TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INITIATIVE FATIGUE AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER EFFICACY

The undersigned, approved by the Department Chair of Graduate Studies in Education, have examined a dissertation entitled:

TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INITIATIVE FATIGUE AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER EFFICACY

Presented by Kati O'Quinn, a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education, and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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# TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF INITIATIVE FATIGUE AND ITS IMPACT ON TEACHER EFFICACY

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A Dissertation
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The Faculty of the Graduate Education Department
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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By

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Titus 2:7-8

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# ABSTRACT

As new initiatives and requirements are added to the expectations of teachers, fewer resources, such as time, money, and energy, are available to ensure quality implementation. As a result, initiative fatigue sets in, and teachers are at risk for burnout, dissatisfaction, and diminished attitudes about teaching. The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented in a school and the level of teacher efficacy. The level of teacher efficacy was also measured in schools which implemented a planning protocol for new initiatives compared with those who did not. The School-wide Initiative Inventory survey, a researcher-created survey, was piloted and approved, and then combined with the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale, to create a 34-question survey tool. A total of 380 participants completed the survey, and the data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A Pearson r correlation was run to determine the strength of the relationship between initiative fatigue and teacher efficacy, as well as teacher efficacy and initiative implementation planning. In addition, a multiple regression analysis was ran to determine which factors were predictive of initiative fatigue. Results from this study indicated that while initiative fatigue and teacher efficacy were not strongly linked, teacher efficacy and initiative implementation planning practices showed statistically significant relationships. In addition, it was determined that having the support and input of principals, as well as time to reflect upon the success of new initiatives, are statistically significant indicators of initiative fatigue levels among educators.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Every year, hundreds of qualified teachers have left the profession, with as many as 50% of teachers departing for good within the first five years on the job (Darling-Hammond, 2003, Gray & Tai, 2015; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). This "revolving door" of educators has not only cost districts across the country billions of dollars, but has also impacted the value of education that students receive (Ingersoll, 2001; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Wyckoff, 2009). Educators across the country left the profession, or at the least, became complacent in their roles, due to the fact that they were being asked to do more with less (Reeves, 2009). The need for this study was based on data that indicated initiative fatigue negatively impacts teachers and students in the classroom, thus leading to many teachers leaving the profession (Reeves, 2011).

Influences from outside of the education field, have played a significant role in the drafting and passing of such major educational policies and laws as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, No Child Left Behind Act, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (National Research Council et al., 2001). In fact, interest and influence in education have been hot-button issues in political campaigns for many years (National Research Council et al., 2001; Rose & Gallup, 2000). Frequently, these decisions made by politicians and officials at the government level have been made as a result of perceived societal changes and concerns. In addition, it is important to note that corporations have used education as an arena to influence policy-making (National Research Council et al., 2001). While the public, politicians, and the corporate world have impacted and influenced education reform, educators have had to navigate the ever-changing landscape caused by changing policies. For example, as policies and laws have

changed, education professionals have had to consider how to best address the needs of the students who have passed through their doors (National Research Council et al., 2001). As each new policy and law has taken effect, changes to funding, expectations, and assessment have come with it. In order to adequately implement these changes, educational organizations have expended more time, energy, and resources. As the frequency and the number of expectations have risen, the resources used to implement such policies and expectations have failed to increase. The result has been an increase in initiative fatigue felt by educational organizations across the country, and an ever-increasing haze about what is essential in education, and what is just "noise," (Reeves, 2002; Schmoker, 2006).

Previous education reform trends, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, A Nation at Risk report, and the No Child Left Behind mandates, have focused on improving education through increased rigor, standards revision, teacher competency, and increased accountability. These increases, changes, updates, and policies have led to new initiatives being created and implemented in the school system (Reeves, 2011). The issues addressed in this study will focus on the increased demand for program change and initiative implementation within public schools today. Frustration and discontent have been heard from coast to coast and from urban schools to rural schools (Reeves, 2009).

**Brief Overview of Education Reform**

Beginning in 1787, the United States federal government, although newly created, recognized a need for education. As a result, the Northwest Ordinance was created, which required townships to support the education of each community by allocating land in

each region for a school or educational institution (Cross, 2015). With a rapidly increasing high school enrollment rate, along with a nearly twenty percent illiteracy rate for high school graduates entering the military, the federal government saw a need to increase vocational education in high schools across the United States (Cross, 2015). Therefore, in 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act, also known as the National Vocational Education Act, was passed in hopes of increasing educational opportunities, and practical training for all high school students (Cross, 2015).

Throughout the ear of World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the enacting of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965, religious separation within schools, and the Civil Rights movement several changes and additions to school expectations took place (Cross, 2015; Iorio & Yeager, 2011). As the country moved from surviving the struggles brought on by WWI to the growing working class, its focus shifted to improving education within the country and expanding the rights of students within the public school setting (Iorio & Yeager, 2011). Many of the policy changes found in school systems were direct results of legal battles fought on behalf of civil rights and liberties (Iorio & Yeager, 2011).

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed, allocating funds for areas of need within the education system in the United States. During that era, noted differences in the education of poverty-stricken students compared to wealthier peers gave way to concern over fair and equitable education standards. Those concerns were addressed through six provisions, which were addressed in the ESEA (U.S. Department of Education, 1965). Of those six provisions, five focused primarily on allocating funds specifically for the use of student achievement support. However, Title

5, designed to promote and support reform and school improvement programs aimed at supporting student achievement, narrowed the focus to improving instruction within schools (U. S. Department of Education, 1965). This major reform act was focused directly on improving and supplementing student achievement.

Another major trend toward reforming education occurred with *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* published in 1983. On August 26, 1981, Secretary of Education, T. H. Bell formed a commission charged with evaluating public education in the United States (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Public perception of education, along with his "responsibility to provide leadership, constructive criticism, and effective assistance to schools and universities" (p. 1) prompted the formation of this commission.

In April 1983, Chairman Gardner, chairman of the National Commission on Education, presented Secretary Bell with the report. It included the findings of the commission's 18 months of research and data collection. The report identified specific student needs, areas in need of improvement, and overall weaknesses within the education system in the United States at the time. The pressure from rising scores in other countries, along with societal changes and needs within our country were identified as two areas of major concern. The honest and blunt findings of the commission set the stage for modern education reform in the United States (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

During and leading up to the time of the 1970's and 1980's education reform, many of the recommendations and findings focused on increasing the rigor and expectations of students at the secondary level. The requirements for graduation, as well

as the decreasing achievement levels of students, were noted issues within the report. Preparedness of high school graduates for college or careers was also a noted weakness of the time. In addition, the report addressed concerns with teachers and teacher preparation programs. According to the report, many teachers hired at that time were pulled from the lower half of their graduating class. There was likewise a noted concern that the average teaching salary after 12 years was only $17,000. The result of the low salary was often manifested in teachers' taking second or third jobs and working during the summer. Teachers stated they had little say in the textbooks and materials that they used for teaching, resulting in less enthusiasm for the subject. There was also a considerable shortage of teachers, specifically in the mathematics and science areas (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

In 2001, portions of the ESEA were reauthorized during President George W. Bush's administration. This act was a bi-partisan reauthorization entitled No Child Left Behind (NCLB), which added requirements for the establishment of standards, as well as a definition of proficiency levels. It also included specific requirements for student achievement and teacher accountability. The law required states to adopt statewide standards, identify levels of proficiency for students, define adequate yearly progress, and administer assessments in mathematics and language arts. The accountability of schools increased considerably with the passing of this bill (NCLB, 2002). Although No Child Left Behind was designed to be monitored and eventually reauthorized, the reauthorization never took place due to political involvement, mounting educational priorities, and an admittedly shaky foundation. It was eventually replaced with a new educational reform bill by the following administration (Hess & Finn Jr., 2007).

On December 10, 2015, President Barak Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act, which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and replaced NCLB of the Bush administration (U.S. Department of Education, 2016; National Research Council (U.S.) et al., 2001). This was a result of work from legislators, parents, and students across the country, recognizing that some of the key elements of the NCLB Act were unattainable for public schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). While the NCLB Act made significant strides toward improving education in the United States, stakeholders took the revision period of the bill as an opportunity to make changes, as well as advancements toward improving education even further in the nation. Thus, the Every Student Succeeds Acts was created. One of the primary goals of the ESSA was to more fully prepare students for college and careers (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

**Theoretical Framework**

Although initially introduced in the *Harvard Business Review*, Douglas Reeves adopted the term Initiative Fatigue for use in the educational organization setting (Reeves, 2002). As a result, the term Initiative Fatigue has been used in educational organizations to describe the compounding expectations and initiatives that educators are responsible for, without an increase in funding, support, or emotional capacity needed to effectively implement multiple initiatives at one time (Reeves, 2002, 2011). Many times, administrators and leaders continue implementing less than effective mandates and initiatives simply because they are familiar. Other times, replacing the initiative requires more time than organizations have available to spend, resulting in additions of new programs, rather than replacements (Reeves, 2002, 2009, 2010).

Douglas Reeves (2010) argued that even the most dedicated employees can become exhausted and disenfranchised with their work when the educational organization has failed to see that emotional energy has a limit. He reiterated that regardless of how "well-intentioned" and needed some programs or initiatives might have been, if the number of initiatives has increased, while the amount of time, resources, and emotional energy has remained the same, the new initiatives will inherently receive less attention than those which came before (Reeves, 2010).

In addition to reduced resources and energy levels available to implement new initiatives and programs, the impact on teacher efficacy is of great importance to this study. Because teacher efficacy has been directly linked to student achievement and motivation, as well as teacher acceptance of new initiatives, it is crucial to understand what teacher efficacy is and what impacts the efficacy of teachers (Hoy, 2000). Teacher efficacy, as defined by Berman et al. (1977), is "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (p. 137). Teacher efficacy originated through work of both Rotter and Bandura and has since evolved into what it is known as today (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Albert Bandura's work noted that teacher efficacy was a form of self-efficacy in which teachers created beliefs regarding how well they were able to perform at certain tasks (Bandura, 1977). Those beliefs went on to influence the level of effort put forth, the amount of endurance or stamina one exerted toward certain tasks, and how well teachers were able to handle demanding and stressful situations (Bandura, 1977).

Teacher efficacy levels have also been influenced by what has been referred to as collective teacher efficacy (CTE) (Hoy, Sweetland, & Smith, 2002). Collective teacher

efficacy has been defined as "the perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students" (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000, p. 480). The collective efficacy of a school helps to shed light on how schools differ in their attainment of educational goals within the organization (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Bandura (1997) indicated that due the challenges faced by teachers within organizations that often lay outside of their control, increasing the collective efficacy of the organization might be challenging, but not impossible. There is further evidence to indicate that once collective efficacy is established, it can be made to succeed only if nurtured (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Therefore, identifying key factors that influence collective efficacy and individual teacher efficacy are key to promoting high levels of efficacy within an organization, as well as positive student achievement (Hipp, 1996; Protheroe, 2008).

Some of the increasing demands on teachers come from the federal government, while others are pushed down from the state level. Still others are created or adopted at the district and building level (Reeves, 2002, 2011; Cottongim, 2012). These initiatives often times are not research-based or put into practice long enough to prove validity and practicality (Schmoker, 2011). With the increasing demands on public school teachers, our national education system is seeing a reduction in highly qualified educators (Brenneman, 2015). In 2011, data collected by the Teach for America Foundation indicated that only 27.8% of teachers surveyed were still teaching after 5 years in their original capacity and school. Another study by Darling-Hammond (2003) indicated 50% of first year teachers teaching in an urban school leave the profession after three years. The study also indicated that 50% of all new teachers leave the profession within five

years. This type of turnover becomes problematic for schools, especially lower income and poverty laden districts. In some reports, as much as 42% of those leaving the profession indicated the reason for leaving as dissatisfaction in the workplace (Ingersoll, 2001). Dissatisfaction was categorized as low pay, lack of support by administration, and lack of teacher input in decision making (Ingersoll, 2001).

Data such as previously mentioned have prompted educators to begin looking into the epidemic at hand in the education field. Many education systems are hesitant to look too deeply at the issues plaguing teacher retention, due to the pressure, financial impact, and timeliness of what change might bring. Some researchers suggest schools simply go back to the basics and focus on what works (Collins, 2001). According to Mike Schmoker (2011), schools must focus on what is essential within education: coherent curriculum, comprehensive lessons, and an inclusion of reading and writing into all subject areas. He goes on to suggest that simplicity within public schools will allow them to achieve things that previous generations only strived for. Educator, researcher, and author Doug Reeves (2009) supported Schmoker's ideas with the concept of "pulling weeds" (p. 15). According to Reeves (2009), "The strategic leader must have a 'garden party' to pull the weeds before planting the flowers" (p. 15). That concept is associated with the idea that educators and leaders must weed out the things that are not working in order for strategies, initiatives, and programs that do work to have the largest impact (Reeves, 2011). Unfortunately, schools across the country have continued to add new initiative mandates to schools without removing other mandates from the plates of educators. The added workload, stress, and reduced funding lead to frustration and initiative fatigue (Reeves, 2011).

**Problem Statement**

Within the current education system, there is a pressing need to find programs and processes that increase student achievement and test scores (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Schmoker, 2011). Unfortunately, many times the drive to succeed and to implement new ideas is negated by the excessive use of several new ideas at one time, with little consideration of time and support of the implementation or availability of resources (Reeves, 2011). According to Schmoker (2011), "We insult and frustrate our teachers and leaders when we keep asking them to adopt complex, confusing new initiatives and programs that can't possibly succeed in the absence of a decent curriculum, lessons, and literacy activities" (p. 2). The pressures and demands put upon educators today combined with increased testing in the classroom and disconnected accountability have many questioning their longevity and their effectiveness within the system (Flannery, 2015).

While there is evidence to indicate that initiative fatigue can have a negative impact in the classroom, there has been limited implementation of this data to help alleviate the problem (Reeves, 2009, 2011; Schmoker, 2011; Volmer, 2010). Because experience plays a role in the development of one's efficacy, it is essential to consider the types of experiences teachers have had within the organization to better understand what has shaped their efficacy levels, or the collective efficacy levels of the organization (Bandura, 1977; Protheroe, 2008). Research indicates that experiences within the first year can directly influence the level of efficacy felt by teachers (Hoy, 2000).
Hoy (2000) indicates that the way in which new teachers are socialized has had an impact on their efficacy. If teachers experience several instances of "failures," or sub-par

outcomes, which directly impact their "mastery experiences," their sense of efficacy is likely to suffer (Hoy, 2000). When teachers are faced with the demands of multiple initiatives or programs, and constantly changing expectations, there is little indication that mastery can be reached, and fatigue sets in (Reeves, 2002). When implementing change within an organization, resistance and difficulty could be experienced if not adequately planned for (Bolman & Deal, 2008). A paradigm shift is necessary in order for school leaders and teachers to effectively implement and monitor new programs, and for other programs to be evaluated and potentially removed (Leadership and Learning Center, 2005). In such educational organizations, it is acknowledged that even highly skilled individuals can only effectively implement and maintain so many programs, before "the feeling of being overwhelmed sets in and begins to erode both individual and group efficacy" (White & Smith, 2010, Ch. 7).

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented in a school and the level of teacher efficacy. In addition, the level of teacher efficacy was measured in schools which implemented a planning protocol for new initiatives compared with those who did not. Knowing how initiative fatigue impacts teacher efficacy can allow educational organizations to begin to reduce the fatigue felt by their educators, thus reducing potential staff turnover and increasing achievement within their organization. Reeves suggests that any vision without an implementation plan is not only counterproductive, but it leads to cynicism, distrust, and fails to reach the intended goals of the organization (Reeves, 2010).

## Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and the level of teacher efficacy?
2. What is the relationship between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans?
3. What factors of teacher perception can predict possible initiative fatigue?

## Limitations/Delimitations/Assumptions

The intention of the researcher was to provide accurate and significant data, which would enrich and enhance this field of study in education. There are many variables that can affect the outcome of the researcher's study and results. Limitations would include any variable that is outside the control of the researcher. Delimitations are intentionally designed to provide the most accurate and relevant data.

### Limitations.

1. The implementation process of the participating district's initiatives took place prior to the study.

2. Access to available data and/or feedback may be limited by the participation of respondents.

3. Due to time constraints of the study, researcher may not have access to all districts due to processes and procedures for conducting a study within certain districts.

### Delimitations.

1. The data collection is limited geographically to Missouri schools willing to participate.

2. The researcher included data from all grade levels of public schools, Pre-K through grade 12.

3. The researcher included data collected from certified teachers only. Administrator perceptions will not be measured.

**Assumptions.**

The researcher made the following assumptions:

1. The researcher assumes the participants are providing accurate and honest feedback through self-reported data.

2. The researcher assumes that the initiatives and programs reported by the participants fall into the appropriate category as defined by the researcher to the participants.

**Design Controls**

This study was based on survey research and examined the perceptions of teachers and multiple initiatives implemented at one time. The researcher chose to conduct a quantitative study in order to access a larger population of teachers. Invitations were sent to all school districts in the state of Missouri. Those willing to participate were sent the survey via email by the researcher. The survey tool included demographic information as well as topic-specific information. Because existing surveys failed to meet all the criteria established by the researcher, a new survey was created. This new tool was piloted and tested for validity before it was approved for use in this study. One of the key focuses of this study was to determine whether or not the planning, implementation, and monitoring process of an initiative or program had any effect on the initiative fatigue

felt by educators. Therefore, survey questions regarding implementation process were included.

Funding varies from school to school. Therefore, a survey question was created to determine whether or not the respondents felt as though adequate funding was provided for the initiatives put in place. The question did not inquire about overall district funding. To ensure the most accurate and honest data available, the researcher conducted the survey with complete anonymity for the respondents. Only general demographic information was required for the survey, and no identifying features were included. By maintaining anonymity, the researcher increased the reliability of more accurate results.

**Definition of Key Terms**

**Initiative Fatigue.** The concept that while initiatives and programs are increasing, the time, money, and energy to implement those initiatives remains constant, thus resulting in the new initiative receiving less than the previous initiative. The adequate number of initiatives recommended by Douglas Reeves is 1-6 initiatives (Reeves, 2011).

**Initiative.** For the purpose of this study, "initiative" and "program" will be used interchangeably.

**Teacher Efficacy**. The extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance (Berman et al, 1977).

**Collective Efficacy.** "The perceptions of teachers in a school that the efforts of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students" (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000).

## Summary

In this chapter, a brief history and overview of educational reform were presented. It included a rationale for the significance of this study, and how it might impact education moving forward. This chapter also included a theoretical framework for the research used in the investigation of initiative fatigue and education reform, thus laying the foundation for this study. Included in Chapter One are the limitations of the study, design set up, and key terms used within the study.

Chapter two will include a review of literature which connects the research that has already been done to this study itself. Chapter three will include the methodology for conducting the study. The researcher will describe the sample group used, the qualifying factors, and the reporting methods. The demographic questionnaire, as well as the interview questions, will be presented in this chapter. Chapter four will include the findings of this study, as well as the correlation to the research. Chapter five will provide an overview of the study, including its relevance and implications in the field of education.

# CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

## Introduction: Initiatives and Reform

When the Russians launched Sputnik into space, beating the United States, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), as well as the United States military, saw this feat as not only a failure on the part of the United States, but also a threat ("Milestones: 1953–1960 - Office of the Historian", 2017; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). As other countries have made advancements in certain areas in which the United States has fallen behind, U.S. politicians have, in the past, indicated that more time be spent teaching science, math, and technology. As a result, other subjects, including art and history, received less time and attention, which occurred when planning and implementation became fragmented (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Fullan, 2006; Reeves, 2016). However, when looking solely at the challenge ahead, those individuals often failed to recognize the fact that those successful nations offered extensive and diverse curricula, which challenged learners to think critically and to use multiple subjects areas in order to problem solve (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). As new challenges, setbacks, and political circles emerged, policy and reform began to change the landscape of education, resulting in several waves of educational change (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

Education reform and policy implementation has played a seemingly important role in shaping the educational landscape of this country for centuries. For example, many of the reform policies that have been put in place in the United States have resulted from a deficit or a need to address certain problematic areas in the nation (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; National Research Council (U.S.) et al., 2001). In the early 1900s, due to

illiteracy rates along with low graduation rates, vocational education became an important reform with several initiatives attached (Cross, 2015; Hillison, 1996). With the Smith-Hughes Act, several new initiatives and policies were put into place in high schools across the United States to help encourage students to find careers and training from which they would benefit (Cross, 2015; Bartholomew, 2014). As major events occurred and impacted our nation, new initiatives were enacted. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act changed policy further by paving the way for new standards and provisions, which would ensure poverty-stricken students were given an education equitable to their wealthier peers, thus giving life to programs such as Title 1 (U.S. Department of Education, 1965; Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015). Funding, with provisions attached, became a part of educational reform, and policies and initiatives were put into place to improve instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 1965; Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015). Interestingly, however, ESEA did not at the time it was written, permit the federal government to mandate or control a specific "curriculum or program of instruction" at the state or local level (U.S. Department of Education, 1965; Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015).

The 1970s and 1980s were wrought with recommendations, policies, and new expectations for schools across the nation (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). An increase in policy changes and initiatives implemented took place following the release of the major work of *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* report in 1983. Each reform or policy implementations was crafted with a purpose and an antecedent, and each was designed to improve educational opportunities and academic achievement for all students (National

Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). By the early 2000s, new administration and political groups had taken the initiative to create even further policy change. In 2001, certain portions of ESEA were changed and reauthorized under the direction of President George W. Bush (NCLB, 2002; Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015). This legislation and policy was later replaced by President Barak Obama with the Every Student Succeeds Act (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; National Research Council (U.S.) et al., 2001; Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015).

With each of these policy shifts and reforms implemented within the public education system in the United States, the expectations and requirements for public educators also shifted (Gamson, McDermott, & Reed, 2015). While the majority of the programs, initiatives, reforms, and policy changes have played an important role in the education of American students, many have argued that when teachers seek to work in isolation and are reluctant to try new things, they become stagnant and complacent (Schmoker, 2006; Volmer, 2010; Dufour, 2004). The argument continued, pointing out that educators must strive to try new ideas, and work to ensure that instructional practices and sound reform are functioning in the best interest of their students (Schmoker, 2006; Reeves, 2016). Those who believe initiative fatigue to be problematic, however, have not argued that trying new things is a problem, but rather continuing to increase the work load and initiatives implemented at one time causes the problem (Reeves, 2002, 2010, 2011). Instead of adding new, simplified and impactful initiatives, changes, and reform mandates to those already existing, it is argued that educational systems should instead replace those former mandates and initiatives that are no longer as beneficial or relevant (Reeves, 2011; Volmer, 2010).

**The Law of Initiative Fatigue**

Initiative fatigue is not limited to the education field. In fact, many employees of organizations and other businesses suffer from having too many expectations and mandates to accomplish with limited resources and energy (Turner, 2012; Reeves, 2010). Within the education field, Doug Reeves (2011) coined the phrase *The Law of Initiative Fatigue,* stating it is:

> The tendency of education leaders and policymakers to mandate policies, procedures, and practices that must be implemented by teachers and school administrators, often with insufficient consideration of the time, resources, and emotional energy required to begin and sustain the initiatives. (p. 1)

Reeves (2010), an educational researcher and expert, also suggests that leaders in the education field have three crucial resources available to them: time, money, and emotional energy. Because time is a fixed notion, and monetary resources fluctuate greatly depending on a myriad of reasons, the organization's emotional energy is the one significant resource that can be modified by the organization (Reeves, 2010). Therefore, as more time, monetary resources, and energy are spent on an ever-increasing number of initiatives and agendas, the fatigue felt by the organization will become greater.

How that fatigue manifests itself varies from organization to organization and from teacher to teacher. In some instances, it manifests itself in the form of teacher burnout. Burnout is characterized by extreme exhaustion in the workplace, feelings of anger, frustration, disparagement, and ineffectiveness (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998; Chang, 2009; Hakanen et al., 2006). While some professionals decide to leave the profession as a result of burnout, many remain working, only to perform the minimum

requirements with less than effective effort (Maslach & Goldberg, 1998). Individuals experiencing burnout, who continue to work, produce results that are generally ineffective and inconsequential. In fact, it is reported by peers and individuals themselves that they are less impactful in their work and accomplish less (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009).

The concept of initiative fatigue has been the discussion of educational experts and practicing teachers around the globe (Reeves, 2011). For example, curriculum changes and education reform in Western Australia have educators and experts monitoring the effects of the change fatigue on teacher retention and job satisfaction (Dilkes, Cunningham, & Gray, 2014; Olivier &Venter, 2003). In another study conducted in Queensland, Australia, it was observed that reform within the school system many times led to overlap, causing teachers to have less time to "assimilate and adjust" to any changes before new changes began to affect them (Timms et al., 2007, Gardner & Williamson, 2006). Reeves (2002) suggests that if leaders fail to see the consequences of initiative fatigue, it can deplete the organizations of its energy and its focus.

**Causes of Initiative Fatigue**

Research indicates that some of the root causes of initiative fatigue include a lack of vision and planning on the part of the leaders and organization, having too many priority initiatives in place without the time, energy, or resources to support them, including a natural resistance to change (Reeves, 2002, 2011, 2016; Dweck 2006; Bolman & Deal, 2008). When these triggers are combined, the result is likely to have a negative impact on the organization (Reeves, 2002, 2016; Bolman & Deal, 2008). In fact, when implemented with little regard as to what the expectation might be for the

organization, or if the change undermines the expertise of the organization, the resistance to change might be grave enough to cause the initiative to fail (Bolman & Deal, 2008). In order to ensure the success of the organization, leaders must look their practices in order to help guarantee the success of their practices and their employees (Reeves, 2002, 2016; Bolman & Deal, 2008). In fact, student achievement, staff efficacy and happiness, and overall quality of the institution depend upon the planning and monitoring of the changes being made and the initiatives being implemented (Reeves, Hattie et al., 2011).

Experts suggest that without a clear vision and focus, an organization, including a school, cannot make adequate progress toward its goals (Reeves, 2016; Bolman & Deal, 2008). Frequently, the feeling of fatigue and disparagement felt among teachers and educational institutions results from a lack of focus or vision being compounded by the ever-increasing workload being put on the organization (Reeves, 2016; Timms, Graham, & Cottrell, 2007). Reeves (2016) suggests there are seven key elements that leaders must examine in order to have a positive impact on the organization. Those elements include purpose, trust, focus, leverage, feedback, change, and sustainability. In regard to change and program implementation, focus is one of the most crucial. Leaders must have a focus of what is essential within the organization, knowing what is vital and what is less important. In a study of more than two thousand schools, evidence indicated that schools with six or fewer key initiatives or priorities have shown significantly higher gains in student achievement (Reeves, 2016). By identifying those key initiatives, Reeves suggests that schools focus only on what is essential, and put aside the rest. When identifying what those key ideas might be, one can look at the essential themes of education reform over time. Those include strategic planning, having a vision and

mission statement, creating and including a comprehensive reform model, and communicating the vision and strategies with stakeholders (Reeves, 2002; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). When educational leaders add additional initiatives to the organization intended to "fix" educational concerns, yet fail to remove other initiatives that are no longer effective, schools begin to strain under the weight of having too much to do (Reeves, 2002). Disparagement from staff often times arises, and any new ideas become ill-fated from the onset, and focus can be lost (Reeves, 2002; Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Allen Odden, Professor Emeritus of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, claims that a school's failure to achieve progress and make improvements is not because the school system lacks funding or doesn't know how to improve schools. He argues, rather, that schools lack a persistence and resolve to do what they know to be right (Odden, 2009). Some studies indicate that schools could close the achievement gap in as few as five years. However, in order to do so, they must first ignore the many new programs, supposed fixes, and fads that distract from the practices that are most essential (Collins, 2001, & Schmoker, 2011). Educational institutions must examine whether or not the time, energy, and resources might be better spent on the teachers themselves or on the next new program. While many initiatives and programs are beneficial to the academic achievement of students, one must also consider that teachers' creativity and knowledge can do much to further the academic success of students, if only given a clear and unburdened path to do so (Hall & Simeral, 2008).

In addition to poor planning, or lack of planning, the ever-increasing demands placed on public schools by legislation and outside forces can affect the pressures felt by

initiative fatigue. The push for radical and substantial education reform has forced the nation, states, and local districts to adopt standards, curriculum, and testing policies that often times undermine what educators know to be effective. There has been an existing perception that many states adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) out of necessity and in order to qualify for reform waivers, and other grants and funding (Ametepee, Tchinsala, & Agbeh, 2014; McGuinn, 2016). The idea of adopting and implementing new standards and curriculum without proper research or with lack of evidence has many districts now scrambling to implement more programs to circumvent the lack of progress in previously implemented initiatives. In fact the perception has often been noted that policies and programs are implemented with little regard for the intended outcomes on classroom learning (Fullan, 2006). Unfortunately, frequently in those situations, the older or less effective programs and initiatives are not removed, but rather simply added to, which when compounded, has led to initiative fatigue within teachers and schools (Reeves, 2009).

Strategic leaders must promote a clear and well-articulated vision for their organizations (Reeves, 2002; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Kotter (1996) suggests, "Whenever you cannot describe the vision driving a change initiative in five minutes or less and get a reaction that signifies both understanding and interest, you are in for trouble" ( p. 9). Without a clear vision, schools and organizations cannot understand the rationale for why certain expectations are made, and new initiatives are needed (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Bolman & Deal, 2008). What then tends to occur at the district level is fragmentation (Reeves, 2016). This occurs when several different initiatives are being suggested by many different stakeholders, resulting in the initiatives no longer meeting the focus of the

organization or its intended purpose (Reeves, 2016; DuFour & Marzano, 2012; Kotter & Cohen, 2002). Therefore, it is essential to ensure organizations have a clear vision in place, and each initiative being considered aligns to the vision (Kotter & Cohen, 2002; Reeves, 2016).

Once the vision and mission are in place within an organization or school, leaders must then determine which initiatives will be the most effective, and which would not be effective, and thus, should be ended(DuFour & Marzano, 2012; Reeves, 2010). Many initiatives have merit in isolation (Reeves, 2016; Schmoker, 2011); however, if they are piled on top of other initiatives with little thought to effectiveness, they lose their value. Less time, energy, and resources are devoted to each initiative as more are added (Reeves, 2016). In order to determine what works, Hattie and Yates (2014) suggest that within an organization, leaders must not only identify what works, but also what works best. Reeves (2016) goes on to say that studies have indicated that most interventions will have some impact on student results. However, school leaders must analyze what initiatives will yield the greatest return on the investment of resources, time, and energy (Reeves, 2016; Schmoker, 2011). Focusing on initiatives which are new and trendy, rather than those which should yield quality improvement if implemented with effectiveness, can lead to initiative fatigue within the organization (Reeves, 2016; Schmoker, 2011). When organizations and schools feel the impact of initiative fatigue, the focus of the organization becomes more inconsequential. The effectiveness of the organization is also dislodged by frustration (Reeves, 2002). In addition, as time, energy, and resources for each initiative decrease, studies indicate that each initiative's effectiveness exponentially decreases (Reeves, 2002; Schmoker, 2011).

One concept that Reeves (2002) investigated, is the idea that schools and educational institutions have become hoarding centers for educational programs and initiatives. While it is important to keep resources around for use, it is also equally important to inventory the programs being used and implemented, and audit what needs to stay and what needs to go (Reeves, 2002; Schmoker, 2011). What may have been cutting edge and groundbreaking a few years ago may be irrelevant and counterproductive in today's world of education (Reeves, 2002; Schmoker, 2011). Reeves' research indicates that having more than six initiatives in place at one time is actually counterproductive (Reeves, 2016). Some argue that while schools and education reformers know what is essential to quality education, they are often distracted by the shiny newness of a program or overwhelmed with the onslaught of continuous program pushdown (Schmoker, 2011). However, in order to increase achievement, efficacy, and performance, schools must focus their time, energy, and resources on a limited number of priority initiatives (Reeves, 2016; Schmoker, 2011). In order to do so, Reeves (2002) recommends that leaders examine and review each initiative within the organization for effectiveness. Those that have expired or are no longer effective should be removed in order to provide more time, energy, and resources to other, more effective enterprises. Reeves (2002) refers to this concept as *sun setting*. Sun setting, as Reeves refers to it, is the idea that leaders must plan ahead to review every initiative to ensure that it can be maintained and evaluated for effectiveness over time (Reeves, 2002).

The argument can be made that with the increasing pressures and demands of current policy and policy makers, teachers are inundated with reform that cannot produce quality work (Reeves, 2010; Schmoker, 2011). Programs within schools are constantly

being redeveloped or created and join a host of other mandates to be implemented (Turley, 2005). The programs, changes, and mandate additions come with no extra time, funding, or support to help ensure their success. Instead, they are often times met with frustration or lack of enthusiasm from teachers and faculty members who are exhausted from trying to keep up (Turley, 2005). Marzano et al. (2005) state, "One of the constants within K-12 education is that someone is always trying to change it; someone is always proposing a new program or a new practice" (p. 65). With the push for schools to improve student achievement levels, reduce dropout rates, and increase preparedness for college and career, several outside agencies have created and recommended new policies and programs for schools to follow. This is often an area of frustration and discontent among educators.

Change within any organization can be difficult. Leaders and stakeholders must recognize the need for evaluation and cohesiveness to the institution's vision and focus in order to avoid unnecessary stress and pressure. If the pressure of initiative fatigue is increasing within public schools across the country, and there is the potential for teacher effectiveness and efficacy to decrease, educational leaders across the country must find a way to combat the issues. By taking a leading role in the implementation process of new initiatives and programs, building level principals, as well as district and building leaders, can help to minimize the fatigue felt by teachers and faculty members. Bolman and Deal (2008) suggest that change within the organization can often be a tough process if not planned for. Educational leaders must be cognizant of many factors. When looking to make a change within an organization, the leader must be able to reframe the situation drawing on many lenses of perception. For example, when looking at a program or

initiative to potentially add, the educational leaders and decision makers of the district must look at how the addition of that program might affect the school and/or district structurally, humanistically, politically, and symbolically (Bolman & Deal, 2008). These lenses allow leaders and other stakeholders a glimpse into potential problems, or successes, with program implementation and its effectiveness. Bolman and Deal (2008) argue that regularly leaders fail to allocate adequate time and resources in developing the knowledge and skills needed to involve the right people in the decision-making process, thus resulting in the human aspect of an organization being neglected. This, in turn, could translate into opposition later in the process. Change within an organization is an intricate and methodical undertaking (Bolman & Deal, 2008). Because change alters roles and participation within the organization, leaders must plan accordingly, allowing opportunities for staff and stakeholders to voice their opinions and concerns. Change often impacts traditions, customs, behaviors, and the overall social underpinnings of an organization. To make significant changes without forethought and planning could result in negative effects, insufficient progress with new initiatives, and overall dissatisfaction (Bolman & Deal, 2008, Reeves, 2002, 2011, 2016). When asking educators to take on more responsibility with less energy and resources available to allocate toward the change, and with little thought about the effects, the results are likely to have a negative impact on the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2008).

Often times, school leaders are pressured from outside entities to show resilience to the frequently changing landscape of education (Reeves, 2011). This is often combined with the genuine desire to do what is in the best interest of the students. Unfortunately, the ultimate result is often too many policies and initiatives to implement and not enough

manpower or support to implement them fully and with fidelity. In a study done by Reeves (2011), of the schools involved, only one-half of one percent could state there were six or fewer initiatives being implemented at one time. Some districts reported as many as 77 or more "prioritized" initiatives within their districts (Reeves, 2011). With regard to the districts with significantly higher numbers of initiatives in place at one time, Reeves suggested that a determination be made between which initiatives were most important and which needed the most energy (Reeves, 2011). In a study involving more than two thousand different school plans, findings showed that in schools where six or fewer priorities were identified, significantly higher student achievement gains were noted, compared to schools with several priorities in place (Reeves, 2016).

Another issue with having multiple priority initiatives in place at the same time was that fragmentation occurs, meaning the initiatives were accumulated by the suggestions of different stakeholders. In this situation, each believes the initiative they were supporting was important, with little communication about how the implementation of all of the initiatives at once might impact the educational system. Individually, the priorities and initiatives have good intentions; however, when they are piled together, their effectiveness is reduced, and the time, energy, and monetary resources can be stretched thin (Reeves, 2016). There is evidence to support that as the number of priority initiatives increases, their longer-term effectiveness decreases (White, 2005, 2009).

Based on this knowledge, there are a few key steps that educational leaders can do to help manage the initiative overload within their districts. Buckingham (2005) suggests that organizations strategically and carefully identify their highest priorities and focus on those. Fullan (2006) indicates that there are "seven core premises that underpin our use of

change knowledge." (p. 8). Those include focusing on motivation, building capacity, learning within the context, changing the context in which we work, reflecting on actions that have been taken, engagement at multiple levels, and persistence to stay the course (Fullan, 2006). Collins (2001) claims that simplicity is the key to changing and improving the organization. In order for initiatives to create statistically significant gains, leaders must intentionally and systematically evaluate the quality of return in regard to the time and energy expended on such initiatives (Reeves, 2016). Reeves (2011) also states that "The strategic leader must have a 'garden party' to pull the weeds before planting the flowers." (p. 15).

Schmoker (2011) suggests that one of the key reasons why schools do not make progress is because schools rarely implement the essential elements. According to Schmoker (2011), there are three key elements that schools should consider essential to success. Those include "a reasonable coherent curriculum, sound lessons, and far more purposeful reading and writing in every discipline-authentic literacy" (Schmoker, 2011, p. 2). Studies indicate that these vital areas are rarely the only primary focus within a learning organization, and they are often pushed aside by a myriad of other initiatives (Schmoker, 2006). Schmoker (2006) argues that if schools were to simply implement the three key elements, they would see a better outcome than all other initiatives combined, even those which were conducted well. By narrowing down the focus of those things that are most important, simplifying the process, outcomes, and procedures, and by ridding the organization of those distractions that are no longer useful or needed, educational leaders can begin to relieve the pressure of initiative fatigue.

Finally, school leaders must be willing to maintain the change that is taking place, and stay the course of the initiative implementation. Fequently, once a problem is addressed, or improvement begins to be evident, people stop maintaining the change that brought about the resolution to the problem. Change must be supported or it will have little impact (Dweck, 2006). Teachers exhibit enhanced levels of organization, planning, and enthusiasm when they have higher levels of efficacy (Hoy & Spero, 2005). In addition, teacher efficacy can be impacted by the level of resources and support teachers encounter within their organizations. Findings indicate that those with higher levels of efficacy are more receptive to new ideas, more likely to experiment with new methods, and persist through challenges and change (Hoy & Spero, 2005).

**Teacher Efficacy**

The foundation of self-efficacy is rooted in the social cognitive theory, originally developed by Stanford professor Albert Bandura. According to Bandura (1994), self-efficacy can be defined as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (p. 2). Many researchers claim that the self-efficacy of a teacher can influence both the teacher's behavior as well as the outcome of the students. For this reason, researchers have found that positive or elevated self-efficacy can help to improve schools (Ross, 1998; Hoy, & Spero, 2005). The definition of *teacher efficacy* was later created, using the same principles, yet applying them to the scope of an educator. Berman et al. (1977) define teacher efficacy as "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (p. 137). Hoy (2000) explained teacher efficacy as the "teachers' confidence in their ability to promote students' learning" (p. 42). When

teachers are efficacious about their craft, their enthusiasm increases, thus often resulting in higher student engagement and achievement. The willingness to take on new challenges and even implement new reforms or programs has been observed to be higher in teachers who are more efficacious (Hoy & Spero, 2005). In a study conducted to determine the effects of a change agent within the school setting, the teachers' self-efficacy appeared to be the most influential characteristic exhibited affecting student achievement. The self-efficacy of the teacher impacted the positive achievement of goals as well as increased student performance (Berman et al., 1977; Hattie, 2009; Donohoo, 2016).

According to Bandura (1997), the four areas in which people gain efficacy include mastery experiences, physiological and emotional states, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion (Bandura 1997; Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, & Hoy, 1998; Hoy, 2000). As teachers become more successful within their craft and their mastery level increases, their level of efficacy also increases. The opposite experience can have the reverse effect; if a teacher has a poor lesson or experience, their efficacy level decreases. Researchers agree that creating environments in which new teachers have high levels of efficacious experiences can help to increase the likelihood of their success and retention within the field (Bandura, 1997 Mulholland & Wallace, 2001). In addition, providing opportunities in which teachers can witness and experience fellow colleagues having successful and effective experiences also develops more confidence to try new things (Hoy, 2000; Protheroe, 2008; Garmston, 2001). When looking at the responsibility of teachers to promote and support new programs and initiatives, one study found that the responsibility fell to those teachers who were considered veteran teachers who often have higher levels

of efficacy (Gardner, 2013). Reeves (2010), indicates that even employees who are the most effective and the most dedicated will eventually become exhausted, diminishing their effectiveness, often through diminished efficacy.

In addition to teacher efficacy, the collective efficacy of educational institutions has become the focus of considerable research (Hoy, 2000; Protheroe, 2008; Donohoo, 2017). Jenni Donohoo, Provincial Literacy Lead of the Ontario Ministry of Education's Curriculum and Assessment Policy Branch, defined collective teacher efficacy as, a staff's shared belief that through their collective action, they can positively influence student outcomes, including those who are disengaged and/or disadvantaged (Donohoo, 2017). According to recent studies, Collective Teacher Efficacy (CTE) is the number one factor that has influenced student achievement (Hattie, 2016; Donohoo, 2017). Hattie's most recent research indicated that CTE has shown to be three times more impactful on student achievement than the socio-economic status of that student (Hattie, 2016; Donohoo, 2017). Because an educator's actions can be guided by their efficacy beliefs, it is noted that those collective efficacy beliefs are drivers of resolve and persistence when pursuing the collective goals of an organization (Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy, 2004; Donohoo, 2017). There are six conditions which can enable collective efficacy (Donohoo, 2017). Those conditions include the influence of advanced teachers (Derrington & Angelle, 2014; Goddard, 2002; Knobloch, 2007; Donohoo, 2017), finding consensus on goals (Kurz & Knight, 2004; Donohoo, 2017), understanding the work of colleagues (Donohoo, 2017), cohesion of staff, responsive (and supportive) leadership, and effective interventions (Donohoo, 2017).

Considerable research around teacher efficacy looks at job satisfaction and school environment characteristics as factors, or indicators, of efficacy level (Yoo, 2016). Although the original work by Albert Bandura indicated that a teacher's efficacy is fixed (Bandura, 1997), more recent research is emerging that indicates a person's efficacy could change over time depending upon several factors (Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). Those factors include stress level, teacher-student rapport, and support from administration (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Studies go further and indicate that teachers who experience higher levels of stress show greater signs of health issues and increased levels of burnout (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) suggest that the apparent demands faced by teachers impact the personal competence and self-efficacy of the individual. Those who do not anticipate being successful with a student or group of students will likely put in less effort than with other students, thus indicating that self-efficacy can become self-fulfilling prophesies. A teacher's efficacy is greatly impacted by the mastery experiences they encounter (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Therefore, success or failure with a lesson, group of students, or program will impact their overall efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007).

As previously mentioned, teacher burnout can be one result of initiative fatigue. Researchers have indicated that there is a moderate link between teacher burnout and teacher self-efficacy, stating that the link may be caused by the fact that lower self-efficacy could result in the feeling of burnout (Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2007; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). While burnout is somewhat of a complex concept, one of its causes has been linked to a person's inability to effectively cope with the stressors of work. In the

realm of teaching, those stressors can be manifested in several ways. For example, the inability to handle behavior problems in the classrooms, relationships within the workplace and with students and parents, new mandates and education reform, and conflicts with colleagues contribute to workplace stress for educators (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). If teachers have repeated episodes of the aforementioned stressors, self-efficacy could suffer as a result, thus linking burnout with efficacy together (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007).

When considering the enabling conditions of high collective efficacy of an organization, Donohoo (2017) explains that the advanced teacher influence condition is effective when educators have been given opportunities to become stakeholders in vital school-wide decisions. When giving more autonomy to educators over the important decisions that impact their daily goals, there is a higher likelihood of building collective efficacy (Donohoo, 2016). Her research goes on to point out that the cohesion of a staff is most effective in increasing collective efficacy when there is agreement across the institution regarding fundamental issues impacting education. With regard to the leadership component of collective efficacy, concern and respect for the teacher is not only essential, but should be coupled with a hedge of protection from distractions and issues that might take away from quality time and focus toward the common goals (Donohoo, 2017).

Research indicates that there is a significant link between the collective efficacy of an organization and student achievement (Bandura, 1993; Goddard, 2001; Goddard et al., 2000; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). There is further research to indicate a substantial correlation between collective efficacy, goal attainment, and group effectiveness (Little &

Madigan, 1997; Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). Furthermore, noteworthy correlations have been made between perceived collective efficacy and the dedication to approach group goals by efficacious educators (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). In order to prepare the organization for changes that will yield results, leaders must consider how the change will impact the culture in which it is being introduced (Wasta, 2011; Senge et al., 2011). Consideration of the shared goals combined with an analysis of the change readiness of the culture is more likely to result in long-term change (Wasta, 2011). In addition, considering whether or not the intended initiative or reform is manageable or implementable is essential when planning for success. Hence the importance of connecting shared goals, attainable benchmarks, and overall communication during the process of making a change within an organization (Wasta, 2011; Fullan, 2007).

**Planning for Change**

As previously mentioned, Reeves (2016) identifies "change" as one of the key elements of leadership. According to Reeves' work, leaders must be willing to identify and admit that there is a need for change. Some may look at this as pointing out that what is currently taking place within the organization is not working and must be reformed (Reeves, 2016; Fullan, 2006). Although the mantra of change is often touted loudly from the seats of the board, teacher organizations, and even teachers themselves, often when leaders begin to make the necessary changes, they come up against opposition (Reeves, 2016). In order to more effectively overcome the opposition (if able), leaders must ensure that the change reform they are suggesting is rooted in data and based on a need derived from strategic planning, which includes identifying instructional practices that might also need to be revised (Reeves, 2016; Fullan, 2006). Another suggestion made by Reeves is

to ensure that the decision makers, and those helping to carry out the process, are able to communicate with one another about the costs, benefits, potential struggles, and overall feelings of the changes being proposed (Reeves, 2016). In fact, by using a costs and benefits diagram, a collaborating advisory group can identify just how essential and effective initiatives might be to their purpose and organization (Reeves, 2016). Because each quadrant has specific characteristics, stakeholders can easily see just how impactful each program or initiative actually is to their purpose. Reeves (2016) also suggests that by completing a change readiness assessment, leaders and stakeholders can more easily determine whether or not their organization is ready to make effective changes. Although increasing the number of initiatives seems like a slight change to the everyday workings of the institution, the time, energy, and resources spent on each initiative can have considerable impact on the organization and stakeholders as a whole (Reeves, 2016).

Peter Senge (2011), senior lecturer at MIT, and organizational change expert, had the following to say about how leaders tend to approach change in public schools:

> The fundamental flaw in most innovators strategies is that they focus on their innovations, on what they are trying to do—rather than on understanding how the larger culture, structures and norms will react to their efforts. (p. 26)

When leaders have considered how the change will impact the organization, rather than focusing solely on how they can utilize their own skills to implement a new policy, there is a reasonable likelihood that sustainability is possible (Wasta, 2011). However, if the change comes as a demand, with a forceful nature, while the likelihood of adopting the change is high, sustainability is doubtful, especially if the capacity of those carrying out the changes has not been built up and increased (Fullan, 2006). If the change is proposed

after considering the readiness of the organization and taking measure to support the organization, sustainability is more evident (Wasta, 2011). To consider the readiness of an organization to adapt positively to change, Watsa (2011) suggests that the skill set of the faculty as well as a tentative plan for providing support and professional development be in place. Fullan (2006), extends this same thought by claiming that building capacity that is focused on results is critical when considering the impact on change. In addition, the willingness and awareness of all stakeholders should be considered (Wasta, 2011).

**The Role of Professional Learning and PIM Process in Planning for Change**

Evidence indicates that an inverse relationship exists between the long-term effectiveness of initiatives and the number of initiatives in place at one time (White, 2005, 2009). When there is failure to focus, prioritize, and eliminate distractions, the organization and the individuals suffer the cost (Gallagher, 2009; Reeves, 2010). When leaders are able to focus on fewer priorities and initiatives, effective monitoring is possible (Reeves, 2011). Focus, monitoring, and efficacy are three elements Reeves (2011) argues are part of a cluster of professional practices that have the power to positively impact student achievement. When teachers and administrators exhibit high levels of efficacy within an organization, the students reap the benefits. While having a focus on priorities within the school is imperative, the way organizations are designed and how they operate have an impact on teacher efficacy, which has the greatest impact on student achievement (Reeves, 2011). Because school improvement is typically a collaborative event, which includes dialogue and feedback, Reeves, Hattie et al., (2011) suggest that professional learning communities (PLCs) aid in the process of creating strategic school improvement plans. In addition to a collaborative effort of a PLC, or

other planning team, the Leadership and Learning Center (2005) created a process to encourage planning, implementing, and monitoring new changes and initiatives. The PIM® process (planning, implementation, Monitor) was created to respond to the need of urban, rural, and suburban schools to identify what was working well and what should be left behind or discontinued. Because the process operates in a cyclical model, constant planning, implementing, and monitoring allows for schools to constantly and consistently monitor what is working well within their organizations.

Schools frequently question what is essential and what is simply extra. In looking at Schmoker's work, he suggests that schools stick to what is "essential" and avoid what is new and popular unless it aligns with the needs of the school (Schmoker, 2011). Therefore, if schools are in need of quality change initiatives, they must have a quality vetting process for choosing what those change agents might be. White (2005) suggests that the planning process for a new initiative, program, or change within an organization should be a result of a comprehensive needs assessment. This needs assessment should create suggestions for action and pave the way for the creation of goals. In order for the assessment to be comprehensive, White (2011) suggests that it must gather and analyze not only student achievement, but also leadership and teaching practices. By including student achievement data, teaching and leading practices, and state high-stakes assessment results, a process of inquiry can be established among educators (White, 2011).

During advanced inquiry, educators are able to triangulate the data derived from the needs assessment in order to identify which practices will promote higher levels of achievement gains, or help close achievement gaps (White, 2011). In order for an

educational institution to enact quality changes and initiatives that will result in high achievement and align to goals, they must ensure that their goals are measurable, challenging, and specific (Hattie, 2009). By ensuring that the goals and initiatives are aligned to a definite need, schools can help avoid adopting new popular policies that might simply add to the pile of initiatives.

Once the planning of goals has been established, the implementation process can begin. Implementation with fidelity is an important factor; however, in order to apply the new plans or initiatives school-wide with fidelity, experts suggest that when using a model like the PIM® process, implementation should include action steps and professional development in order to build capacity within the learning organization. The strategies by which the program or initiative will be implemented must be clearly described, detailing the persons responsible for certain roles, a reasonable timeline by which the process will be implemented, and the rationale behind the process (White, 2011). While simplistic at its core, it is essential that explicit planning and protocols are established. It is also essential that a timeline be established and agreed upon (White, 2011).

As previously mentioned, professional development is an essential piece of the implementation process. Notably, professional development is often omitted or underserved when implementing new initiatives and plans within the learning organization. However, this is an essential piece to building capacity within the institution (White, 2011). By identifying the key professional development needs of each initiative, and by supporting those needs effectively, schools are able to identify their areas of limitations in regard to time, energy, and resources (White, 2011). One key

strategy is to ensure quality resources are available for not only professional development, but also initiative implementation, and effective monitoring of the process and of the results.

Monitoring, once a lesser supported component, has recently become a more essential piece of the change agent process. With recent increases in state and federal expectations of public education, more frequent monitoring of program performance is essential (White, 2011). Instead of monitoring strictly student achievement data, the state and federal governments also require monitoring of teaching practices to improve achievement within the organization and to build capacity among stakeholders (White, 2011). If schools simply monitor student achievement data, they will continue to struggle, failing to make gains in achievement. Those gains might be easier to achieve when looking at teaching practices in relationship to the student data. By monitoring both, an organization can determine more effectively what is working and what might need to be reevaluated. In addition, contributing factors to the change can begin to be identified and monitored. Those might include learning conditions, instruction time, materials, and implementation fidelity. As data begins to surface, the planning team or professional learning community can begin to disseminate and reflect on the results or the implementation process, depending on where the team is in the cycle. While the implementation process is concise and targeted, focusing on professional development and parent involvement, the monitoring process, and utilizing both formative and summative approaches guides the team in the decision-making process of what to change, what to keep, and what to continue, all in the name of positive change reform (White, 2011).

In addition to the support of change, planning and monitoring of the newly enacted programs or initiatives is imperative. Often times, strategizing, prioritizing, and limiting the number of initiatives being implemented at one time are the keys to the beginning of the implementation process. In a study of over 2000 American and Canadian school plans, research revealed that organizations with six or fewer priorities experienced "significantly higher gains in student achievement than the typical school with dozens of strategic priorities" (Reeves, 2011, p. 4). Reeves (2010), goes on to say that if an organization does not limit their priority initiatives, the organization can expect to see negative impact on student achievement and school performance. One of the other key factors to quality initiative implementation includes a process that uses a high level of implementation for the selected program. A common misconception of education systems is that once the initiative is decided upon, materials gathered, and professional development conveyed, the initiative is delivered. However, delivered and implemented are not considered the same (Reeves, 2016). Although educators seek to use and implement research-based practices, the actual follow-through hinders the process.

Based on the Linear Hypothesis of Change, the assumption is that as implementation levels increase, student achievement increases at the same rate (Reeves, 2016). However, in reality, significant change is not observed until the program has been implemented at its highest level. No increase is observed at lower levels of implementation (Reeves, 2016). In the work of data teams, the use of a four-level rubric is often used when identifying levels of implementing a solution to a problem. Those steps include a pre-initiating, in which data are collected and charted in order to identify the problem to be addressed. Next the team prioritizes goals based on evidence.

Following goal prioritizing, the team questions the results indicators to determine if any changes need to be made to the implementation or plan at that time. Finally, the plan is monitored to determine the plan's impact on student learning (Hattie, 2012).

Because significant improvement is not seen until the highest levels of implementation occurs, many initiatives never reach their full potential. If the program is not given the proper time and energy to reach the highest level of implementation, then it is often seen as a failure, and another initiative is started. When the compounding initiatives begin competing for attention and resources, teachers begin to feel the effects of initiative fatigue (Reeves, 2016). Being able to identify which initiatives require the most attention, and which should be eliminated, will greatly assist in relieving or avoiding the risks of initiative fatigue (Reeves, 2011, 2016). Within in the Quadrants of Implementation Audit, school leaders and teachers must identify where the initiatives fall and what possible actions can be taken with the initiatives as a result. For example, if an initiative falls within the quadrant titled "Weed," it has been identified as having a low impact rate, coupled with a low implementation rate. Programs or initiatives falling into this category should be identified and potentially "weeded" out, as they have very little impact on student achievement (Reeves, 2016). Those programs found in the "Evaluate" quadrant are identified as needing more appraisals to identify whether or not the acutely implemented programs are having a quality impact on student achievement. In several instances, these initiatives have questionable evidence of impact on achievement, thus finding themselves under more scrutiny for quality (Reeves, 2016).

## Summary

While the rhetoric and conversations around initiative fatigue seem to be increasing, the research shows very little advancement toward improving or rectifying the level of initiative fatigue felt within public schools today (Reeves, 2016). Evidence and research show that the implementation of too many initiatives or programs without the proper support can have negative and detrimental effects, not only on teacher effectiveness and efficacy but also on student achievement (Reeves, 2010). Data and proven models indicate that there is indeed an efficient and effective way to identify, plan, implement, and monitor change efforts in schools (White, 2011). Teacher effectiveness has been shown to improve not only student achievement levels but also to increase teacher efficacy. Research indicates that when teachers show high levels of efficacy, their students perform better (Marzano, 2007). If goals and plans are aligned to a strong vision, triangulated data, and are supported with professional development, studies indicate they are more likely to be successful. In addition, if they are monitored for effectiveness and removed if no longer serving a higher purpose, teachers and other stakeholders are able to better concentrate on the priority initiatives still in play (Reeves, 2010, 2016; White, 2011).

# CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

This quantitative, non-experimental study of practicing public school teachers and current initiative implementation in prekindergarten through twelfth grade schools in the state of Missouri was designed to determine if there is a relationship between initiative fatigue and teacher efficacy. In addition, it examined the differences in efficacy levels in schools with initiative implementation plans and those without plans. The two surveys, one researcher-developed and one established survey tool, were sent to lead administrators instead of directly to teachers, as a point of protocol, in the approximately 2,132 public schools within 518 school districts in Missouri for dissemination within their buildings.

## Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented, and the level of teacher efficacy?
2. What is the difference between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans?
3. What factors of teacher perception can predict possible initiative fatigue?

## Participants (Selection/Sampling)

The subjects of this research included teachers of prekindergarten through twelfth grade in the state of Missouri public schools. Initially, 2075 principals were contacted with the request to survey the educators within their building. 107 responded, granting permission for staff to participate in the study. Those principals were then asked to forward the survey tools to the certified teachers within their buildings. Approximately

625 teachers received the email, with 380 participating by completing the survey for a return rate of 60.8%.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher chose not to survey prekindergarten through twelfth grade teachers in charter, private, magnet, or online schools. In order to ensure enough participation to yield a valid consensus, the researcher chose to send the surveys out to all public school buildings within the state. For buildings in which there were no initial responses, a follow-up email was sent. To protect the participants of the study, all responses were collected anonymously, with no identifying questions or labels. The researcher chose to access and collect data using the electronic format, Question Pro. This program afforded the researcher easy access to data and allowed respondents to take the survey anonymously at their convenience.

The survey, which also acted as consent to participate, the ethics certificate, and the Research Review Board (RRB) application were submitted to the RRB. The timeframe of data collection began following approval from the research review board, and surveys were sent out early March. The data collection window remained open until mid-March, a time period of approximately two weeks. This time period was selected to coincide with teachers returning from break, yet avoiding major state testing windows for teachers to access and take the survey. By utilizing an electronic survey format and selectively choosing the timeframe to implement the survey, the researcher helped to increase the response rate. In addition to utilizing the electronic survey format, the researcher also provided an opportunity for an optional incentive included in the email for those who elected to participate by taking the survey. Email addresses were extracted solely for the purpose of the random incentive drawing and were not associated with any

data analysis so that confidentiality could be ensured. By providing an email address, those opting in to the optional incentive were entered in a random drawing to win one of twenty, ten-dollar Amazon gift cards.

**Survey Rationale and Construction**

Two surveys were utilized in this study. In order to avoid confusion for participants, the two surveys were combined into one document prior to dissemination. The first survey addressed initiative planning and initiative fatigue and was researcher developed, as there was no existing survey to address the research questions. The survey was based on information gleaned in the literature review and empirical data. Once the survey tool was designed, it was tested for validity and reliability. The school-wide initiative fatigue survey became the first section of the overall survey tool. The second portion of the survey tool included the short version of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) in order to draw a correlation between initiative fatigue, initiative implementation, and teacher efficacy. Items 1-22 correspond with the school-wide initiative fatigue scale in which items 1-12 assess levels of identify the level of fatigue, and items 13-22 assess implementation plans. Items 23-34 (TSES) assess teacher's sense of efficacy. The TSES was categorized into three sections. Items 24, 26, 29, and 33 assess *Efficacy in Student Engagement;* items 28, 31, 32, and 34 assess *Efficacy in Instructional Strategies;* and items 23, 25, 28, and 30 assess *Efficacy in Classroom Management.* By combining the two sources into one survey, the researcher intended to reduce confusion and to add ease to those taking the survey. In addition to collecting information regarding initiatives and initiative fatigue within the workplace, initiative implementation planning, and teacher efficacy levels, demographic information

(items A-D in the survey tool) was collected for the purpose of separating various groups at a later time if needed.

**Survey Development**

Both surveys used in this study consisted of a Likert scale style item analysis. Utilizing research and information gathered in the literature review, effective and explicit questions were created in order to have a valid and reliable tool that would identify whether or not initiative fatigue was existent within the learning organization. Therefore, to address a portion of both research questions, the School-wide Initiative survey tool was created. In addition, the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was used to address portions of both research questions. Combined into one survey for ease of administering, as well as to reduce confusion, the surveys consisted of a total of 35 items, which analyzed all necessary demographic and topic specific information.

Once the survey questions were generated from a table of specifications, the survey was entered into QuestionPro in order for a pilot test to take place. In using the table of specifications, the researcher was able to better ensure the survey questions measured the intended purpose. In Table 1 (Table of Specifications), there are statements that refer to initiative fatigue (IF) and others that refer to an initiative implementation plan (IIP). The markings, indicated with an "X," represent whether or not the question from the survey tool addresses initiative fatigue or the initiative implementation plan.

Table 1

*Table of Specifications*

| Question | Demo | IF | IIP |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Including this year, how many years have you been teaching? | X | | |
| 2. Your current grade level teaching assignment (Select all that apply) | X | | |
| 3. Your current certified teaching assignment (content) | X | | |
| 4. Approximately how many initiatives (new or ongoing) does your building currently have in place? | | X | |
| 5. Initiative implementation in my school includes teacher input | | X | |
| 6. Initiative implementation in my school includes building level administrator input | | X | |
| 7. Initiatives implemented in my building result from real areas of concern | | X | |
| 8. Initiatives implemented in my building are monitored for effectiveness | | X | |
| 9. Teachers support initiatives in my building | | X | |
| 10. I am satisfied with the number of initiatives currently being implemented | | X | |
| 11. I am confident that the initiatives being implemented are best for students | | X | |
| 12. The initiatives implemented do NOT have a negative impact on the overall education of students in my school | | X | |
| 13. The time spent on the initiatives does NOT detract from other vital areas of the education process | | X | |
| 14. Adequate rationale (reasoning) for implementing the initiatives is provided by my district | | X | |
| 15. Initiatives implemented in my school are clearly explained | | | X |
| 16. Adequate training is provided for each initiative | | | X |
| 17. Adequate time to implement each initiative is available | | | X |
| 18. Adequate funding is available to support initiatives | | | X |
| 19. Practical data is collected on each initiative | | | X |
| 20. My building reflects on the success of each initiative | | | X |
| 21. My building reflects on the failure of each initiative | | | X |
| 22. I have adequate time to reflect on the implementation and quality of the initiative(s) being implemented | | | X |

**Pilot Process**

Once the questions for the survey tool were established using the table of specifications and literature review, the researcher and university professor thoroughly examined each statement in order to ensure that the statements aligned with the designated purpose of the tool. Once entered into the QuestionPro system, the survey was ready for the pilot process. An initial version of the School-wide Initiative Inventory was sent to a panel of experts to test for construct validity. Once questions were adjusted, added, discarded, and thoroughly reviewed by a university professor, a pilot group of approximately 50 participants who shared similar characteristics of the desired survey group was used to validate and examine each of the items on the survey.

The results of each pilot survey were used to modify and improve the survey tool. The various drafts of the pilot survey were submitted for review to the researcher's advisor and collective team, including a statistics expert, to help revise and refine as needed. The results of the pilot(s) were as follows:

1. Expert Validity Panel #1:

   The initial validity pilot was designed to address the content validity, alignment of survey questions, and intended scale of assessment. The original version of the survey tool as presented in Appendix A was used to gather feedback from education experts. The original group of experts included six classroom teachers, one administrator, and one university professor. Each of the experts was sent a copy of the survey and asked to respond to the nature, clarity, and effectiveness of the survey questions. To increase validity and reliability, survey questions were presented using a variety of phrasing choices. This helped to ensure that respondents were consistently and more

authentically responding to the survey questions, as opposed to answering in a more routine and rote fashion. This initial expert panel was sent the survey on February 12, 2018, and had completed and returned it by February 15, 2018. Throughout this process, the panel and researcher were able to have conversations regarding the difficulty level of taking the survey, clarity of questions, suggested revisions, and any other questions regarding improvement of the survey tool. Any necessary revisions were made before submitting the survey for the survey pilot, which included changing the wording of the survey tool from Initiative Fatigue Survey, to School-wide Initiative Inventory Survey. This decision was based on the suggestion of panel experts that the original title presumed a negative connotation and could potentially skew results.

Following the completion of the expert validity panel, the researcher sought and was granted permission to conduct the survey pilot in the researcher's home district, as it would not be used on the final data collection to avoid any bias.

2. Survey Pilot: The survey was sent to approximately 50 teachers as a pilot group. During this pilot, the survey results were uploaded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for data analysis. Construct validity is the degree to which the questions measure the intended purpose of the study. To measure the strength and consistency of the items, a Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the consistency and reliability of the items. The coefficient range of reliability using the Cronbach's Alpha is from 0 to 1. Using the coefficient scale of Cronbach's Alpha, in which the α coefficient of

0 represents a less reliable internal consistency measure and the α coefficient closer to 1, specifically above a 0.7, indicates a stronger, more reliable internal consistency, the researcher examined the survey questions with the guidance of her advisor and statistician to ensure that the final survey results were reliable. The alpha value for the pilot was .937. After further reflection and analysis, the researcher made necessary edits to the title of the survey, and no questions needed editing or omitting in the final draft.

In summary, after the survey instrument was initially constructed by the researcher, a table of specifications was established to identify face validity. Input from a validity panel was utilized in order to make necessary revisions to the survey tool. Once revised, the survey tool was entered into QuestionPro and emailed to the pilot group. The results of the pilot group were analyzed using SPSS, and a Cronbach's alpha was used to test reliability and verify the survey tool. Revisions were made as needed by the researcher with guidance from the advisor and committee in order to establish strong reliability and validity before deploying the final survey.

**Research Procedures**

Upon completion of the pilot surveys, necessary revisions and edits were made and the final survey instrument was sent in an email, along with th Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale and instructions for administrators. Lead administrators in the approximately 2,132 public schools in the state of Missouri who were willing to participate then forwarded the surveys and instructions to the teachers they selected within their buildings. In addition to the survey tool, the researcher included the RRB approved Informed Consent form (Appendix D). The request was made that they forward

the survey to their teachers at that point. The email addresses of the lead administrators were collected from the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) directory. The survey remained open for a duration of 12 days. To encourage higher response rate, the researcher sent reminder emails as necessary.

Using SPSS, Cronbach's Alpha was determined to identify consistency and reliability. The alpha value for the school-wide initiative inventory was .93. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) had an alpha value of .90. The questions from the TSES were categorized into three subsections. The first section, *Efficacy in Student Engagement*, included items 25, 27, 30, & 34. The second section, *Efficacy in Instructional Strategies*, included items 29, 32, 33, & 35. Finally, the third section of the TSES, *Efficacy in Classroom Management*, included items 24, 26, 29, 31.

To address each research question, a Pearson's r correlation was used to determine whether there was a relationship between an indicated level of teacher initiative fatigue and teacher efficacy. The Pearson's r test allowed the researcher to identify the relationship between the school's numbers of initiatives in place (items 1-22) and the efficacy levels of teachers within those buildings (items 22-34), which addressed the first research question. The hypothesis was that in schools that have higher levels of initiatives in place, the teacher efficacy would be lower. The Pearson's r correlational test also allowed the researcher to see the relationship between schools that have initiative implementation plans and those that do not and how those variables impacted teacher efficacy. Pearson's r coefficient values ranged from +1 to -1. While a 0 value indicates no correlation or association of the variable tested, a -1 coefficient indicates a negative correlation, and a +1 coefficient indicates a positive correlation.

To further enhance to value of the study, the researcher chose to conduct a multiple regression test. In order to run a multiple regression test, the researcher had to determine whether or not the data from the Pearson's r test allowed for regression data to be collected. For the items in which the multiple regression analysis was appropriate, the researcher was able to see which factors had predictive value. By running a multiple regression analysis, the researcher was better able to make recommendations, as the results from the analysis had a high correlation with the efficacy of teachers and, therefore, provided predictive values for districts and organizations to use when developing or implementing new initiatives.

**Summary**

Following an in-depth literature review of the history of education reform, initiative fatigue, change theory, and teacher efficacy, the researcher created, piloted, and established a working survey tool to be paired with an already existing survey. Following an extensive piloting process, including revision and modification, the researcher-created survey was deemed valid and reliable. The two survey instruments were then sent to willing participating Missouri public school teachers.

Chapter four will present the analyzed data and will include the results from each survey. Both researcher narrative and data tables will indicate the value of the findings, while Chapter 5 will summarize the entire paper, including the discussion of the research and the recommendations moving forward.

# CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

## Introduction

The intent of this study was to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of initiative fatigue and its impact on teacher efficacy. Within the current education system, there is a pressing need to find programs and processes that increase student achievement and test scores (U.S. Department of Education, 2015; Schmoker, 2011). Unfortunately, many times the drive to succeed and to implement new ideas is negated by the excessive use of several new ideas at one time, with little consideration of time and support of the implementation or availability of resources (Reeves, 2011). The current problem addressed was whether or not teacher perceptions of initiatives in place in their schools impacted teacher efficacy. Without proper monitoring and planning, teacher efficacy may have been impacted by initiative fatigue. Identifying whether or not teacher perceptions reflected actual need was essential for making lasting change in learning environments.

Data were uploaded in SPSS for analysis. Descriptive statistics were utilized to present quantitative data in a manageable way. Data will be presented in this chapter giving insight into the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and the level of teacher efficacy?
2. What is the relationship between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans?
3. What factors of teacher perception can predict possible initiative fatigue?

In order to address the aforementioned questions, the follow null hypotheses were established:

1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and teacher efficacy.
2. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans.
3. There will be no statistically significant perceptions of teachers evident to predict initiative fatigue.

Each question and related hypothesis were investigated through quantitative analysis, conducting Pearson correlations to determine the strength of possible relationships. Based on the initial data analysis, further analysis using a multiple regression was performed to determine the potential for predictive measures. In addition, after analyzing the data and determining the significance, further details were revealed that were not specifically addressed with the research questions.

Before collecting data, the researcher sent an invitation email that included details of the study and expectation of participants to all public school administrators across the state of Missouri. Those administrators responding to the initial email with a confirmation were sent a second email that could be easily forwarded to staff members. The second email included the informed consent document, purpose of the study, and link to the QuestionPro survey. Once teachers completed the survey, they had the option to enter an external link and register an email for a chance to win an Amazon gift card.

The email entered was in no way tied to any data collected as all data were anonymously collected.

Emails were sent to all lead administrators in the state of Missouri (2,132), with a total of 107 administrators granting permission, resulting in a return rate of 5% of administrators agreeing to allow their teachers to participate. It is important to note that there were some responses to the initial email, which indicated the reason they would not be participating at that time was due to the fact that they were currently involved in several initiatives, and they did not wish to survey their teachers at that time. Since administrative permission was required prior to a teacher's ability to access the survey and participate, this determined the total number of teachers who were allowed to participate as 625. Of the 625 teachers invited to take the School Wide Initiative Inventory and Teacher Efficacy Survey, 380 actually completed the survey, for a 60.8% return rate from the possible pool. It is important to note that there were 380 complete data sets; however, there were an additional 67 respondents who did not indicate the number of initiatives currently implemented in their schools, thus their data were not analyzed.

Because there was not an initiative inventory survey already created, the researcher created and piloted a 23-items survey tool to measure aspects of initiative inventory and implementation. These 23 items were combined with the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Survey, in order to provide correlational data between initiative fatigue and implementation and teacher efficacy.

**Research Question One**

A Pearson r correlation was used to determine if there was a relationship in research question 1: What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and the level of teacher efficacy? The survey was split into three sections, (a) initiative fatigue, questions 1-10, 22, & 23, (b) initiative implementation plan, questions 11-22, and (c) Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), questions 24-35. The survey data were run to determine the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and the level of teacher efficacy, which was indicated by questions 2, and 24-35 of the survey. Using a Pearson r, the data indicated there was not a statistically significant relationship between the number of initiatives and the level of teacher efficacy. The Pearson r coefficient for research question 1 was -.001, with a significance level of .980 as reflected in Table 2.

Table 2

*Pearson r Correlation Table Research Question 1*

| | |
|---|---|
| Pearson *r Correlation* | *-.001* |
| Sig. (2-Tailed) | .980 |
| *N* | 318 |

*Note.* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Based on the data, the Pearson coefficient indicated a negative relationship between the number of initiatives and teacher efficacy; however, it was at a statistically insignificant level, meaning, teacher efficacy was not significantly impacted based on the number of initiatives in place at one time. Thus the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

**Research Question Two**

A Pearson r correlation was also used to determine if there was a significant relationship for research question 2: What is the relationship between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans? The second research question was designed to determine whether there was a relationship between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans. To determine this, the total from items 24-35 of the survey was analyzed using a Pearson r correlation on items 11-22. Individually, each question indicated a statistically significant relationship, with significance values at .000. In addition, each question indicated a positive relationship, meaning, as the value of one increased, the value of the other increased, or as one decreased the other decreased. Therefore, based on the analysis of data the researcher rejected the null hypothesis. The questions for the School-wide Initiative Inventory were designed to assess several aspects of both initiative fatigue and initiative implementation planning, focusing on key points of each factor as indicated by research. In addition, when looking at the questions individually, there was sufficient correlation for the researcher to run the multiple regression analysis, thus revealing the following results.

**Research Question Three**

The third research question was designed to determine which teacher perception factors analyzed could predict possible initiative fatigue. In order to determine possible predictive analysis based on the data collected, a multiple regression was completed. With a significance value of .035, initiative implementation plans that included

administrator input in the decision making process were shown to predict levels of fatigue at a statistically significant level. In addition, time to reflect revealed a significance factor of .014, indicating that it, too, can predict fatigue at a statistically significant level. With standardized coefficient beta values at .152 and .271 respectively, and significance levels below .05, the multiple regression analysis identified these two factors as having predictive measures with regard to initiative fatigue, and thus the null hypothesis was rejected with coefficient levels of .035 and .014.

Table 3

*Multiple Regression Table Research Question 3*

| | Standardized Coefficient Beta | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|---|---|---|
| Initiative implementation includes building level administrator input | .152 | .035 |
| I have adequate time to reflect on the implementation and quality of initiatives being implemented | .271 | .014 |

*Note:* Significant at the 0.05 level

**Further Findings**

While the data from this study was designed to address the aforementioned research questions, it is important to note other variables that resulted from the data. For example, it is important to note with regard to research question one and two, that 88.4% of the respondents reported six or fewer initiatives in place at one time in their schools. Looking at this statistic, compared to the research that indicates that more than six initiatives could result in fatigue, there is reason to believe that fatigue levels might be higher if the percentage of respondents with more initiatives were higher (Reeves, 2010,

2016). It is also important to note that 12% of respondents reported seven or more initiatives in place within their schools, and as many as 25 initiatives being implemented at one time was reported. That data indicates that there is the potential for fatigue to be taking place in some learning organizations. Secondly, it is important to note that based on individual questions, the analysis of the data indicated that as the number of initiatives increased, the level of teacher satisfaction tended to decrease. While this information was grouped with other questions resulting in an overall statistically insignificant relationship, in isolation there were data to support the idea that as the number of initiatives increases, the level of teacher satisfaction decreases.

**Summary**

The statistical analysis and findings of this study exploring the relationship of initiative fatigue, initiative implementation, and teacher efficacy has been presented in this chapter. Three null hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and teacher efficacy. The researcher failed to reject this null hypothesis.
2. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans. This null hypothesis this was rejected.
3. There will be no statistically significant perceptions of teachers evident to predict initiative fatigue. This null hypothesis was rejected.

Statistical significance was noted with regard to teacher efficacy levels in schools where initiative implementation plans were in place, as well as the perceptions of teachers concerning initiatives implemented involving administrator input, and perceptions of teachers regarding having adequate time to reflect on initiatives being implemented. Important information and insight has been gained regarding the perceptions of teachers and how their perceptions change based on the number of initiatives in place at one time, as well as how their perceptions reflect a change in satisfaction rather than a change in efficacy. Chapter five will present a summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the data, professional implications, and recommendations for further research.

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between initiative fatigue and initiative implementation and its impact on teacher efficacy. Research indicates that some of the root causes of initiative fatigue include a lack of vision and planning on the part of the leaders and organization; having too many priority initiatives in place without the time, energy, or resources to support them; and a natural resistance to change (Reeves, 2002, 2011, 2016; Dweck 2006; Bolman & Deal, 2008). By collecting data on the perceptions of teachers regarding initiative fatigue in their buildings and comparing it to their levels of efficacy, the researcher was able to determine the relationship between factors and make recommendations regarding the implications within the education system.

## Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions and null hypotheses ($H_0$):

Research Question 1. What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented, and the level of teacher efficacy?

$H_{01}$. There will be no statistically significant relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and teacher efficacy.

Research Question 2. What is the difference between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans?

$H_{02}$: There will be no statistically significant relationship between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implementation plans and districts without initiative implementation plans.

Research Question 3. What factors of teacher perception can predict possible initiative fatigue?

$H_{03}$: There will be no perceptions of teachers evident to predict initiative fatigue.

**Summary of Design Procedures and Methods**

This study used a quantitative descriptive research approach to capture and analyze the data concerning the perceptions of teachers regarding initiative fatigue and its impact on teacher efficacy. The researcher collected data from public school teachers across the state of Missouri. After receiving approval from the Research Review Board in February 2018, the researcher began the process of piloting a portion of the final survey tool. The survey tool used for the study was comprised of researcher-created items and the short form version of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. For the researcher-created items, the researcher began with a validity panel comprised of five teachers, one administrator, and one university professor. No noted adjustments were needed after the panel review; therefore, the researcher sent the pilot survey to a district similar to, but not involved in, the study after receiving permission from their superintendent. The pilot survey was open for a total of five days and received a total of 50 responses. A Cronbach's Alpha was run on the pilot data results, yielding a coefficient of 0.93, which indicated a strong reliability factor. No questions required altering; however, after analyzing feedback from the pilot, the word *fatigue*, as well as the definition of *initiative fatigue* were removed from the directions of the survey to eliminate any bias.

Upon completion of a successful survey pilot, the researcher sent an invitational email to all lead administrators in Missouri public schools. The initial invitational email included a brief description of the study, the requirements for the lead administrators, and a copy of the informed consent document. Administrators willing to participate responded to the invitational email. Consenting administrators were emailed the survey link and informed consent forms to forward to their teachers. The researcher documented administrators who agreed to participate in the study and recorded the total number of certified teachers in those buildings in order to determine the total number of surveys sent. Total surveys approved by administrators to send to teachers equaled 625, with 380 teachers returning completed surveys, for a return rate of 60.8%.

The final survey was sent using QuestionPro, and the data analysis was conducted using SPSS (IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences Statistics). A Pearson r correlation was used to determine the relationship of factors in research questions one and two, and multiple regression analysis was used to address research question number three. It was determined to use a Pearson r because the factors being compared were expressed as interval or continuous. The multiple regression was appropriate to use to address research question three, because it provided an indication of variances with shared factors in this relational study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009).

**Limitations, Delimitations, and Design Controls**

There were some limitations encountered by the researcher during this study. First, there was limited control over the response rate. Although the researcher took precaution to ensure that emails were sent to valid and reliable email addresses of administrators, the response rate of those administrators could not be controlled by the

researcher. In addition, the researcher encountered approximately five large school districts that required approval in order to send the surveys to their staff. In some cases, the approval process required a lengthy and in-depth application process, for which the time frame of the study did not allow. As a result, the perceptions of teachers in those districts were not captured for this study. The delimitations the researcher put in place for this study were designed to ensure the data collected related directly to the intended purpose of the study, without bias and skewed results. Those delimitations included limiting the survey to certified teachers in public schools in the state of Missouri only. In addition, for the purpose of this study, the researcher did not collect the perceptions of administrators. The design controls utilized by the researcher included reminder emails to administrators, simplification of the participation process, which allowed for clarity of expectations, and assurance of anonymity regarding the collection of data and responses.

**Summary of Findings**

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between initiative fatigue, initiative implementation, and teacher efficacy. Although there has been considerable research regarding both initiative fatigue and teacher efficacy individually, the researcher wanted to determine whether or not there was a statistically significant relationship between the two. In addition, the researcher wanted to add to the body of research around initiative fatigue, as well as to clarify any implications that might impact educational organizations. The following sections provide details regarding the findings of each of the research questions addressed in this study.

### The Relationship between the Number of Initiatives and Teacher Efficacy

The first research question was as follows: What is the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented and the level of teacher efficacy? The data indicated a *p* value of 0.980, which was above the .05 level, signifying there was not a statistically significant relationship between the number of initiatives and teacher efficacy, thus the null hypothesis was accepted. While the relationship between the number of initiatives and teacher efficacy did not yield a statistically significant relationship, data indicated there was a relationship between the number of initiatives in place and teacher satisfaction. No significance leading to a change in teacher efficacy may indicate that teachers' efficacy levels are less impacted by these factors due to their personal beliefs about how they can teach their students and promote their academic success. Although research indicates that the efficacy of a teacher is influenced by vicarious events that they experience, the practice and implementation of initiatives within their learning organizations did not yield a negative impact on perceived efficacy levels. Another possible reason for this result could be due to the fact that, of those teachers surveyed, approximately 88.4% reported to be implementing six or fewer initiatives. In his research of more than two thousand schools, Reeves (2016) reported that schools with fewer than six priority initiatives in place at one time, yielded significantly higher student achievement, thus indicating that implementing six or fewer initiatives was essentially more manageable for schools.

### The Relationship between Implementation Plans and Teacher Efficacy

The second research question was as follows: What is the difference between teacher efficacy in districts with initiative implantation plans and districts without

initiative implementation plans? The data from this portion of the survey results indicated all questions of the survey relating to the implementation planning process had a *p* value of .000, which was below the .05 significance level, demonstrating there was a statistically significant relationship between the efficacy of teachers in districts with initiative implementation plans and those without evidence of initiative implementation plans, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. While the data from this research question did yield a statistically significant relationship, it is important to note the data also supported the idea that as the number of initiatives increased, the satisfaction level of the teachers decreased.

**Factors of Teacher Perceptions that Predict Initiative Fatigue**

The third and final research question of this study was as follows: What factors of teacher perception can predict possible initiative fatigue? Using a multiple regression analysis with a significance level of <.05, two factors indicated a statistically significant level of prediction of initiative fatigue, thus rejecting the null hypothesis. Based on the *p value* (*p*=.035) the factor of initiative implementation plans that included administrator input showed a predictive value on initiative fatigue. As a result, the researcher was able to conclude that having administrator input and support regarding initiatives being implemented within a learning organization had a statistically significant impact on whether the initiative had the potential to cause fatigue among the staff. The second factor that indicated a statistically significant level of prediction included the factor regarding time for reflection about the initiative and its effectiveness. With a significance factor of 0.014, this factor showed a statistically significant predictor level for initiative fatigue. As a result, the researcher concluded that teachers having enough time to reflect

on the initiatives they are implementing, as well as the effectiveness of those initiatives, has a significant impact on the level of fatigue they feel.

**Professional Implications**

Based on the data collected from this study, there are several recommendations that can be applied in educational settings. First, knowing that initiative fatigue is a prevalent issue in many schools should not be forgotten. While the data from this survey indicates that approximately 88.4% of teachers identified six or fewer initiatives in place, there were recorded findings of as many as 25 initiatives in place at one time. With 12% of the teachers surveyed indicating seven or more initiatives in place, there is reason to believe that fatigue could be evident in those educational settings. In fact, the data revealed that as the number of initiatives increased, the level of teacher satisfaction decreased. In addition, there were statistically significant relationships between the level of teacher efficacy, and whether or not initiative implementation plans were in place. Knowing that planning for change and accounting for how that change might impact the learning organization, is essential in preventing initiative fatigue and maintaining higher levels of teacher efficacy. It is also important to note the two key predictive factors of fatigue in this study, both of which are supported by previous research.

The factor of administrator input with regard to initiative planning speaks to the need for administrator support and knowledge concerning initiatives schools put into place to support student achievement and teacher satisfaction. In fact, Ingersoll (2001) suggests that a lack of adequate support from school administration can result in teacher turnover. Reeves (2016) suggests that leaders must include not only trust, focus, leverage, feedback, change, and sustainability measures in decision making for their schools but

also purpose. If the administrators are left out of the decision-making process for their learning organization, they will have a hard time adequately supporting those initiatives once put into place. If administrators are not in support, it in turn effects a teacher's level of support for initiatives.

With regard to the second predictive factor that was indicated, having time to reflect on the practices and initiatives in place can have a significant impact on whether or not learning organizations can avoid initiative fatigue. When educators have time to reflect, often they are able to identify the key factors that are working and those which are not. By reflecting and acknowledging those factors that are yielding the outcomes desired by the goals of the organization, teachers and administrators can have more voice in what does get implemented and what might get removed. Reeves (2016) suggests that by identifying the key initiatives and focusing on those, schools have a better opportunity for student achievement gains. When teachers and organizations are not given time to reflect on the successes and failures of the practices and initiatives, there is a tendency to try more initiatives without getting rid of those not working. By adding the new initiatives to the previous initiatives, less time, money, and energy can be spent on each initiative in place, thus leading to initiative fatigue. Therefore, by limiting the number of initiatives each learning organization has in place, by including administrator input on the decision making process, and by providing adequate and protected time for teachers and stakeholders to reflect on the outcomes of each initiative, learning organizations can better ensure less chance of initiative fatigue and a better opportunity for student achievement gains.

## Recommendations for Further Research

Although the null hypothesis was accepted for the first research question, meaning there was no statistically significant relationship identified, there were other data to indicate that further research around the topic of initiative fatigue could yield valuable results for the education community. Upon further review of the data, the researcher noticed a statistically significant relationship between the questions on the survey relating to teacher satisfaction and fatigue. Based on this data, there is evidence to believe that initiative fatigue impacts teacher satisfaction in the workplace. By identifying the exact correlations between those two factors, and running a predictive analysis on those measures, learning organizations can better capture the need for limiting the number of initiatives put into place, as well as the need to better support initiative implementation in order to maintain higher levels of teacher satisfaction.

In addition to initiative fatigue and teacher satisfaction, the researcher recommends looking more closely at the perceptions of teachers as compared to the perceptions of administrators. While this study focused solely on the perceptions of certified teachers, because one of the predictive factors reflected the need for administrator support, it would be interesting to know how the perceptions of those two groups compared. Identifying why teachers indicated administration input as important would lead learning organizations into discussions about how to better involve stakeholder input in the change process.

Because a significant number of respondents indicated that they had six or fewer initiatives in place at one time, it would be advantageous to the profession to examine the differences in perceptions of teachers with fewer than six initiatives in place at one time,

and teachers with seven or more initiatives in place at one time. In addition, it would be valuable to further investigate those same groups and identify which had planning protocols and which did not.

Finally, the researcher recommends looking at initiative fatigue in different settings. By using the demographic questions and looking more closely at the comparisons of rural, suburban, and urban school settings, researchers and learning organizations can better understand how initiative fatigue impacts various school settings. By looking into the aforementioned topics, learning organizations could better provide supports for how schools might initiate conversations around new changes and initiatives being considered for implementation.

**Summary**

Throughout the process of this study, the researcher focused on the perceptions of teachers regarding initiative fatigue and its impact on teacher efficacy. The ability of learning organizations to understand and identify the threshold at which teachers indicate fatigue begins to set in is an essential piece in preventing initiative fatigue. Much of what is known about initiative fatigue indicates that there are a certain number of well-intentioned initiatives that schools can effectively implement at one time without causing fatigue to set in (Reeves, 2002, 2010, 2016). This study supported previous research findings with regard to initiative fatigue and teacher satisfaction, but showed little relationship between fatigue and teacher efficacy. It did, however, show a relationship between teacher efficacy and initiative implementation planning. In addition, statistically significant predictors of initiative fatigue included factors in which administrator input was sought before implementation, as well as teachers having enough time to reflect on

the effectiveness of each initiative in place. Those two predictive factors can help learning organizations better plan and prepare for initiative implementation and better avoid initiative fatigue.

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APPENDIX A: School-wide Initiative Inventory Survey

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project. However, if you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point. It is very important for us to learn your opinions. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be reported only in the aggregate. Your information will be coded and will remain confidential. If you have questions at any time about the survey or the procedures, you may contact Kati O'Quinn at 417-588-4607 or by email at the email address specified below.

For the purpose of this study, initiatives will include, but are not limited to:

- Testing procedures
    - Can include new benchmarking programs
- Reading initiatives and programs
- Technology updates and implementation
    - Can include new technology integration, technology instruction for staff and students, 1:1, BYOD, etc.
- STEM/STEAM
- Curriculum Changes
- Can include creation of new units, new curriculum maps, etc.
- New instructional practices
- Teacher Evaluation changes
- Professional Development changes and mandates
- Attendance procedures
- Grading procedures and practices
- Schedule changes
- After school program changes/requirements
- RtI or other intervention strategies

Throughout the first section of this survey, when reference is made to initiative fatigue, it should be understood that it can include any of the previous mentioned programs, but is not limited to that list.

Overview

The purpose of this survey is to gain as much information regarding initiative fatigue, factors surrounding initiative fatigue, and teacher efficacy from public schools in Missouri. This survey was designed in such a way to allow you the opportunity to indicate your experiences within your school. Your honest responses are critical in

order to determine the most accurate trends in data. All responses, as well as your participation, will remain anonymous.

Instructions

This questionnaire was designed to be comprehensive in design, yet only take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

- Please read each question carefully and choose the number on the scale that best represents your answer,
- Consider the scale used to describe each section,
- On open-ended responses, please use concise language and explicit detail.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

**School-wide Initiative Inventory Survey**

**Demographic Information**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Including this year, how many years have you been teaching? | Insert Answer _____ | | | | |
| B | Your current teaching assignment (grade level). | Pre-K to 5th Grade ○ | 6th Grade to 8th Grade ○ | 9th Grade to 12th Grade ○ | | |
| C | Your current teaching assignment (content) | Core (Math, Science, English, Social Studies) ○ | Encore (Fine Arts, Practical Arts, Physical Education, etc.) ○ | Other Support Roles (Counselors, Instructional Coaches, Curriculum Coaches, etc.) ○ | Other certified position (not administration) ○ | |
| D | Approximately how many initiatives (new or ongoing) does your building currently have in place? | Insert answer _____ | | | | |

**School-wide Initiative Inventory Survey**

Considering the current and ongoing initiatives being implemented in your school, please rate the following statements:

| | **Initiatives** | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Moderately Disagree | 3 (Disagree) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Moderately Agree) | 6 (Strongly Agree) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Initiatives implemented in my school are research based. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 2 | Initiative implementation in my school includes teacher input. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 3 | Initiative implementation in my school includes building level administrator input. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 4 | Initiatives implemented in my building result from real and prevalent areas of concern. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 5 | Initiatives implemented in my building are monitored for effectiveness. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Moderately Disagree | 3 (Disagree) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Moderately Agree) | 6 (Strongly Agree) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Initiatives are supported and willingly implemented in my building. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 7 | I am satisfied with the number of initiatives currently being implemented. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 8 | I am confident that the initiatives being implemented are research based and best for students. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 9 | The initiatives implemented do not have a negative impact on the overall education of students in my school. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 10 | The time spent on the initiatives does not detract from other vital areas of the education process. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 11 | Initiatives implemented in my school are clearly explained. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | 1 (Strongly Disagree) | 2 (Moderately Disagree | 3 (Disagree) | 4 (Agree) | 5 (Moderately Agree) | 6 (Strongly Agree) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | Adequate rationale (reasoning) for implementing the initiatives is provided by my district. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 13 | Adequate training is provided for each initiative. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 14 | Adequate time to implement each initiative is available. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 15 | Adequate funding is available to support initiatives. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 16 | Practical data is collected on each initiative. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 17 | My building reflects on the success/failure of each initiative. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 18 | I have adequate time to reflect on the implementation and quality of the initiative(s) being implemented. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 19 | If an initiative does not show adequate, positive results, the initiative is discontinued. | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |
| 20 | Teacher input/feedback is listened to and valued regarding the | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ | ○ |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | initiative. | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 21 | My overall attitude about the initiatives being implemented is: | **Very Discontent** ○ | | **Discontent** ○ | | **Content** ○ | **Very Content** ○ |
| 22 | I feel that the number of initiatives being implemented in my building is: | **Too Numerous** ○ | | **Just Right** ○ | | **Too Few** ○ | |

APPENDIX B: Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001)

**Directions:** Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking any one of the nine responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "None at all" to (9) "A Great Deal" as each represents a degree on the continuum.

**Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your *current* ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.**

| | Teacher Beliefs | None at all | | Very Little | | Some Degree | | Quite a Bit | | A Great Deal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 2 | How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 3 | How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 4 | How much can you do to help your students value learning? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 5 | To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 6 | How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 7 | How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 8 | How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 9 | To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 10 | To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 11 | How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |
| 12 | How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom? | 1 ○ | 2 ○ | 3 ○ | 4 ○ | 5 ○ | 6 ○ | 7 ○ | 8 ○ | 9 ○ |

## APPENDIX C: Initial Invitation Email

Hello,

My name is Kati O'Quinn, and I am a doctoral student at Southwest Baptist University, and an Instructional Coach at Lebanon Middle School. I am collecting data to complete my dissertation, which will help identify any relationships between school-wide initiatives and teacher efficacy in classrooms across Missouri.

What is requested of you in this process:

If you are willing for your teachers to participate, I would ask that you kindly respond to this email by FRIDAY MARCH 9, 2018, to let me know you are willing to participate. Once you have responded YES, I will send you a follow-up email which contains the survey link and the informed letter of consent, which you can forward easily to your teachers. At that point, you are finished!

Now the details:

If you would be willing for your teachers to participate, I would greatly appreciate their feedback. The average time for completion of this survey is approximately 4-6 minutes, and all responses will be anonymous. Upon completion, the dissertation with results from this survey will be available for examination at http:///www.sbuniv.edu. If you should have any questions, you may contact me at koquinn@lebanon.k12.mo.us. The informed letter of consent, which will accompany the survey link sent to your teachers is attached to this email for your viewing. Again, if you are willing to participate, please respond to this email with a YES, and I will forward you the link.

Thank you so much for your time, and have a wonderful day!

APPENDIX D: Informed Consent

**TITLE OF STUDY**

Teacher Perception of Initiative Fatigue and Its Impact on Teacher Efficacy

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR**

Kati O'Quinn
Doctoral Student at Southwest Baptist University
234 State Road OO
Lebanon, MO 65536
417-588-4607
koquinn@lebanon.k12.mo.us

**PURPOSE OF STUDY**

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between the number of initiatives implemented in a school, and the level of teacher efficacy. In addition, the level of teacher efficacy was measured in schools which implemented a planning protocol for new initiatives compared with those who did not. Knowing how initiative fatigue impacts teacher efficacy can allow educational organizations to begin to reduce the fatigue felt by their educators, thus reducing potential staff turnover and increasing achievement within their organization.

**STUDY PROCEDURES**

This study is a quantitative study, using an anonymous survey tool to collect responses. All survey questions will be accessed through Question Pro, the survey will be open for responses for a duration of two weeks. It is estimated that it will take respondents approximately 4-6 minutes to complete the survey. Willing participants will have the opportunity to enter into a drawing for a $10 Amazon Gift Card, as a thank you for participating. This entry will be the only time in which participants will need to enter any personal information, and it will not be tied to any data collected in the process, as it will be enter in an external link.

**RISKS**

There are no known risks related to this research, and all information collected will remain anonymous. You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

**BENEFITS**

While there is no immediate or direct benefit you for your participation in this study, the hope is that the information obtained from this study might better help educational organizations identify areas in which initiative fatigue might be reduced, and teacher efficacy improved.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your responses to the survey will be anonymous. Please do not include any identifying information when completing your survey.

**COMPENSATION**

Willing participants will have the opportunity to enter into a drawing for a $10 Amazon Gift Card, as a thank you for participating. This entry will be the only time in which participants will need to enter any personal information, and it will not be tied to any data collected in the process.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

This study was reviewed and approved by the SBU Research Review Board. If you have questions at any time about this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page, or contact Dr. Tammy Condren at (417) 328-1737, or the Research Review Board Chair, Martaun Stockstill at (417) 328-2089, or RRB@sbuniv.edu.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. This consent form will be included in all survey emails sent to teachers. By continuing to the survey, itself, you are thereby consenting to participate in the research. You are free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher.