more important to them and if their support needs are being met by their school administrators.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in this study, or if you decide to take part, you can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. There are no foreseeable risks, harms, or discomforts associated with participating in this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life.

There are no costs for participating and there are no immediate benefits to you other than to further research in this area. However, if more than 50% of the teachers in your school participate in this study, I will prepare a special report and present it to your school administration. Your school administration may use these results to reflect on their support efforts. Your school's special report will only consist of aggregated results for administrative support questions, without any demographics information to fully protect your privacy.

Please also be assured the general results of this study will be reported as aggregate data only so that no one viewing the results will ever be able to identify you. Fictitious school codes will be used to further protect your privacy and the privacy your school.

As a former charter school teacher, I would like to thank you, in advance for taking the time to participate in this study. It may take approximately 15 minutes of your time.

You can begin your survey by simply clicking **HERE** <hyperlink>. Alternatively, you can copy and paste the following URL into your internet browser: <URL to the online survey>. I hope that you will be able to participate.

Thank you,

Ali Yilmaz  
Doctoral Student  
Administrative Leadership Program  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
ayilmaz@uwm.edu  
414-xxx-xxxx cell



## APPENDIX C:

### Dimensions of Administrative Support Survey

Dear Charter School Teacher,

I greatly appreciate your time and willingness to take this survey.

Please note that the effectiveness of this survey is solely dependent on your honest completion.

Thank you,

Ali Yilmaz  
Doctoral Student  
University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee

IRB Approval #16.183  
Date: 12/21/2015

---

#### Your Gender

- ☐ Male  
☐ Female

#### Years of **OVERALL** Teaching Experience

*(student teaching or short term subbing doesn't count)*

Please select from  
the scroll down  
menu here



#### Years of Teaching Experience at **YOUR CURRENT SCHOOL**

*(student teaching or short term subbing doesn't count)*

Please select from  
the scroll down  
menu here



### Employment Status at Your Current School

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time

### Your Age

- ☐ Less than 30 years
- ☐ 30-39 years
- ☐ 40-49 years
- ☐ 50 years or more

Page Break

This question is asking you to make two judgements about different types of administrative support. Each of the following statements is considered as administrative support.

**The first column** is asking you to rate **how important** each of these administrative supports to YOU at the current stage of your career.

**The second column** is asking you to rate **the extent** of support that you receive from the administration in your current school.

**NOTE: If there are multiple administrators in your school, please consider administration as a team.**

	Please rate <b>HOW IMPORTANT</b> each type of support is to <b>YOU at the current stage of your career.</b>				Please rate <b>the EXTENT of SUPPORT</b> that <b>YOU</b> receive from the administration in your current school.			
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Gives clear guidelines regarding my job responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Provides standards and expectations for my performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Accurately and objectively assesses my performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Offers constructive feedback after observing my teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Provides frequent feedback about my performance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support

Like the previous question, this question is asking you to make two judgements about different types of administrative support. Each of the following statements is considered as administrative support.

**The first column** is asking you to rate **how important** each of these administrative supports to YOU at the current stage of your career.

**The second column** is asking you to rate **the extent** of support that you receive from the administration in your current school.

**NOTE: If there are multiple administrators in your school, please consider administration as a team.**

	Please rate <b>HOW IMPORTANT</b> each type of support is to <b>YOU</b> at the current stage of your career.				Please rate <b>the EXTENT of SUPPORT</b> that <b>YOU</b> receive from the administration in your current school.			
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Acts friendly toward me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cares about my well-being	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cares about my job satisfaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Considers my ideas and suggestions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishes an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect among staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gives me a sense of importance and that I make a difference	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gives me undivided attention when I am talking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Involves me in decisions regarding workplace policies and practices that affect me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is easy to approach to discuss my feelings, worries, and frustrations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is honest and straightforward with the staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recognizes what I do and my professional accomplishments associated with school goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offers incentives to encourage and maintain good work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attends or supports extracurricular activities that I organize	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shows appreciation for my work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates genuine concern for my program and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expresses confidence in my actions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrates empathy for everyday challenges of being a teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trusts my judgment in making curriculum and instructional decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Like the previous question, this question is asking you to make two judgements about different types of administrative support. Each of the following statements is considered as administrative support.

**The first column** is asking you to rate **how important** each of these administrative supports to YOU at the current stage of your career.

**The second column** is asking you to rate **the extent** of support that you receive from the administration in your current school.

**NOTE: If there are multiple administrators in your school, please consider administration as a team.**

	Please rate <b>HOW IMPORTANT</b> each type of support is to <b>YOU at the current stage of your career.</b>				Please rate <b>the EXTENT of SUPPORT</b> that <b>YOU</b> receive from <b>the administration in your current school.</b>			
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Fosters collaboration by providing structure and time for working with and/or learning from my colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Encourages individual growth through advice, feedback, and providing professional development opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Identifies resource personnel to contact for specific problems the administration is unable to solve	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquires adequate staff to help me teach students with special needs (e.g., special education and ELL students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides adequate resources to help me teach students with special needs (e.g., special education and ELL students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shares up-to-date instructional techniques and educational research	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides helpful information about managing the daily challenges of being a teacher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicates current school policies and relevant federal and state mandates and regulations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides opportunities for me to attend workshops, attend conferences, and take courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shares timely and sufficient information about important changes, deadlines, and upcoming events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides relevant and accurate data on students' attendance, academics, and discipline to inform my classroom decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Takes time to explain reasons behind new initiatives and or performance expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Like the previous question, this question is asking you to make two judgements about different types of administrative support. Each of the following statements is considered as administrative support.

**The first column** is asking you to rate **how important** each of these administrative supports to YOU at the current stage of your career.

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**NOTE: If there are multiple administrators in your school, please consider administration as a team.**

	Please rate <b>HOW IMPORTANT</b> each type of support is to <b>YOU</b> at the current stage of your career.				Please rate <b>the EXTENT of SUPPORT</b> that <b>YOU</b> receive from the administration in your current school.			
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support
Aligns teaching assignment and prep time based on my teaching experience and educational background	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visits my classroom on a regular basis to see if I need assistance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consistently enforces school rules for students to maintain a safe and disciplined environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Effectively deals with pressures from outside the school that might interfere with my teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equally distributes resources and unpopular tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establishes channels of communication among staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps me analyze my students' assessment data and develop an action plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supports me during parent and student meetings and backs me up when needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps me evaluate my professional development needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assists me with classroom discipline problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is available to help when needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helps me solve problems and conflicts that occur	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is flexible and accommodates my individual needs as much as possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provides necessary materials, resources, and technology to teach effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is highly visible, actively involved in everyday processes of the school, and frequently interacts with me and my students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Makes continuous and conscious effort to improve our working conditions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protects my class time from outside disruptions (e.g., announcements, phone calls, unscheduled visitors during class time)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Schedules adequate planning time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Schedules common planning time with a mentor or teachers in my department	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Offers extra assistance when I become overloaded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Provides adequate training and time to effectively use new tools and resources to implement curriculum	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Allocates time for various non-teaching responsibilities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Responds to my emails and or requests in a timely manner, and keeps me informed on its progress	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	
Collaborates with me to plan specific goals and objectives for my program and students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	No Support	Little Support	Moderate Support	Great Support	

APPENDIX D:

Survey Modification Permission Letter –Cordeau (2003)

November 2, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Molly Cordeau, Ed.D., give Ali Yilmaz, a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, permission to modify and use items from the survey instrument entitled, "Mentoring Alternatively Certified Teachers: Principals' Perceptions", which was developed and validated in my doctoral work, to collect data for the purpose of a dissertation study.

Please feel free to contact me at    if you have questions or need additional information.

Respectfully yours,

*Molly Cordeau, Ed.D.*

Molly Cordeau, Ed.D.



## APPENDIX E:

### Survey Modification Permission Letter –Schindewolf (2008)

11/3/2015

Re: Permission to Modify and Use Survey: "Teacher Support Survey..." - Ali Yilmaz

Re: Permission to Modify and Use Survey: "Teacher Support Survey: Dimensions of Support Leading to Success"

Amy Schindewolf <[\[redacted\]](#)>

Tue 11/3/2015 8:20 AM

Inbox

To: Ali Yilmaz <[ayilmaz@uwm.edu](mailto:ayilmaz@uwm.edu)>;

Good morning. You have permission to utilize and modify as needed the survey instrument from my study. I wish you luck in your research. Feel free to proceed as needed with any portion of my dissertation and components of it to help your study.  
Amy Schindewolf

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 3, 2015, at 8:11 AM, Ali Yilmaz <[ayilmaz@uwm.edu](mailto:ayilmaz@uwm.edu)> wrote:

Dear Dr. Schindewolf,

My name is Ali Yilmaz, and I am currently a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. As part of my dissertation, I am planning to conduct a study to examine perceived administrative support needs of teachers and the extent of available administrative support in the urban charter schools in the United States.

Recent statistics indicate that charter schools lose their teachers at significantly higher rates than traditional public schools, and 65% of charter school teachers cite "lack of administrative support" as one of their reasons to move to another school. Due to dearth of research on the U.S. charter schools, the teacher turnover problems in charter schools are far less understood when compared to traditional public schools.



## CURRICULUM VITAE

**ALI YILMAZ**

**Place of birth:** Kuyucak, TURKEY

### **EDUCATION:**

**B.S. Marmara University, Istanbul, TURKEY** **July 1999**  
Major: Chemistry, Minor: Education

**M.Ed. National-Louis University, Chicago, IL** **June 2008**  
Major: Administrative Leadership

**Dissertation Title:** Teacher Perceptions of Administrative Support in Urban Charter Schools.

### **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS:**

Yilmaz, A. (2016) *Teacher Retention in Urban Schools: Implications for Human Resource Development*. Refereed Full Manuscript Submitted to the 2016 Academy of Human Resource Development International Research Conference in the Americas, Jacksonville, FL.

Yilmaz, A. (2015). High Teacher Turnover in Urban Schools and Potential Solutions. 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Education, Chicago, IL.

Yilmaz, A. (2014). Effective feedback systems. *The 2014 Academy of Human Resource Development International Research Conference in the Americas*, Houston, TX.

Yilmaz, A, & Akdere, M. (2013). Effective feedback system (EFS) can prevent failures (Fs): A systems perspective. *Refereed Proceedings of 11<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Knowledge, Economy, and Management*, Valletta, Malta.

### **HONORS & AWARDS:**

Best Paper Award, 2015 at 3rd International Conference on Education, Chicago, IL.

Chancellor's Award, 2015 at University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee

Iron Team Honors, 2014 at Business Management-715 Course at UWM

Chancellor's Award, 2013 at University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee